

**Project reference**

EuropeAid/  
121076/C/G/Multi

**EC Partners**

- **Field Studies Council, UK**
- **Environment for Healthy Life, Uzbekistan**
- **Oydin Hayot, Pure Life**
- **Uzbek NGOs**

**Facts and Figures**

- Duration: **24 months**
- EC contribution: **€140 600**
- **4 schools** and **5 Mahallas** involved
- **80 young environmental leaders** are taking part in developing LA21 and events on local environmental improvement
- **400 children** are taking part in decision making
- Study visit to the UK for **9 people**, including a representative of the Ministry of Public Education
- **17 new training modules** developed and implemented
- The number of volunteers and YELs on the increase



**EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION**

# Civil Society

## Youth empowerment leading to improved local environment in Mahallas

*"Building a better environment through training and partnership."*

IBPP 2007 report on the Project activity



### Context

Currently the views of young people are usually at best, not sought, and at worst, ignored, as part of the local democratic process in Mahallas (local areas for self government). As a result young people's participation in decision making is weak, and young people are often either disinterested in or frustrated by the decision making process. If participation does take place, it is often tokenistic. However, young people are the future of Uzbekistan, and it is critically important they have the opportunity to develop and practise responsible decision making and participation skills.

### Objective of the project

The overall goal of the project is to enhance the effectiveness of responsible participation by young people in Uzbekistan in decision making at all levels. The project aimed to enhance the capacity of Mahalla leaders and the community and to involve young people in decision making. It aimed to build the confidence of young people to show them participation is possible, and to generate enthusiasm for involvement. It also strived to develop the capacity of young people in the Mahallas to engage and participate in environmental improvements. Furthermore it aimed to create mechanisms to provide support for young leaders and systems to allow engagement in environmental decision making and improvement activities. Finally it aims to serve as the foundation for the roll-out of project outcomes beyond Tashkent.

### Main activities and impact

The main activities of the project were building the YEL (Young Environment Leader) training team, selecting the YEL in schools through social events, training the YELs, providing consultation with young people and developing and establishing LA21 in cooperation with Mahallas.

The impact of the project is that youth organisations and decision-makers now include young people in a meaningful and effective way in decision making and that young people participate in a responsible way.

## Civil society

### Youth empowerment leading to improved local environments in Mahallas

"Hello, my name is Riza. I want to tell you about a project I am taking part in. I am 15 years old and go to school #244 in Tashkent. There are about 1700 pupils! When I heard about a project to get young people more involved in local environmental activities I wanted to join in. I was lucky enough to be selected as a Young Environment Leader (YEL). This was great as it gave me a lot of chances for different kinds of trainings on teamwork, education for sustainable development, communication (being a communicator and resolving conflict) and other topics of civil society.



Our job has been to find out about the environmental problems in our Mahalla. We did this through a "planning for real activity". After doing this we held a big and exciting event in our school to find out what the other pupils thought, whether they agreed with the problems we found and if they had more problems to add. Over the summer holidays we are going to try and develop plans to improve the environment.

After participating in the project I saw the real issues that need attention and I began to think differently, make decisions in different ways and act differently! It is also fun to take part in the project, we meet YELs of other mahallas and schools who live on the other side of the city and it was really exciting to work jointly. Even though we are young and yes our steps are not so big we feel we are doing something.

I would like to conclude my story and wish to all my peers to have such an opportunity. In other words I would like to see this activity expand and just expand."