



MINISTRY OF LABOR AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION MONGOLIA



NATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON GENDER EQUALITY



Japan
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MONGOLIA GENDER SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: ADVANCES, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT SINCE 2005



ULAANBAATAR
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**Government of Mongolia
National committee on Gender Equality**

Mongolia Gender Situational Analysis: Advances, Challenges and Lessons Learnt Since 2005
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FOREWORD

Mongolia has made good progress in creating a more gender sensitive legal and policy environment as well as an effective national mechanism for promoting gender equality. The Law on Promoting Gender Equality was adopted in 2011 and the Government of Mongolia is pursuing a series of tangible measures towards implementing the law in a systematic way.

It is of great significance that this situational analysis has examined and compiled the gender equality related developments in Mongolia for the last 14 years by focusing on the related changes, challenges, advances made and lessons learned – while stating the challenges that remain to be tackled.

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**THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON GENDER EQUALITY**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank	MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Size Enterprise
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women	MTS	Mid-term Strategy
CHD	Center for Health Development	NCAV	National Center Against Violence
CSO	Civil Society Organizations	NCGE	National Committee on Gender Equality
CRKh	Citizens Representatives Khural	NCGES	Secretariat of the NCGE
DV	Domestic Violence	NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
GFP	Gender Focal Point	NPGE	National Program on Gender Equality
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ)	NSO	National Statistical Office
GSS	General Secondary School	NUM	National University of Mongolia
HT	Human Trafficking	PHI	Public Health Institute
ILO	International Labor Organization	PSE	Pre-School Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund	RoK	Republic of Korea
IO	International Organizations	SDA	Swiss Development Agency
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
KOICA	Korean International Cooperation Agency	SGKh	State Great Khural (Parliament)
LLC	Limited Liability Company	SHW	Sexual Harassment at Workplace
LPGE	Law on Promotion of Gender Equality	SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	TVEC	Technical Vocational Education Center
MECSS	Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports	UB	Ulaanbaatar
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism	UFE	University of Finance and Economics
MJHA	Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs	UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
MoH	Ministry of Health	UNDP	United Nations Development Program
MONES	Mongolian Women's Fund	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MNUE	Mongolian National University of Education	UNO	United Nations Organization
MNUMS	Mongolian National University of Medical Science	USA	United States of America
		WB	World Bank
		WHO	World Health Organization

CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS

(As of May 1, 2019)

Currency unit - MNT: Mongolian Tugrugs

MNT1.00= \$0.000378547

\$ 1.00 =2641.68

NOTE

In this report, 'S' refers to US dollars

GLOSSARY

<i>Aimag</i>	- Province
<i>Bagh</i>	- Rural sub-districts
<i>Dzud</i>	- A natural disaster event in which a summer of drought is followed by a harsh winter. Dzuds are known for their devastating impact on livestock health and herder livelihoods.
<i>Ger</i>	- The traditional dwelling of Mongolians
<i>Ger district/area</i>	- Ger districts or areas refer to the communities surrounding city centers. These areas are most often the first arrival for migrants, and many end up staying even a generation after arrival. They are largely unplanned areas with limited municipal service provision.
<i>Khashaa</i>	- A private, often enclosed, plot of land on which a family's home stands.
<i>Khural</i>	- Parliament or national congress in Mongolia
<i>Soum</i>	- Secondary subdivision outside Ulaanbaatar city

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Progress since 2005: Since 2005, the legal and policy environment for promoting gender equality has evolved, significantly strengthening the national gender machinery to promote gender equality in Mongolia. This has been the product of a joint effort by the Government of Mongolia and civil society, with support from the development partner community. This joint effort was resulted in the first National Program on Gender Equality (NPGE 2002-2015) and the adoption of the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality in 2011. This work continues today with the implementation of the law, supported by the Government of Mongolia's Mid-term Strategy for 2013-2015, and the second NPGE for 2017-2021.

Initially, Mongolia's gender policymaking, as articulated in the Women in Development (WID) approach, focused on resolving the issues women faced during the transition to democracy and market-based economics. This shifted to a Gender and Development (GAD) approach, seeking to create equal development opportunities and choices for women, men and social groups. Today, the National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE) is led and chaired by the Prime Minister. Sectoral Gender Sub-councils and aimag (provincial) Gender Subcommittees with Gender Focal Points at both national and sub-national levels support the NCGE. This has greatly enhanced the national gender machinery, steadily building up the knowledge and experience in gender policy planning and implementation reflecting the needs of specific sectors and local areas.

The Law on Promotion of Gender Equality has been instrumental in mainstreaming gender into the mandates and activities of the National Human Rights Commission, the Civil Service Council and the National Statistical Office. This has greatly strengthened gender research and reporting as well as gender-disaggregated data collection. Public access to information on gender inequality and gender-based violence including domestic violence has appreciably improved. Furthermore, budget allocations for gender activities are also increasing despite the recent economic challenges facing the country.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have become a leading force in gender justice, creating awareness advocating for ending violence against women, human trafficking as well as ensuring and enhancing women's participation in the political decision-making processes.

Lessons learnt since 2005 and current challenges: Although policy and legal frameworks have improved, there remains a lack of awareness of gender inequality issues at all levels. A shortage of needed capacities, human and financial resources has undermined the ability of the NCGE Secretariat to ensure cross-sectoral coordination, resulting in cutting short the implementation of the 2002-2015 National Programme on Gender Equality. The implementation of the Environment Sector Gender Policy approved in 2013, has suffered due to weak political will, leadership and management. The benefits of the donor community's continued technical and financial support to gender research and other gender activities are yet to translate into stronger policymaking. CSOs working for gender equality still have capacity needs to ensure effective participation in national gender policy and program planning and implementation.

The improvement of Mongolia's Gender Development Index (GDI) from 0.717 in 2005 to 1.043 in 2017 is largely explained by women's average longevity and educational levels which are both higher than those of men. Despite the GDI improvement, there are pressing issues in economic, social and environmental fields that demand urgent attention.

In economic sphere: There has been inadequate capacity and resources to undertake gender analysis, gender impact assessments and to effect corrective actions at the planning stages of national, capital city and local development policies. This has resulted in a lack of progress in addressing the root causes of gender disparities. Public investment planning and budgeting has largely been focused on mineral development which contributes to deepening social inequality including gender disparities in the labor market. The universal approach to social welfare fails to improve employment opportunities for female heads of household and low-income people, and has been inadequate in addressing risky male behaviour.

Low economic diversification, a shortage of productive employment, and a poor business environment for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) limit labor market opportunities for low-income women and men in urban and rural areas. This creates conditions for the exacerbation of income disparities, and furthermore could result in the losing of an opportunity to take advantage of the demographic window¹ and in the heightened levels of societal tensions and stress including gender-based violence.

