

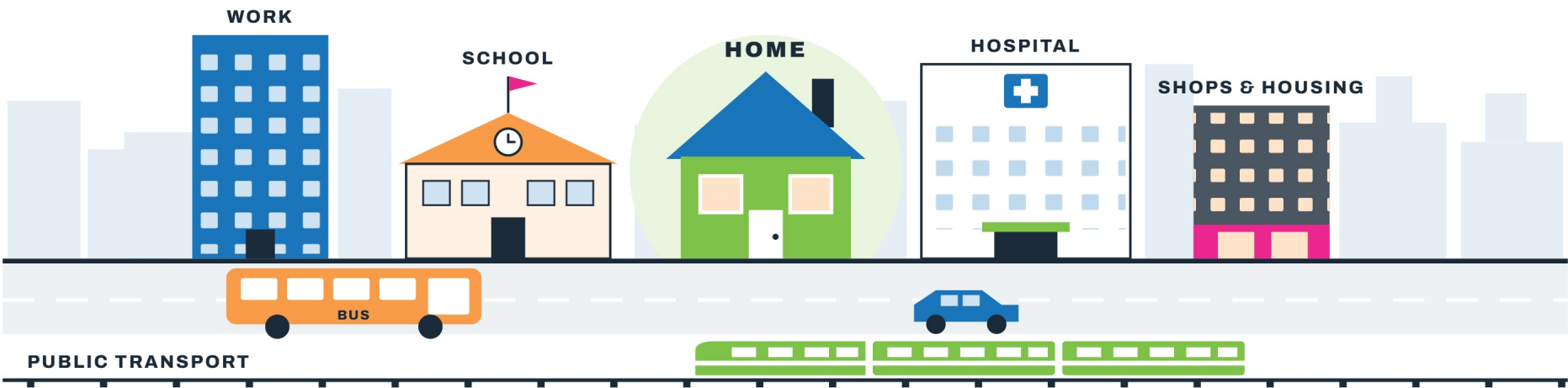
Improving Indoor Air Quality

A Public Health Issue

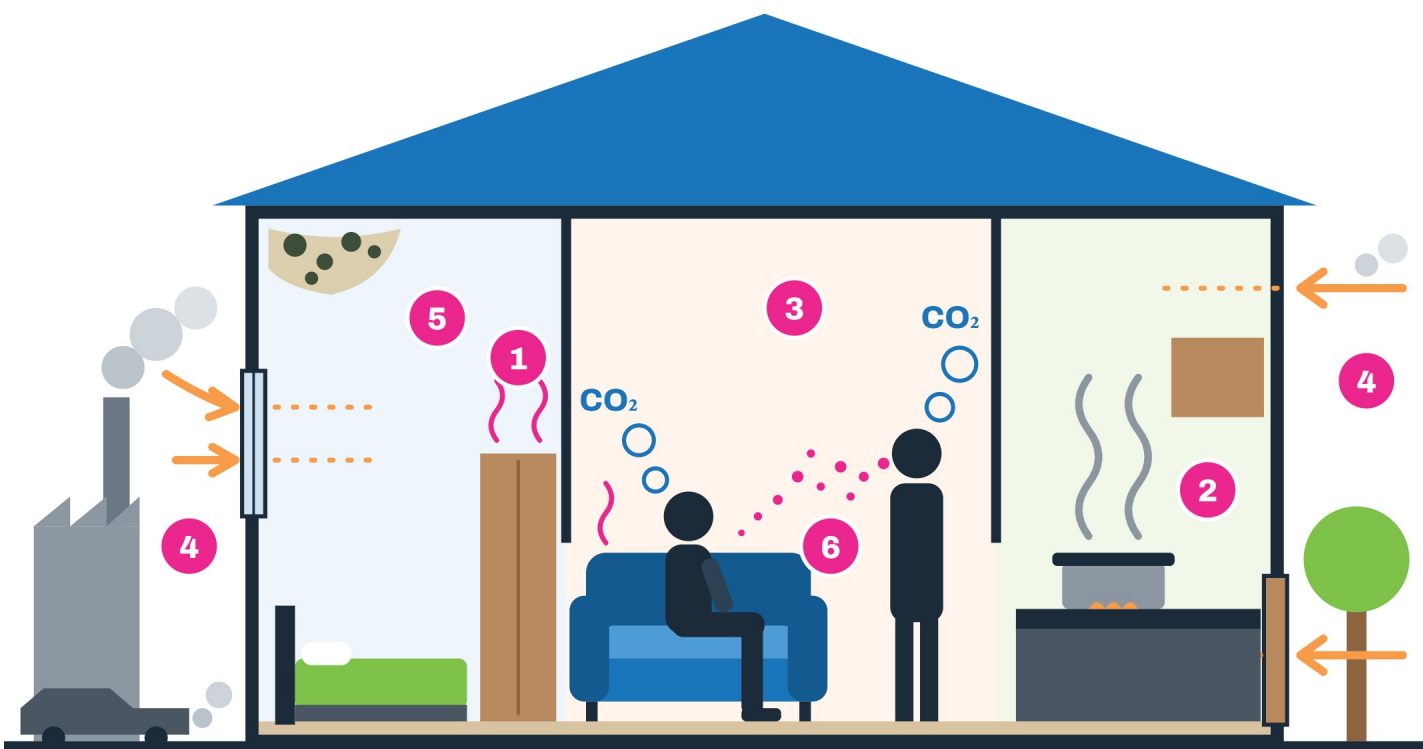


90%
of our lives are spent indoors

At home, at school, at work, in hospitals and on public transport, the air we breathe is mostly indoor air.



02 What are we breathing indoors?



- 1 **VOCs & formaldehyde** released by furniture, paints, flooring, construction materials and cleaning products.
- 2 **Cooking & combustion:** fine particles (PM2.5), NO₂ and CO from stoves, solid fuels, heaters and candles.
- 3 **CO₂ from human breathing** builds up in crowded, poorly ventilated rooms, a marker of stale air linked to poorer concentration.
- 4 **Outdoor pollutants** from traffic and industry enter through windows, ventilation and leaks in the building envelope.
- 5 **Dampness & mould** grow where moisture is trapped, triggering asthma and respiratory symptoms.
- 6 **Airborne infections:** enclosed, poorly ventilated spaces favour the transmission of respiratory diseases such as influenza, COVID-19 and tuberculosis.

03 The health toll

2.8 M

deaths in 2023 from household air pollution, mainly from cooking with solid fuels (State of Global Air 2025)

7.9 M

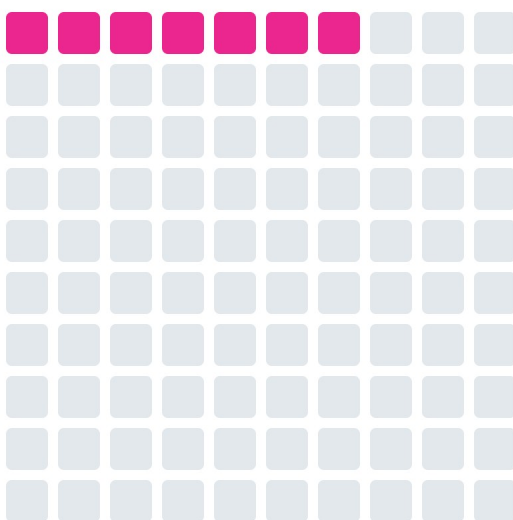
deaths in 2023 from air pollution overall; 86% from noncommunicable diseases (State of Global Air 2025)

DISEASES LINKED TO POOR INDOOR AIR

- Ischaemic heart disease
- Stroke
- COPD
- Lung cancer
- Pneumonia & lower respiratory infections
