

Subregional workshop on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Central Asia Dushanbe, May 25-26, 2023

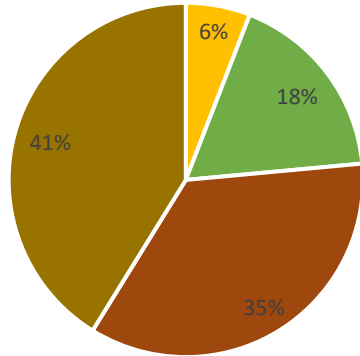
Evaluation Summary

The participants were requested to indicate their opinion of various aspects of the Subregional workshop on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Central Asia in terms of preparations, conduct of the meetings, content, practical and general comments. A total of 17 evaluation forms were submitted. A summary of feedback received is presented below.

1. Please indicate the usefulness of the workshop for you in view of:

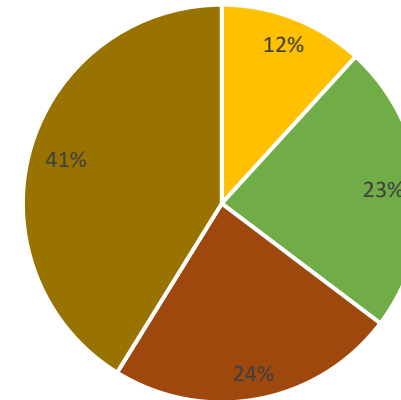


Provision of a forum for information exchange and initial transboundary consultations



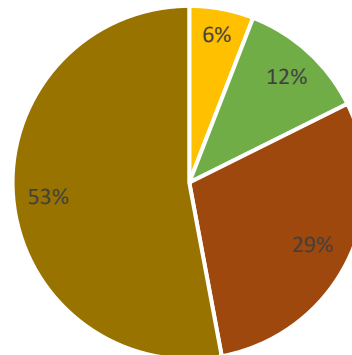
■ useless
 ■ somehow useful
 ■ useful
 ■ very useful
 ■ extremely useful