Economic challenges are having a more pronounced effect on women's employment than on men. Women's labor force participation is falling, average incomes are lower than men's with no sign of increasing. Discrimination against women of reproductive-age in recruitment and employment continues and concentration of women and men in different sectors and occupations as well as their career promotion opportunities remain the same unless urgent efforts are made for change and advancement.

Promoting work-life balance and creating healthy and safe working conditions is a key issue in male-dominated sectors, especially where men work in shifts or spend a long time away from their families. There are widespread cases where women move to soum and aimag centers to look after their small children attending school while their husbands remain behind to tend to herds. This creates heightened health and security risks for men but also places family relationships in jeopardy. Measures need to be taken to provide men with stable income generating opportunities, particularly in rural areas and in sectors with seasonal jobs such as agriculture and tourism.

In business, women remain heavily dependent on family relationships, and are concentrated mostly in small businesses. They operate in sectors most vulnerable to competition from imports, they lack access to financial services and resources, and are often deprived of the possibility of competing fairly for public contracts. These challenges are especially difficult for women in the sewing, wool and cashmere, textile, agricultural and dairy industries. Women's entrepreneurship is further hampered by their limited land and property rights. Credit and other forms of financial support as well as projects and programmes available for MSMEs are usually short in duration and on-the-job training and marketing services are limited.

Infrastructure and urban planning policies are not conducive to the lives of young families which need to combine parenting with productive employment. There is no improvement of water supply and sanitation facilities for rural households and school dormitories.

In social sphere: Although access to education and health generally shows improvement, the content and quality of education and teaching are insufficient to fight gender stereotypes, instil gender equality values and zero tolerance of gender-based violence. Health services tailored to the specific needs of men require further development. Availability of education and health services meeting the requirements of women and men, girls and boys with disabilities remains a problem issue. Population migration results in changing the gender balance in urban and rural areas as emigration is dominated by young males while internal rural to urban migration is predominantly young females seeking education.

The availability of pre-school education is insufficient and access is limited for children living in peri-urban areas, children from herder or low-income families and ethnic Kazakh children. The availability of school dormitories for the youngest school-aged cohort varies greatly across rural areas. There remain many schools with pit latrines not meeting hygiene standards. Stopping violence in schools and creating a safe school environment are tasks requiring attention and effort much greater than shown currently.

The number of boys attending middle-schools continues to decrease with each grade. Gender imbalance in tertiary education is characterized by prevalence of female students, where women are concentrating in education, health and humanitarian disciplines, men are predominantly studying in engineering and natural sciences. This distortion is caused more by private education providers rather than as a result of parental influence or young people's choices. As a result,

¹Demographic window is a period of time in a nation's demographic evolution when the proportion of population of working age group is particularly prominent

young women tend to fall victim to low quality education which fails to match labour market demand that leads to the horizontal gender disparity in employment in the years ahead. Students of technical and vocational schools are predominantly male with female students steadily decreasing in recent years. Therefore, it is critical to maintain an adequate ratio among male and female students of higher educational, technical and vocational training institutions in order to prevent women's gains in tertiary education devalued. Moreover, a lack of reskilling and up skilling opportunities for those aged 40 and older marginalizes many people, rendering them unable to compete in the labor market.

Mongolian men live shorter than women by 9.67 years as of 2018. The gap between female and male average life expectancy is typically ascribed to the risky behavior of men. This inclination tends to overlook socio-cultural, political and economic causes impacting health and wellbeing. While maternal and infant mortality rates have been steadily declining, there is a persistent need to improve the quality and delivery of services. In particular, services need to be designed for women with disabilities, minors, educational programs should be developed on child health for parents and on air and soil polluting malpractices and behaviors for the public at large. A system of services and educational programs related to sexual and reproductive health and rights is lacking especially for children and youth in remote rural areas.

The participation of women in political decision-making remains insufficient and women have neither held any of the top three political offices at the national level nor at the subnational level. In the business and civil service areas, there are many women working in middle and entry-level management. Very few have made it to the upper management. This calls for interventions to increase women's capacity alongside policy reforms that would establish more gender-sensitive electoral and political finance systems. This could include the introduction of special measures including nomination or seat reservation quotas as well as strengthening the motivation of political parties to promote women's political participation.

Eroding family stability, increasing divorce rates, proliferating tolerance of violence, a lack of protection and special care and assistance for victims of domestic abuse and the lack of support mechanisms for women-herders are issues calling for an urgent response. The content and quality of behavioural change programs legally mandated for violence perpetrators are poor. The nation is facing a challenge in implementing the measures aimed at ending sexual harassment at workplace throughout the country and putting an end to sexual slavery, the most widespread form of human trafficking, is high on the list of priority actions.

In environmental sphere: Deterioration of pastureland and water shortages have long been major challenges for the herding community. Land and pasture disputes are becoming more prominent triggered by increasingly heavy internal migration. Livestock-breeding women and men lack resources to fully reap the benefits of their growing herds and to constructively contribute to the protection of pastures and control of desertification by improving live-stockbreeding practices. Their participation in local decision-making processes is equally limited. Herders are using water for their own use and for farming from rivers and wells polluted by irresponsible mining. This will have major consequences on the health of herders and local communities. This issue should be carefully examined through the gender lens.

The uncontrolled sprawl of ger districts along the capital city's perimeter coupled with worsening living conditions, environmental degradation and air pollution are resulting in a sharp growth of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases as well as heightened pregnancy risks and higher under-five mortality rates.

Measures to be taken: This country gender situational makes short-, mid- and long-term recommendations to promote gender equality and strengthen the national gender machinery. The State Great Khural, relevant organizations in its jurisdiction, the Government, civil society organizations, multilateral and bilateral development partner organizations are urged to give particular consideration to the following important issues:

In research and analysis:

- Alongside strengthening gender disaggregated data collection in all sectors, actors should develop appropriate forms and strategies of cross-sectoral cooperation by identifying root causes of gender disparities and all related factors through research and analysis. One example would be to undertake a comprehensive study of gender disparities in education and average life expectancy in the holistic context of economic, social, cultural and living environments; and
- Build capacity for multidimensional research and analysis and establish a unified information system in order to make a contribution towards improving the National Statistical Office (NSO)'s gender-specific database.

In policy planning:

- While consistently promoting the Gender and Development approach in national, sectoral, local and organizational policy planning, analyze its effects on family relationships, and take measures to foster family integrity and stability;
- Identify economic and social measures aimed at transforming gender related perceptions and practices at the level of individuals and families. Introduce, based on equal participation of women and men, human-centered and family-friendly approaches in sectoral policies at all levels and especially in the national development strategy;
- Ensure consistency of donor-initiated gender projects and programmes and/or gender components of such interventions from their design stages with the National Programme on Gender Equality and sectoral and sub-national gender programmes; and
- Provide support towards applying gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) methodology in the policy planning and budgetary processes.

