
Public Service Improvement Project Study Tour on regional waste management – Terms of Reference

Background

The Public Service Improvement Project is a multi-year initiative in Kyrgyzstan, designed and funded by the Swiss Government and implemented by HELVETAS and the Development Policy Institute (DPI). The Project will help to improve living conditions in the rural areas through better access and increased quality of services. Through its interventions on improving the national system of service provision and supporting national learning and replication mechanisms, the Project aims to indirectly and positively impact the conditions in rural areas countrywide.

The main goal of the PSI phase I (2015 – 2019) was to introduce sustainable, effective, efficient, accountable and responsive management solutions in targeted municipalities that address real needs and demands of citizens and that deliver tangible service improvements.

The main thrust of PSI phase II (2019-2024) was to deepen, replicate and scale up tested models and solutions from phase I to tangibly improve public services by establishing replication models and supporting national mechanism for their dissemination and scaling up the approach countrywide.

The third phase (2024 – 2028) will focus on sustaining results and effectively utilizing already allocated resources. It will support key national partners in their development and assist LSGs during the transition and post-administrative-territorial reform (ATR), providing long-term, reliable support to municipalities beyond the project's lifecycle.

PSI III will work on achieving two outcomes that contribute to the overall goal:

Outcome 1: Sub-national duty bearers collaboratively apply and sustain the key approaches and experiences in the local service improvement and adapt service management to the ongoing reforms

Outcome 2: Key national partners and various system actors maintain sustainable and up-to-date learning mechanisms for the LSGs and improve the overall framework conditions for inclusive local public service provision

One of the interventions is to support local partners in the selected districts to organize a collaborative system of inclusive service expanding to the entire district through integrated management (all LSGs plus District Gov), resource mobilization and mechanisms of participatory planning and monitoring in solid waste management issues.

Rationale for Study Tour

During Phase II the project focused on inter-municipal cooperation to organize new or improve existing services among neighboring municipalities. It was concluded, based on the lessons learnt during this intervention, that certain local level issues must be addressed and resolved at a higher level from two or several municipalities cooperating. One such **pressing issue is proper management and functioning of the landfills.**

In 2023 Kyrgyzstan started its Administrative-Territorial Reform (ATR) that came to the full-fledged transformation of the country by cutting in half the number of municipalities from 484 to 264 by the end of 2024. It presented the new opportunity to elevate the solution of some existing drawbacks at a higher – district or regional level. Newly adopted Law on Waste calls for elaboration of the regional programs on waste management by the LSGs and local state administrations. Thus, it could be high time to try applying Project's experience in scaling up several products to create the best synergy effect at the district level (SEDPs, SIAPs, waste management programs, etc.).

According to the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ecology and Technical Supervision, prior to the implementation of the ATR, there were 415 landfills in the Kyrgyz Republic, occupying over 600 hectares of land - an average of 0.86 landfills per municipality across 484 municipalities. In April

2025, the Ministry reported a new figure of 290 landfills following the ATR, which now corresponds to an average of 1.1 landfills per municipality across 264 municipalities. Data from the National Statistical Committee show that the amount of waste increases every year. But construction of one modern and environmentally safe landfill requires initial investments in the amount from 200 to 400 million soms while the average annual budget of a rural municipality is about 30-80 million soms (after ATR). These data indicate that at present, municipalities of the Kyrgyz Republic do not have sufficient resource potential to properly organize the process of solid waste disposal in accordance with modern requirements. Therefore, there must be a different way to solve this problem through separate waste collection, recycling, reusing and creating a common and proper landfill for the whole region to ensure its efficient operation. District or regional waste management programs could envision a proper landfill for the whole region/district to cover the entire territory (ideally with the concept of “One region – one landfill”). The operation of such district landfill would contribute to effective resource management and coordination of actions among all stakeholders.