Provision of opportunities for networking



■ useless
 ■ somehow useful
 ■ useful
 ■ very useful
 ■ extremely useful

Identification of good practices and lessons learned

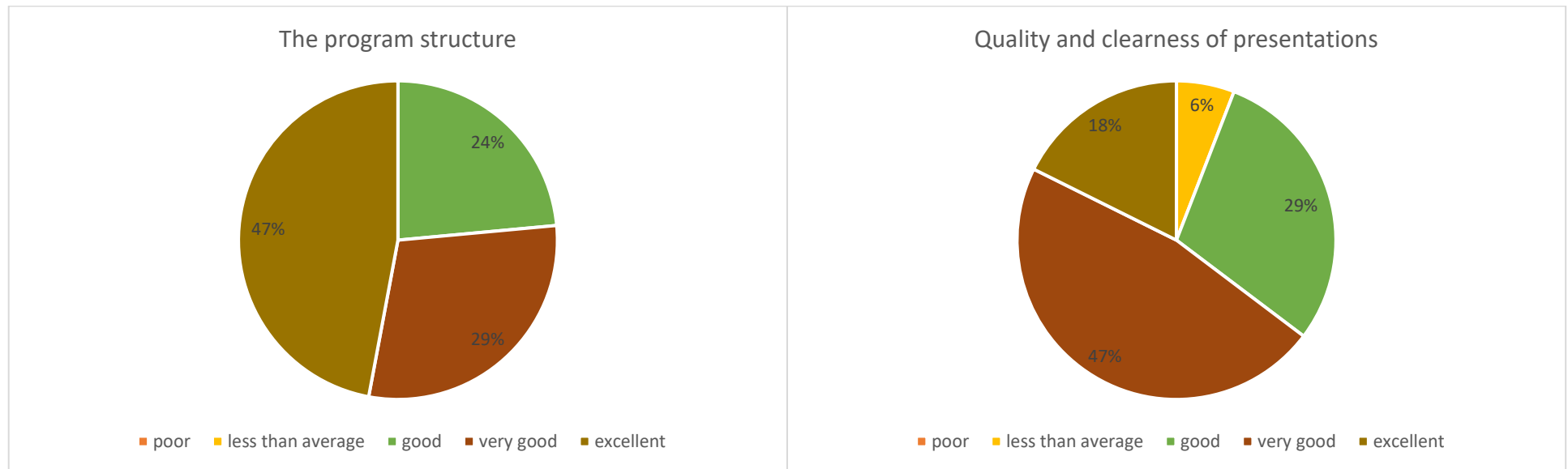


■ useless
 ■ somehow useful
 ■ useful
 ■ very useful
 ■ extremely useful

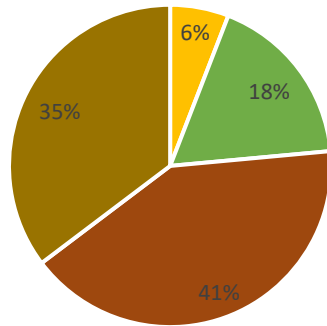


Overall, the participants of the subregional workshop on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Central Asia found the event very useful. In particular, they found the topic highly relevant to their sphere of competence and activities, and they considered the knowledge and skills acquired during the meeting quite useful for their future work. Besides deepening knowledge on mine tailings safety, the event provided opportunities for information exchange and initial transboundary consultations as well as networking to the vast majority of participants. Almost all respondents found the discussions on good practices and lessons learned very helpful.

2. The level of satisfaction with the workshop in terms of:

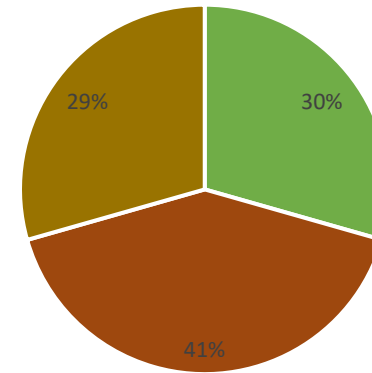


Quality and relevance of handout materials distributed by the organisers



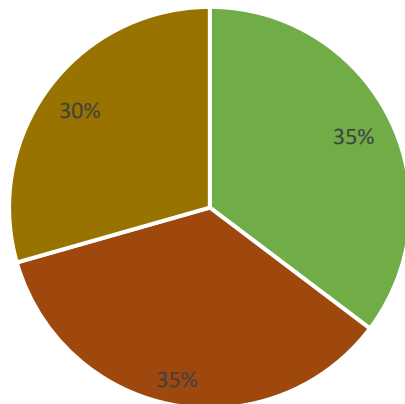
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Usefulness of discussions



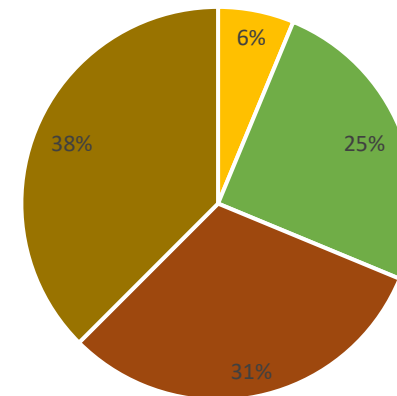
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Organisation of the workshop



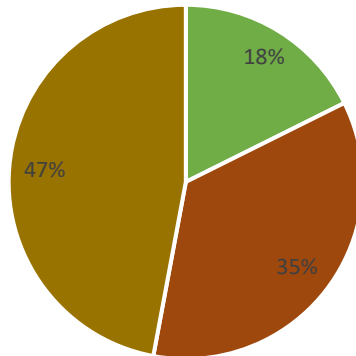
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Results / decisions endorsed at the workshop



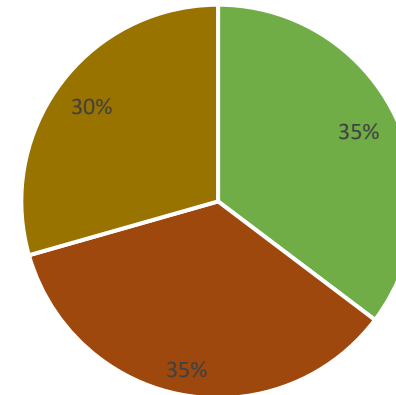
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Support provided by the UNECE Secretariat at the workshop



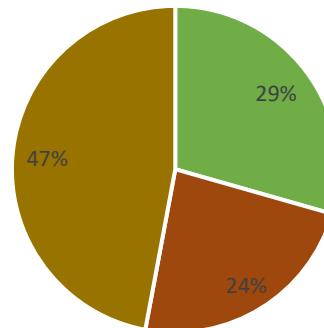
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Schedule of the workshop and agenda items