In implementation:

- Support the sectoral and sub-national gender-responsive policy and action plan implementation processes with continuous technical guidance;
- Consistently promote the dissemination and replication of good practices achieved at sectoral and subnational levels throughout the gender equality system and partnerships;
- Facilitate capacity building of all CSOs including those working to promote gender equality and empower women towards implementation of the national gender equality agenda; and
- Develop and coordinate the gender-training agenda to be integrated with the national gender-responsive policy planning content and trends.

In monitoring and evaluation:

- Develop and use indicators measuring qualitative changes in the lives of individuals and family relations to appraise the process and results of gender equality activities at the national and aimag levels; and
- Carry out monitoring evaluations by independent teams, including national and local level CSOs.

In partnerships and cooperation:

- In order to increase the value and achieve synergy of development partners' support to promote gender equality, the government will set up a mechanism and appropriate approach towards effectively utilizing partners' financial support and carry out related consultative meetings.
- Direct the activities of gender equality partnerships and foster international cooperation towards the implementation of the UN Resolution on the Improvement of Livelihoods for Rural Women and Girls initiated by Mongolia and the 2018 Ulaanbaatar Declaration; and
- Conduct studies and disseminate good practices of information-communication and advocacy actions towards eliminating gender-based stereotypes and combating gender-based violence.

OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE GENDER SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Objective

The objectives of the gender situational analysis are: (i) analyze and assess advances made and lessons learned towards promoting gender equality in Mongolia since 2005 as well as inform the national and international partners and stakeholders about critical gender issues; (ii) provide practical recommendations for advancing gender equality in the economic, social and environmental spheres through effective undertakings, cooperation and partnerships.

Methodology for data collection, analysis and synthesis

The national, sector, local and organizational-level sex-disaggregated statistical data and internationally used indicators have been validated through sources of the national statistical office. Moreover, secondary data including policy documents, reports, research analysis, assessments and media sources have been used within the areas of concern reflected in this post-2005 situational analysis report.

The sex-disaggregated data and desk review have been enriched by information provided by individual interviewees and participants of focus groups discussions conducted for development of the sector-specific, gender-responsive local development sub-programs and relevant advocacy activities within the framework of the “Gender-responsive sector and local development policies and actions” technical assistance. Over 200 persons participated in individual interviews. Findings and results of the questionnaire-based studies conducted among 30 gender focal points and 1200 producers of small-medium size enterprises (SMEs) were analyzed and used in the report.

The “Gender and Development” approach was used for analyzing the abovementioned data, information and the recommendations are directed at (i) supporting the implementation of the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality and National Program on Gender Equality; (ii) making contributions towards realization of the Sustainable Development Goals through mainstreaming gender in the policy planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of the economic, social and environmental spheres; and (iii) ensuring inter-sectoral coordination, effective cooperation and partnerships for advancing gender equality agenda.

A total of 137 professionals, specialists and gender practitioners of the public institutions, civil society and international organizations participated in 6 thematic discussions and consultations where the initial findings of the post-2005 gender situational analysis were presented



1

CHAPTER

ECONOMY AND GENDER

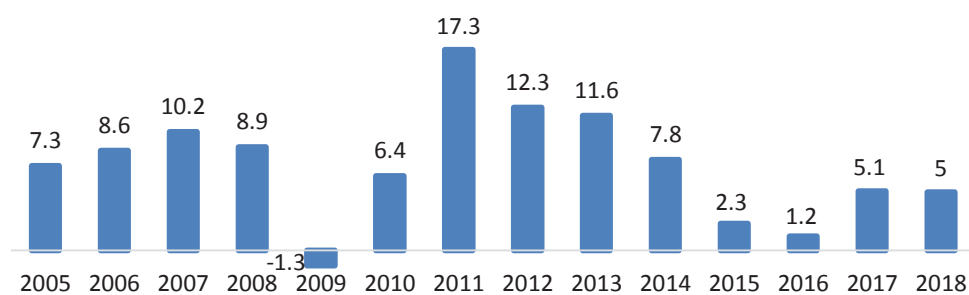
ECONOMY AND GENDER

In the 20 years that Mongolia has lived through a transition to market economy, her economy has grown 20 times² and the GDP per capita in 2016 was 8.4 times that of 2000. In 2005, the year the Asian Development Bank (ADB) undertook its Country Gender Assessment, the economic growth rate showed 7.3% (Figure 1.) and the long-term vision of a development generated by the fruits of mining was optimistic. It was in 2011, the peak year of Mongolia's economic growth, the Law on the Promotion of Gender Equality was passed, with its Article 5 defining the principle of gender equality as "men and women shall have opportunities and conditions to enjoy and to equally participate in political, economic, social, cultural, family and other relations, and to equally participate in social life and equally access the benefits of development and social wealth."

The World Economic Forum's gender gap indicator for economic participation and opportunity³ which placed Mongolia 21st in 2006 with a score of 0.704 and moved up to the 20th place in 2018 with a score of 0.780, is the only one from among four indicators for economic, education, health and political performance that has shown some progress. The country has seen overall reduction in poverty, whose rates went down from the urban 30.34% and rural 43.4% in 2003 to the corresponding 27.1% and 30.34% in 2016.

Albeit Mongolia survived the Asian economic crisis of 2008-2009 and showed a growth of 17.3% in 2011, this rate declined to 5% in 2018, owing to economic downturn and the price slump on the mineral raw materials market. Alongside the increased poverty in rural areas, the accelerated poverty rate has been observed in the capital city in recent years. And female headed households are poorer in urban areas while in rural areas the poorer ones are single father households.⁴

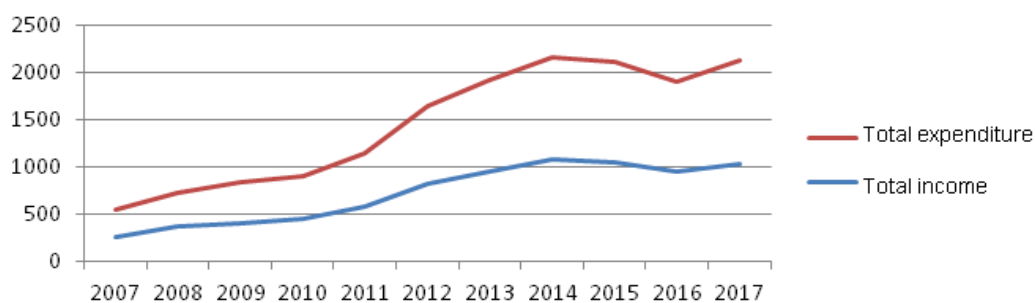
Figure 1. Economic growth rates in 2005-2018, (Annual %)



Source: NSO. 1212.mn

Although Mongolia compares more favorably with the neighboring countries as per income inequality, this persisting income gap and the increasing trend of a household average expenditure to surpass the household income (Figure 2.) indicate a steady movement of the Mongolians towards a credit-based economy. Consumption inequality is higher in urban areas.