The study tour will provide the Project with the opportunity to gain first-hand experience in the development of regional waste management plans and the organization of modern landfills. Specifically, it aims to examine how countries that previously relied on a dispersed network of environmentally unsound and unsustainable disposal sites have transitioned to efficient, economically justified systems. These systems might feature decentralized waste collection and processing (e.g., sorting, recycling), while directing residual waste to centralized, environmentally compliant final disposal facilities serving wider geographic areas.

Objectives

1. To learn overall legal and institutional framework for regional waste management programs to understand differences and similarities towards service delivery approaches, to identify necessary legislation or regulatory acts in this area for Kyrgyzstan.
2. To obtain stronger political support and push by decision makers for promotion of regional waste management approach and implementation of the district plans on solid waste management through first hand learning from the specific experience in elaboration and implementation of regional programs/plans on solid waste management abroad. To get validation and demonstrate importance of such plans in place, how modern landfills should be organized and operated and why it must be done as soon as possible.
3. To study examples of organization of modern landfills from both legal point of view (how they were established, in which legal form, what kind of support of municipalities and state bodies was required, etc.) as well as operational (financial, infrastructure, etc.) to see what is replicable for Kyrgyz context in rural areas.

The Proposed Study Tour Host:

Abstract from the Host

A study tour to ... will provide the participants with a number of insights and benefits:

#	Topic	What could potentially be learned
1	Legal framework for regional waste management programs	Overview of existing framework and existing options related to inter-municipal and regional cooperation. Integration of regional solid waste management plans into the national legislative framework. Presentation and discussion with relevant experts Gain insight into existing models of intermunicipal and wider regional cooperation.

2	Solid Waste management Regional public utility company	Legal framework of a regional utility company Insights into the procedure for establishment of the company Problems encountered in the establishment process . Insights into the system's field-level functioning and any existing cooperation or operational bottlenecks.
3	Operational Format for Multi- Service public utility company	Through field visits and examinations of various models of unified public utility company providing multiple services such as drinking water, solid waste removal and others - obtain information on the financial structures of each model to identify those most applicable to the context of Kyrgyzstan.

Participants for the Study Tour

Participants will include representatives from the Presidential Administration, SACSLSG, PSI pilot district state administrations, PSI pilot municipalities, PSI staff.

Tentative Study Tour Outline (to be further refined)

Day	Activity	Objective
	Arrival to	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation presentation on system of central government local and regional governments in Responsibilities of local governments (public services). Waste management system in State policy on waste management. Circular economy. Overview of existing framework in ... and existing options related to inter-municipal and regional cooperation. Regional plans/programs on solid waste management as part of the legislation 	Participants learn about different LSG system and legal and institutional framework for public services in ... (study tour topic 1)
2	<u>Field visits to LSG with the focus on Waste management.</u> Management, municipal conditions, and control. Pricing policy and tariff setting. Company development. Seedlings of the circular economy. Cooperation with entrepreneurs, event organizers, NGOs and residents.	Study tour topic 2
3	<u>Field visits to LSG with the focus on Municipal enterprises</u> – examining how they operate, the range of services they typically provide, their economic sustainability, the overall feasibility of such enterprises, assess whether outsourcing certain services might be more effective Explore local government reforms and evaluate the role and performance of municipally owned companies in the context of transitioning toward a new management, on the way to the implementation of the new management model in life.	Study tour topic 3
	<u>Departure to Bishkek</u>	

Tentative time period

The suggested time for the study is the following week:

September- October 2025

Follow-up

Upon completion of the study tour, the PSI will offer ongoing technical support for the follow up process, assisting Phase III districts and municipalities in adapting and implementing their district waste management plans. In addition to building technical knowledge on effective waste management systems across broader territories, the study tour is expected to foster political will, institutional commitment, and a shared understanding among both operational staff and local government representatives. This will help create the necessary conditions for mobilizing investments and promoting the adoption of integrated, regionally coordinated waste management solutions tailored to the Kyrgyz context.