■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Duration of the workshop

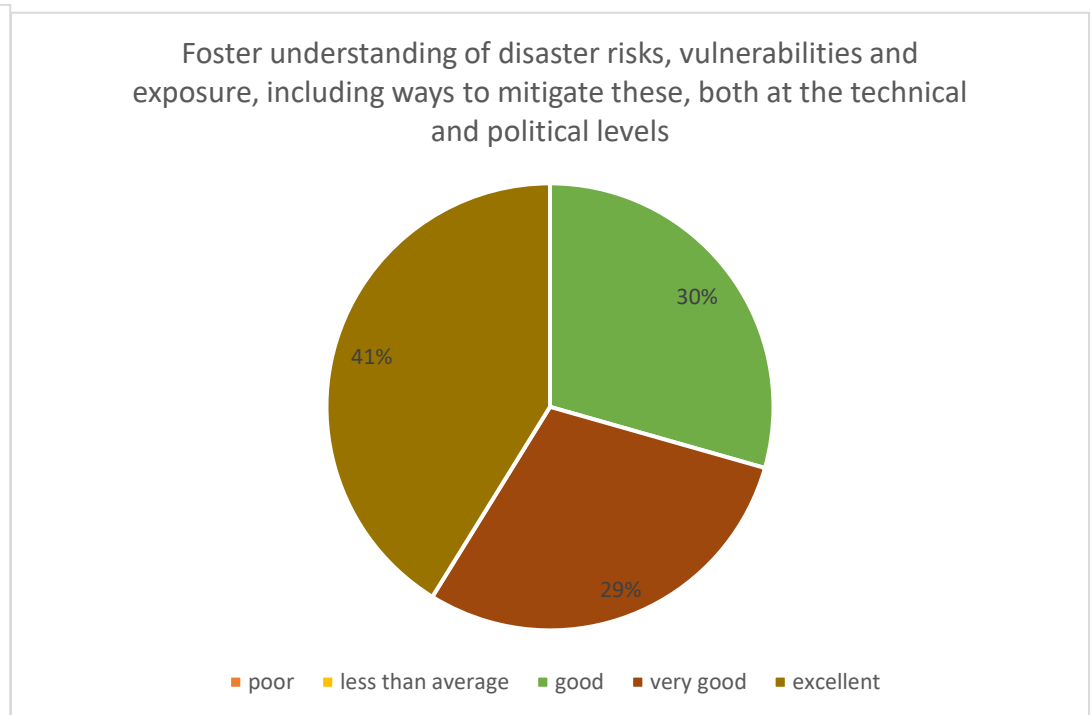
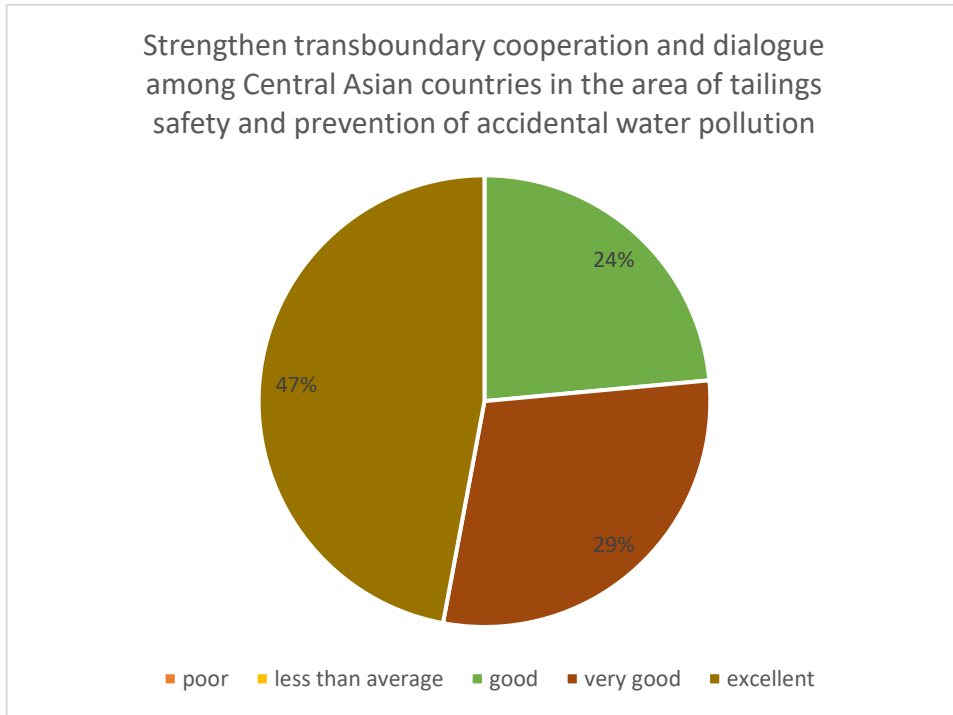