Figure 2. Average household income and expenditure, national total

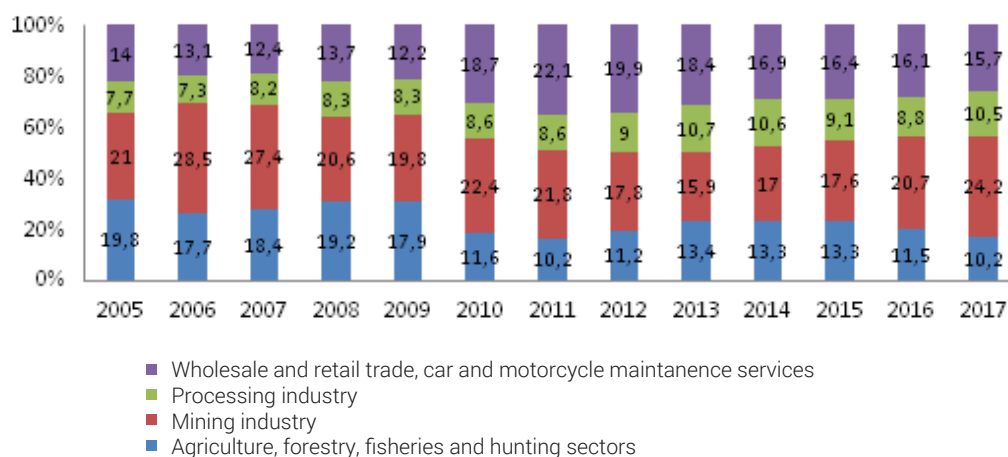


Source: NSO. 1212.mn

As of 2005, the mining, extractive industry, agriculture and the forestry, fisheries and hunting sector used to contribute equal shares in the country's economic growth while by 2017 the shares of agriculture and the forestry, fisheries and hunting sector had shrunk nearly two-fold (Figure 3). In the period since 2005, the processing industry has shown

practically no growth and the contribution of the wholesale and retail trade as well as car and motorcycle maintenance services which in the peak years was on par with the mining, has been gradually slipping down in the past 7 years.

Figure 3. Economic growth in 2005-2018, by key sectors (share of GDP)



Source: NSO. 1212.mn

This lack of progress in the development of the processing industry and the paradox of the ever increasing livestock and the diminishing economic value of agricultural produce all mean that the opportunity for individuals and households to meaningfully partake in economic development shows no improvement. This finding is further corroborated by an upward trend for the informal sector population which has grown to 219.8 thousand in 2018 from the 159.7 thousand of 2016.

Hence arises a pressing need to revisit the economic growth model and prioritize the development of sectors other than mining, which employs less than 5% of the workforce. An IMF research shows the pertinence of economic diversification to productive employment and elimination of inequalities in the access of the benefits of such employment by men, women and population groups.⁵ Increasing the opportunities and establishing clear processes for people's participation including equal participation of men and women in policy and decision-making in the economic sector are issues that still want resolution.

Among the efforts undertaken by the Government in cooperation with international partners to strengthen capacity for gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), an important place belongs to the "Gender Strategy for Organizations and Agencies under the Authority of the Minister of Finance" adopted in 2016 for a period up to 2024. The implementation of this Strategy's Objective Three aimed at introducing gender-responsive budgeting methodology in the budgetary process requires political commitment as well as engagement and support of broad partnerships for gender equality.

A Property ownership

Property ownership including ownership of land is both a concept and practice which originated in the 1990s and hence are relatively new to Mongolia with her culture of nomadic pastoralism and the experience of the socialist order. By 2005, the initial stage of privatization was coming to a close with livestock and housing having become the property of households and with state-owned enterprises turned over to the private sector. Land privatization was only commencing and private property had begun taking shape in the education and health sectors.

The 2005 Country Gender Assessment took note of the new property relations emerging between men and women as households began coming into possession of assets, and recommended that these rights needed mediation through legal and administrative structures promoting equity. Since those times the concept of private ownership of property and

⁵Romina Kazandjian, Lisa L. Kolovich, Kalpana Kochhar, Monique Newiak. 2016. *Gender Equality and Economic Diversification*. IMF Working Paper 16/140. July. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2016/12/31/Gender-Equality-and-Economic-Diversification-44091>

the relevant legal framework have seen development, including the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality which explicitly states that enterprises and organizations in the government and other sectors “shall have a duty to ensure men and women equal access on equal terms to land and other immovable and movable property, budget allocations, financial assets, credit and other economic wealth and resources”.

Furthermore, clauses 1.4 and 2.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly talk about creating equal opportunity for ownership, disposal and inheritance of land and other property and economic resources. There is an insufficient quantitative data towards assessing the implementation of the goals and some of recent studies and surveys show the pertinent discrepancies. A comparative pilot study undertaken by the ADB in Mongolia, Georgia and the Philippines in 2018, revealed male predominance in the ownership of housing with Mongolia showing the highest degree of gender gap.

As for the most important type of property ownership for Mongolian families, it is 60% of men and 33% of women who own their homes, with 55% of men and 27% of women having officially registered their ownership rights.⁶ There are 1.5 times more men than women in the urban areas and 3 times more men in the rural areas who have home ownership certificates.

This gender gap more obvious in the rural areas is to be found with regard to all other types of property. Of the survey respondents, 65% of rural men and 42.8% of women replied that they are engaged in animal husbandry while 6.4% of men and 0.6% of women said they own large-scale machinery. As for the ownership of financial assets, both urban and rural women are slightly better off than men. A study conducted by the SDC in 2015 among herding families established that 58.5% of household property was registered under men's name, 10.7% under the name of both spouses and only 8.5 % under name of wives. Livestock, winter and spring camps, motorcycles and other vehicles were owned mostly by men while property outside the local area would mostly be registered in son's name.⁷

The tendency to have men as certified owners or inheritors of land is more pronounced in the rural areas.⁸ A 2013 survey with 8,000 urban and rural respondents showed that female share in land inheritance was only 27.2%.⁹ Focus group discussions with land farmers further revealed that while men engaged in grain or potato production on large land areas, or lend their land, women mostly do vegetable gardening on smaller plots.

The gender disparities manifest in property ownership generate similar gender imbalances when it comes to business-related decision-making or access to financial resources. For example, women growing vegetables or producing dairy foodstuffs are unable to obtain bank loans for lack of assets that could be used as collaterals. Another issue calling attention is the excessively low value of the housing and house plots of rural families, which turns into a factor inhibiting economic activities of women who constitute the bulk of small and medium enterprise (SME) operators.

Relevant bodies need to take initiative in setting up robust sex-disaggregated information systems for household and company property registration and undertake gender impact assessments in order to strengthen the currently effective laws and regulations. For instance, while the Civil Code of Mongolia stipulates that assets registered after marriage are a common property of family members, the person in whose name this property is officially registered may dispose of it without the consent of other family members, which entails gender disparities if property relations are skewed in favor of one particular gender. It is a common phenomenon that women work for family businesses without formalizing their shares in those businesses, and it is a similarly common phenomenon that in the case of a divorce, the woman loses out, having no claim to any share of the business.