- Type 2 diabetes
- Asthma & allergies
- Airborne infectious diseases
- Reduced cognition & learning

Children are especially vulnerable: household air pollution is linked to over 500,000 deaths of children under 5 in 2021 (State of Global Air 2024). These estimates cover fuel combustion only; the full burden of poor indoor air is still unmeasured.

04 A global regulatory gap



7%

of countries include indoor air quality standards in their air quality legislation

- 49% of countries define air pollution exclusively as an outdoor threat.
- Where indoor standards exist, they are highly heterogeneous; there is **no coordinated global approach**.

UNEP, Regulating Air Quality: the first global assessment of air pollution legislation (2021), 194 States + EU.

05 Towards a World Health Assembly resolution

Placing indoor air quality on the global health agenda, so that WHO and its Member States build a coordinated response.

Member States: join as co-sponsors

April 2026

Establishment of the International **Scientific Committee** on Indoor Air Quality and Public Health

Sep – Dec 2026

Drafting of a **policy brief** by the Scientific Committee, consolidating key messages and recommendations

Jan – Oct 2027

Engagement of Permanent Missions and Ministries of Health to co-draft a **global resolution** on indoor air quality

October 2027

Submission of the **draft resolution** to the WHO Executive Board

2028 · WHA

Vote on the **adoption** of the resolution by the World Health Assembly