■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

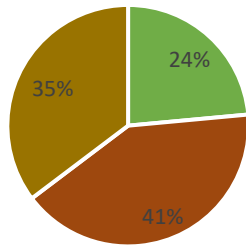


In addition, the participants were asked to evaluate various organizational and substantive aspects of the event. Overall, the respondents found the event very well organized. The program structure, discussions and organisation of the workshop were very well rated. The majority of the respondents found the presentations and handout materials distributed by the organisers to be of high quality and clear. All respondents were highly satisfied with the support provided by the UNECE Secretariat at the workshop. The participants also evaluated the results and decisions endorsed at the workshop very well, while some saw some room for progress in this regard. Moreover, they were pleased with the schedule, agenda items and the duration of the workshop.

3. Degree of achievement of the objectives of the workshop:

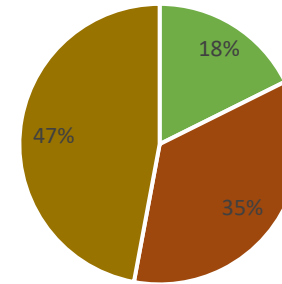


Present the achievements of Central Asian countries in strengthening industrial safety and preventing accidental pollution from tailings facilities at the national and regional levels



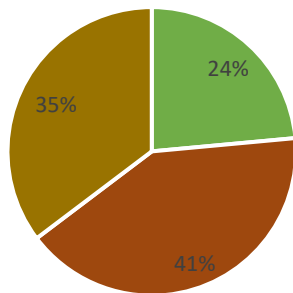
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Share information on UNECE guidelines, tools and projects, as well as those of partner organizations, and experiences in their application



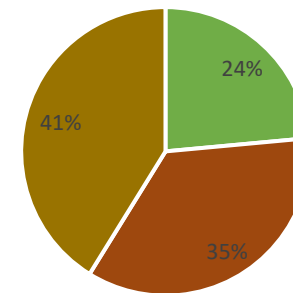
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Provide a platform for exchanging experiences, good practices and lessons learned, bringing together the relevant stakeholders and partners from industrial safety and water communities



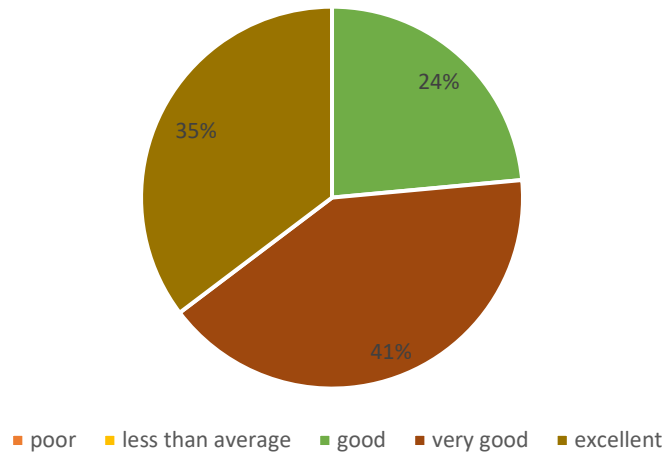
■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Strengthen implementation of and accession to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions and promote benefits of implementation of other UNECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements



■ poor
 ■ less than average
 ■ good
 ■ very good
 ■ excellent

Review recommendations arising from UNECE regional projects, discuss challenges and needs, and identify ways to address them and to strengthen national and transboundary governance of risks.



Furthermore, participants were requested to assess how well the workshop’s objectives were achieved. As per the results, the respondents were highly satisfied with how the meeting contributed to strengthening the transboundary cooperation and dialogue among Central Asian countries in the area of tailings safety and prevention of accidental water pollution. In addition, they indicated that it improved their understanding of disaster risks, vulnerabilities and various ways to mitigate them at the technical and political levels. Also, the participants agreed that the workshop provided a platform for presenting not only achievements in strengthening industrial safety and the prevention of water pollution in the region, but also for sharing lessons learned and bringing together relevant stakeholders. Finally, the responders highly satisfied with the fact that the workshop provided another opportunity to raise awareness on guidelines, tools and projects of UNECE and partner organizations, strengthen implementation of and accession to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions and to promote the benefits of implementation of UNECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as to discuss results of UNECE regional projects.