Gender disparities reveal themselves in property inheritance as well, and the tradition of passing land and other immovable property down to sons is still strong. For example, 72.4% of the participants in focus group discussions held under a 2014 survey, said they would give their khashaa (fenced plots of land) to their sons and only 17.6% were planning to transfer the title deeds to daughters. Such an attitude is a factor that will continue limiting women's rights to land and other important property.¹⁰ However, fathers and mothers turn out to give preference to their disabled children irrespective of the latter's gender in passing down their property. A traditional understanding that family property must be written under the name of the head of household survives to this date and the custom – especially pronounced in the rural areas – of fathers and mothers who are marrying off their sons to prepare the dwelling for the newlyweds further deepens gender disparities in property ownership.

⁶ADB. 2018. *Measuring asset ownership and entrepreneurship from a gender perspective. Methodology and Results of Pilot Surveys in Georgia, Mongolia, and the Philippines*. Manila.

⁷SDC. 2015. *Gender analysis in pastoral livestock herding in Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁸USAID 2010 in OECD. 2016. *East Asia and the Pacific SIGI Regional Report*. OECD. http://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Brochure_SIGI_EAP_web.pdf

⁹Millennium Challenge Corporation in MET and UN-REDD Programme. 2017. *Analysis of Social Inclusion and Gender Dynamic for REDD+ in Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: The UN-REDD Programme/Mongolia. http://reddplus.mn/eng/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Social-Inclusion-Final_Report_Eng.pdf

¹⁰Millennium Challenge Account Mongolia, 2014.

Strengthening Women's Land Ownership in Mongolia: A Survey of Impacts on Women's Voice, Bargaining Power and Household Well-being. Ulaanbaatar

Box 1.**Good practice in supporting gender equality in land ownership**

The Property Rights Project of the Millennium Challenge Account-Mongolia collaborated with the Agency for Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography, State Registration Department, Aimag Governors' Offices and civil society organizations to introduce a good practice of producing gender disaggregated land information and data, and organized many discussions and training activities at national and sub-national levels aimed at promoting women's land rights. As a result of the project's activities among target groups the number of women with land registration has been increased from 35% to 41% within two years period.

Source: Millennium Challenge Account-Mongolia. Mongolia compact gender summary report: Best practices and lessons learned, 2013

The issue of property ownership is raised and analysed with regard to the rights of adult female and male family members whereas interests of the children of the family are hardly ever discussed in this context. Child property rights which become as topical as those of women especially in divorce cases and inheritance rights of orphaned children call for close attention and careful consideration alongside the need to assess the existing legislation through the gender lens.

Apart from the pressing issue of gender disparities in the family property ownership system, recent developments have been pointing at the negative gender impacts brought about by the changes at the macro level. A clear example of such a chain reaction is provided by the education sector where private ownership has gained ground and training in less capital-intensive professions prevailed amidst the declining standards of teaching, with all of this resulting in a steep increase in the supply of people mostly women with tertiary education that mismatched the market demand in terms of both quality and qualification. In 2005 there were 49 public and 125 private universities and colleges. Although a reform policy undertaken in the education sector has brought the total number of these establishments down to 50 public and 88 private schools, the size and the gender set-up of the student body has seen no radical change. Availing itself of the Mongols' traditional reverence for knowledge and learning, the education business not only inflicts economic harm especially on herder and low-income families but also has become a factor leading to an increase in rural-to-urban migration and to the loss of gender balance in the herder population.

Disputes over ownership and use of land take place not only among and between herders but are also increasingly gaining ground among crop growers and herders particularly in the land-farming Khovd, Selenge, Khentii and Tuv aimags, and in the mining regions, between mainstream and artisanal miners on the one hand, and local residents, on the other, with the smaller families of the elderly people and female heads of household being most vulnerable to these conflicts.

B Employment

Mongolia's Law on Promotion of Gender Equality provides for non-discrimination and equal rights of men and women in the labor market in its Article 11 on the guarantees of equal employment and labour rights. Nonetheless, gender segregation remains a fixed feature of the employment situation.

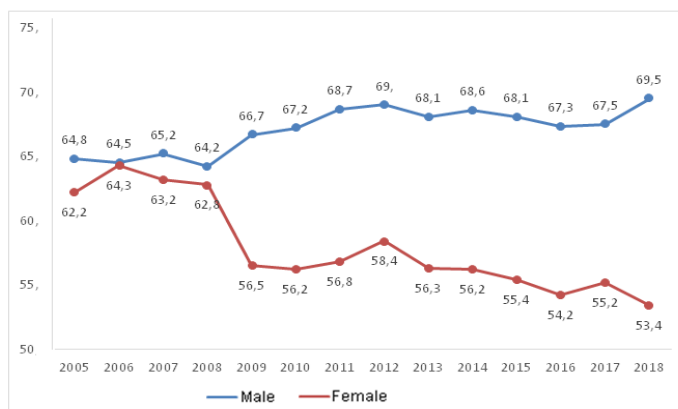
Female and male employment. High levels of women's participation in labor force are increasingly found to be in a positive relationship with a country's economic growth and per capita income¹¹ and as academics infer, the world's total GDP could swell its current size by 26% in 2025 if equal gender participation in workforce is supported across economic sectors.¹² According to ILO estimates¹³, this growth would amount to USD 5.8 trillion worldwide, with East Asia alone accounting for 1 trillion. Meanwhile Mongolia's statistics show that women's labor force participation has been declining since 2006 to fall from 64.8% to 53.4% in 2018¹⁴. This indicates that the economic crisis has had a greater impact on women's employment (Figure 4) particularly, women's workforce participation have been affected in the urban areas, namely in the capital city (44.8%) as compared with that of rural women (60.5%) in 2018.

¹¹Christian Gonzales, Sonali Jain-Chandra, Kalpana Kochhar and Monique Newiak. 2015. *Fair Play: More Equal Laws Boost Female Labor Force Participation*. IMF Working Paper. February.

¹²Jonathan Woetzel. 2015. *The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality can add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth*. McKinsey & Company. https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/esswpaper/id_3a7570.htm

¹³ILO. 2017. *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017*. Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/trends-for-women2017/WCMS_557245/lang-en/index.htm

¹⁴Bock, F. 2015. *Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene in Mongolia: An Institutional Analysis*. Ulaanbaatar: Action Contre La Faim

Figure 4. Labour force participation 2005-2018, by gender

Source: NSO. 1212.mn

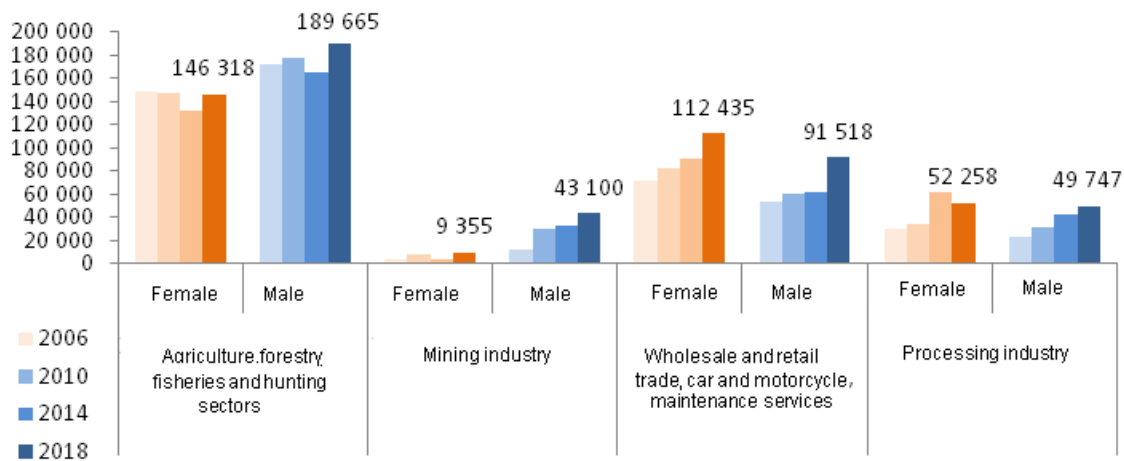
Source: NSO. 1212.mn

While workforce participation of women and men aged 15 and above has grown by 27% since 2005, women's participation suffered a steep 9% drop in 2008 and 2009 (Figure 5). The number of men in salaried employment saw a steady, if somewhat incremental increase over the past 13 years.

Figure 5. Total employed population aged 15 and above in 2005-2018, by gender

Source: NSO. 1212.mn

A look at the workforce in the four sectors that provide the largest inputs in the economy reveal that in the period of 2005-2018, the number of men in salaried employment in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and hunting, mining and other extractive industries as well as wholesale and retail trade has been on the rise while that of women has shown increase mainly in wholesale and retail trade (Figure 6). This indicates that the horizontal gender segregation in the labor market could be expected to further continue with a trend towards expansion.

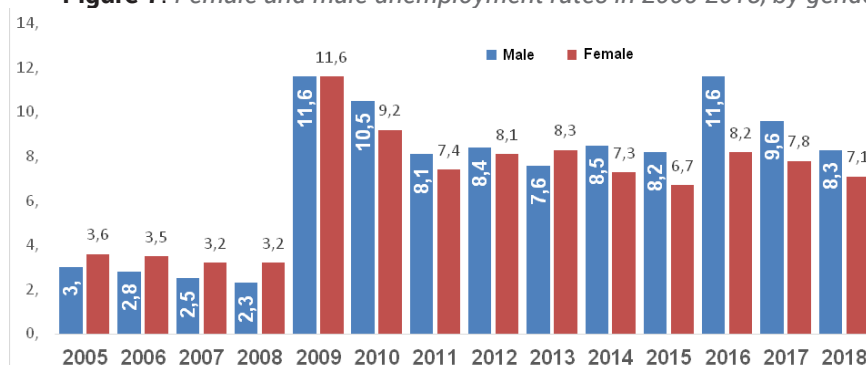
Figure 6. Number of employees engaged in 4 leading economic sectors in 2006-2018, by gender

Source: NSO. 1212.mn

According to the World Economic Forum assessment, as of 2018, women prevail among professional and technical workers with a ratio of 1.82. With regard to managerial posts, women have made some progress and account for 38.9% as against the 35% in 2005. But the fact that they still make up a minority group among executives in the traditionally female-dominated fields such as education and health, testifies to the persisting vertical gender segregation in the labour market.

In 2006, a State Policy on Informal Employment in Mongolia was approved and a decision was made to start producing informal employment statistics. Thus, of those who have joined the informal economy in the past 2 years, 43.6 thousand are men and 19.7 thousand are women, with men currently prevailing in this sector at a male-to-female ratio of 1.6:1. Men have moved mostly into construction, wholesale and retail trade, car and motorcycle repair and maintenance services, freight forwarding, and arts, entertainment and recreation industry while women have joined the informal processing industry. However, women still are concentrated in the wholesale and retail trade sector. Occupational gender segregation manifests itself in Ulaanbaatar and across all other regions of the country.

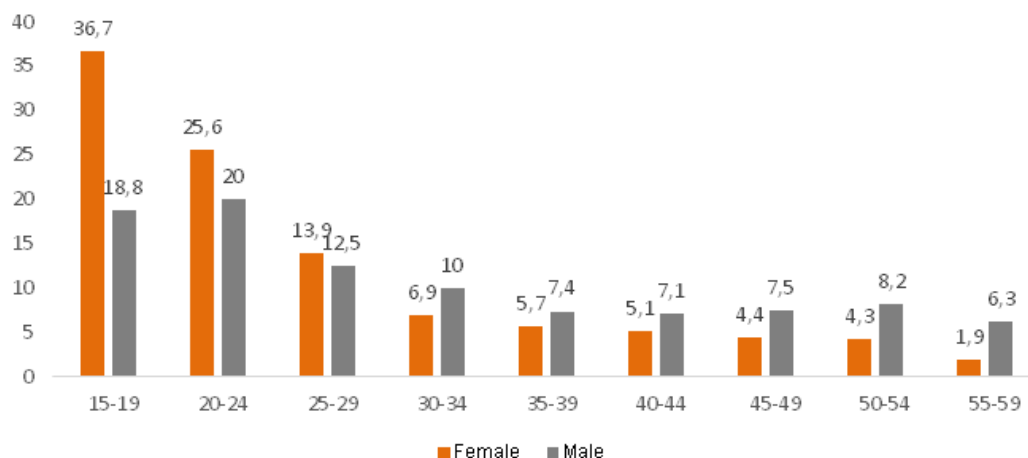
Unemployment. In the period of the 2008-2009 economic crisis, unemployment reached its peak, without, however, a noticeable male-to-female variance, while in 2016 unemployment among men showed higher rates than among women. The number of women actively seeking to work has been larger than that of men but with this gender gap is closing owing to the increase of male unemployment during the past 3 years (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Female and male unemployment rates in 2005-2018, by gender

Source: NSO. 1212.mn

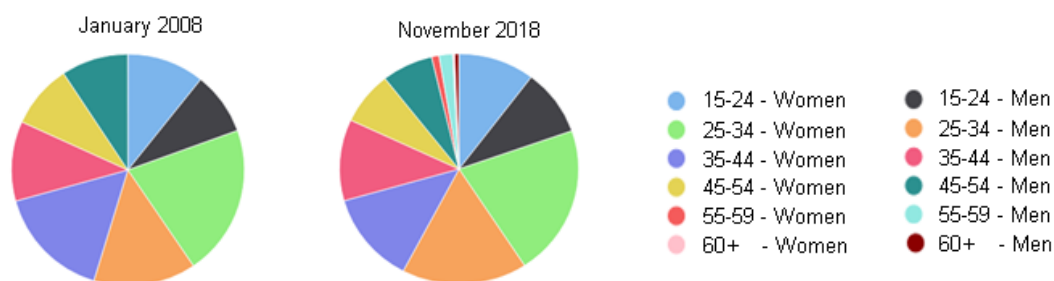
If unemployment in the developing world is typically found more among the less educated or uneducated populations, in our country the tendency is contrary, with educated people being more affected by joblessness¹⁵. As of 2018, of the 104.1 thousand unemployed persons 22.3% is a younger population in the 15-24 age group where women make up the majority (Figure 8). The picture changes for the population aged 34 and above, with women constituting the minority of the unemployed.