4. Degree of understanding of mine tailings safety and prevention of accidental water pollution:



All participants assessed that the subregional workshop allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of mine tailings safety and preventing related accidental water pollution. Some of the respondents specifically noted that they learned a lot about mapping tailings and the hazard and risk indexes. In particular, the participants seemed to appreciate discussions of innovative approaches, aimed to ensure the safety of tailing dumps at the regional level, best practices of accidents prevention and mitigation beyond Central Asia (for example, the Danube River basin) and detailed presentations.

In addition, several suggestions on the content of future workshops have been received. In particular, participants would like to:

- Have more practical examples presented at the workshop
- Further increase awareness about all tailings dumps in Central Asia; and
- Facilitate the establishment of contacts with all interested organizations.



5. Proposed follow-up activities after this workshop:

When asked about the follow-up activities to improve the safety of tailings management facilities and prevent accidental water pollution in Central Asia, the responders offered the following suggestions:

- Continue discussing these issues and sharing experiences at the regional level (e.g. through sub-regional seminars)
- All Central Asian countries should join the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention and harmonize their national legislation accordingly
- Continue this work in the Syr Darya and other river basins and consider also other challenges besides tailings.
- Develop a tailings storage safety strategy for countries in the Syr Darya River basin
- Study the experience of other regions with similar problems and implement similar projects there.
- Provide expert support by the international organizations to the competent authorities at the national level to improve environmental safety.
- Cooperate with the Global Tailings Review and tailings storage operators at the national level seeking to use international standards with the possible organization of an "exemplary" tailings storage facility in terms of safety and modern standards."
- Hold an on-site training to consolidate the knowledge gained. In addition, organize a meeting later in order to follow up whether the recommendations have been implemented and the proposed developments have been used.
- Consider all the risks associated with the operation of hazardous production facilities, not limited to tailing dumps and transboundary rivers.

6. Main lessons learned during the workshop:

Participants were asked to share the main lessons on mine tailings safety and preventing related accidental water pollution they gained during the sub-regional workshop. The crucial role of the following aspects has been noted by several participants:

- Joining the UNECE Convention on Industrial Accidents by the Central Asian countries;
- Building capacity of the personnel working on tailings dumps;
- Adopting best practices to prevent possible accidents;
- Establishing cooperation between operators, government agencies and countries;
- Development of transboundary cooperation between countries;
- Harmonizing legal framework to ensure tailings safety;
- Providing constant informative and analytical support, e.g. monitoring of tailings dumps, regular databases' updates at the national level and data exchange;
- Studying examples of successful remediation of tailings management facilities and/or mitigation of the consequences of emergency situations;



- Studying international experience (trainings, online courses, etc.) on the issue of tailings safety and prevention of accidental water pollution by national experts, stakeholders, employees of competent authorities.

Additionally, some the responders indicated the following main lessons learned:

- Professional training of the UNECE staff in the sub-regional seminar, obtaining knowledge and skills for responders' work, identifying best practices and learning lessons;
- New approaches to ensuring safety, including using satellite information;
- Information about ways to prevent accidents, as well as mapping, remediation and water pollution levels in Central Asian countries, as well as the main enterprises that cause this harm;
- Existence of tools/guidance already developed by the UNECE Secretariat, available online, which allow not only to improve the knowledge about the safety of tailing dumps, but also to share these links with colleagues and help them in this way.

7. Further comments:

In this part, several participants expressed appreciation to the organizers for the implementation of the workshop, supported all the recommendations developed during the meeting, explained that they gained a lot of knowledge and highlighted the relevance of the subject and usefulness to exchange information and experiences with other Central Asian countries. In, particular, it was suggested starting the second phase of the Syr Darya River Basin project. Furthermore, the participants suggested the following ideas and comments on how to improve future meetings:

- Provide bigger screen, so that all the information and numbers can be seen;
- Change the duration and dates of the seminar in such way that participants can participate in the entire event, and not partially;
- Provide a cultural program to establish business relations between experts outside the formal part of the workshop;
- Continue holding such events.