¹⁵NSO. 2018. Labour Force Survey, Quarter IV of 2018. Ulaanbaatar

Figure 8. Unemployment rates in 2017, by age group and gender

Source: Labour Force Survey, Quarter IV of 2018

Statistics show that unemployment among young women is to be primarily attributed to childbirth and child care, following which they again join workforce at approximately 35 years of age (Figure 9). The number of women who become economically inactive owing to the need to take care of their children, grew 1.8 fold in the period of 2012-2016 which coincides with a sharp increase in birth rates since 2005. However, the limited availability of child care services leaves no other choice for young women except as to look after their children up to and often beyond the early school age, which results in a widespread phenomenon of prolonged female career disruptions. This calls for a heightened attention to the issues of improving social protection for young women engaged in child care and creating opportunities for them to catch up at work after the rather long breaks.

Figure 9. Labour force by age and gender in 2008 and 2018

Source: NSO. Labour Force Survey. 2008, 2018

Another factor adversely impacting employment opportunities for women of reproductive age is the attitude of employers who view maternity as an operational setback and an economic burden for the company. The main reason for such a mind-set is the legal obligation of employers to pay social insurance contributions for maternity and child care leaves of their female employees.

Box 2.**Employment issues of women of reproductive age**

It has been established that a bank had written in its Internal Policies and Procedures and was actually implementing a provision saying "...to carefully assess the family planning intentions of a newly recruited female worker who will have no right to maternity leave in the 2 years immediately following her recruitment and shall bear a duty to voluntarily initiate the cancellation of her labour contract in the case of a breach of this provision..." (from the interview with officer G of the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions/CMTU)

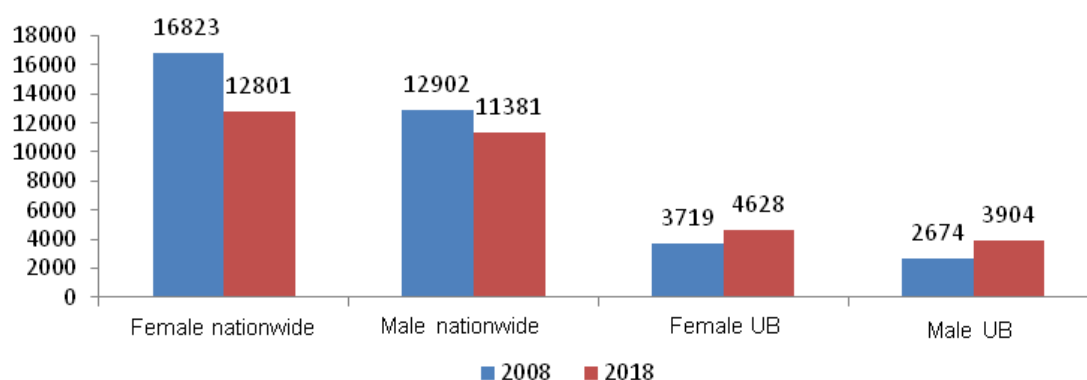
Source: Situation of Human Rights and Freedoms in Mongolia, NHRCM, 13th Annual Report. 2014

Although the Labour Code of Mongolia sets forth that an employer shall retain for 3 years the workplace of a woman on maternity leave, there are cases when this period of time is clipped to only 6 months. It also happens many a time when women are asked about their marital status or reproductive intentions during job interviews. Thus, respondent employers of a 2014 study claimed that they never asked newly employed workers about their reproductive rights while 41% of the respondent employees said that “employers asked whether I was married or pregnant”¹⁶. Furthermore, the requirements for an applicant’s physical appearance spelled out in vacancy notices addressed to young females, and discrimination of low paid unskilled males aged 40 and above by employers who prefer younger males or foreign migrant labor¹⁷ also contribute to the persisting unemployment. The female discussants who participated in the World Bank’s 2018 survey, said employers refused to employ women in their 40s as sales women or shop assistants because they “look too old”, and job advertisements mostly seek people between the ages of 20 and 32. The discussants noted that employers tend to judge people by their outward looks and appearance and such an attitude tells harder on women¹⁸. Furthermore, recent years have seen discrimination based on place of residence and dwellers of the outlying ger districts are increasingly heard complaining about downtown organizations and companies unwilling to employ them.

The unemployment rate for men older than 50 years of age is high but any further analysis is hampered by the lack of data on the age-specific causes of unemployment. In the period since the start of transition to the market economy, there have been no adequate policies and programmes aimed at facilitating people older than 40 including the retired population to acquire new skills fitting their age and physical capacity, and supporting their re-oriented employment. The benefits of a senior citizens employment programme run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection are being accessed by a small number of retirees with tertiary education. Meanwhile, a focus group interview conducted in Tuv aimag reveals that retired women invest a good deal of time and effort in care activities. In the context of a sharp shortage of child care facilities, an innovative measure of providing retired women with variable costs would be beneficial in terms of easing the pressure on the pre-school education system as well as lifting women-pensioners out of poverty.

A picture of the geographical spread of unemployment shows that joblessness has increased in the capital city and declined in the rural areas over the past 10 years. The downward trend in the number of the registered unemployed in both Ulaanbaatar and rural areas (Figure 10) is likely to be attributed not to the decrease in the unemployment rates but rather to the fact that the migration to Ulaanbaatar results in the inability of the migrant women and men to re-register themselves in the city.

Figure 10. Number of the registered unemployed in 2008 and 2018, by gender



Source: NSO. 1212.mn

However, there isn’t sufficient data on the geography of female and male unemployment and regional variations may very well be expected if one is to draw an overall unemployment picture encompassing the country. For example, a study undertaken in 2014, showed higher levels of unemployment at soum centres of Uvs aimag¹⁹ while in Bayankhongor aimag the largest number of the registered unemployed standing at 89.5% was found at the aimag center²⁰. Focus group discussions indicated that there were more chances for women to find general services jobs at public and private sector companies while there was little or no jobs for men. On the other hand, men appeared to be missing their chances to avail themselves of the employment opportunities emerging anew in the rural areas.

¹⁶ WNHRCM. 2014. *Situation of Human Rights and Freedoms in Mongolia, 13th Annual Report*. Ulaanbaatar.

¹⁷ Singh, G. 2017. *Urban Poverty in Ulaanbaatar: Understanding the Dimensions and Addressing the Challenges*. Washington, D.C.

¹⁸ World Bank. 2018. *Perceptions of Precariousness: A Qualitative Study of Constraints Underlying Gender Disparities in Mongolia's Labor Market*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mongolia/publication/perceptions-of-precariousness-a-qualitative-study-of-constraints-underlying-gender-disparities-in-mongolia-labor-market>

¹⁹ Governor's Office of Uvs aimag. Statistical Division. 2014. *Uvs aimag employment report*. Ulaangom.

²⁰ Governor's Office of Bayankhongor aimag. Statistical Division. 2014. *Employment in Bayankhongor aimag*. Bayankhongor.

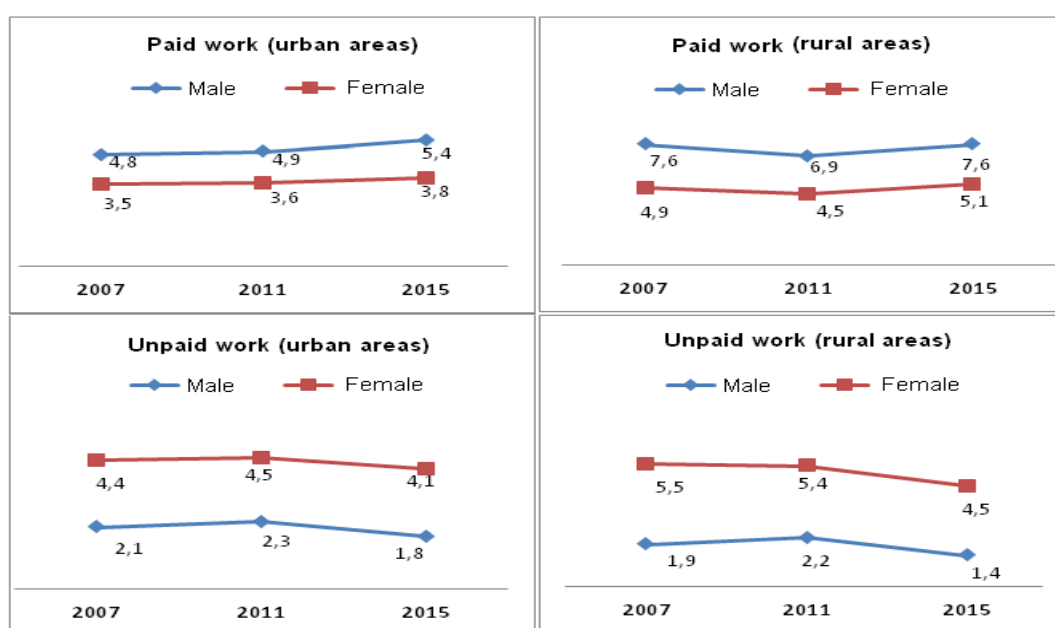
Box 3.**Issues of male employment at sub-national level**

The wool washing factories being built at the local level are creating new jobs. But attracting men to work remains a problem hardest to tackle. They would ask about wages and then keep on playing billiards, jobless as they are. With each passing year there are fewer and fewer men among our workers. If they get the jobs, they wouldn't stay for long. About 1,000 of them got in and out of a wool carding factory in just a half year.

Source: An interview by a local wool washing factory director

An important tool for gender analysis of social and economic policies and programmes is the time use survey which Mongolia's National Statistical Office started implementing every four years since 2007 and produced reports in 2007, 2011 and 2015, providing critical information on women's and men's use of time for different activities and the changes occurring in the established patterns. These reports confirm that in the past eight years, time spent by Mongolian women and men on paid work has increased while the time they use on unpaid work is showing a tendency to decrease. In this 8-year period, time spent on unpaid work such as household chores, care of family members and help to others has decreased by 0.3 hour for urban women and men alike, by 0.5 hour for rural men and by 1 hour for rural women. This dynamic warrants further detailed research since it may indicate both the positive effects which a wider use of electrical appliances has on family members' workload distribution, and the consequences which the dwindling practice of processing livestock raw materials is having in rural areas.

Figure 11. Average time spent per working day on paid and unpaid work, by gender and urban and rural settings in 2007, 2011 and 2015

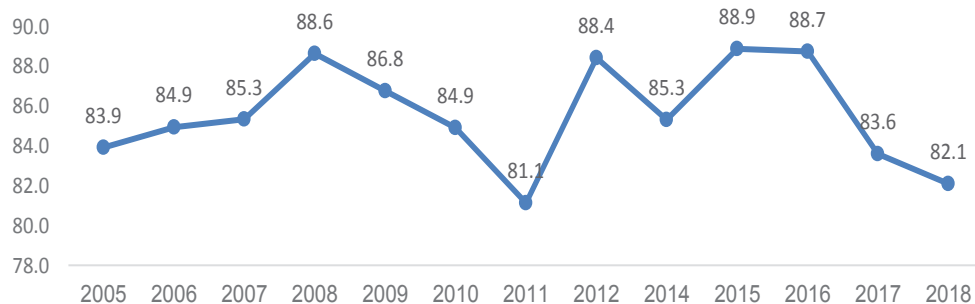


Source: NSO. Time Use Survey Report, 2009,2012, 2016

Wages. Mongolia ratified the ILO's Equal Remuneration Convention (C100) in 1969, and has stipulated in her Labour Code that men and women get equal pay for equal work (49.2). A provision to the same effect is found also in the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality. The ILO recommendation for Mongolia is to fully align these provisions with the Convention principle of equal remuneration of men and women for work that may be of different nature but nevertheless of equal value²¹.

The average monthly salary in Mongolia which stood at USD 83.9 in 2005, increased to USD 379.3 in 2018 with the average monthly pays for women having remained lower than that of men throughout the period. Women's average monthly salary equalled 82.1% of men's average monthly earning in 2018 thus being higher than the world average (72%) (Footnote 3) but lower as compared with the 2005 indicator (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Percentage of women's average salary against men's average salary, 2005-2018



Source: NSO. 1212.mn

In the said period, salary increases took place primarily in the male-dominated mining sector while in recent 3 years a strong upward tendency is observed with regard to the earnings in the processing industry. In 2016-2017, salaries in professional, science and technology sectors increased by 23.9% whereas in the female-dominated education sector the earnings showed the least increase of only 1.1%²². Women earn on average less than men in all sectors except female administrative and executive staff in the mining sector, or highly skilled professionals in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and hunting fields such as industrial and other machine operators as well as women employed with international organizations²³. The biggest pay gaps are observed in the sectors of information technology at 86 % as well as at 78% in finance and insurance (Footnote 13). When measured by the company size, the gender pay gap is at its largest at enterprises with 200 and more workers whereas the smallest difference is found at companies employing 10 to 49 people. In Ulaanbaatar, the gender pay gap is most significant in companies with more than 100 workers where women's earnings make up 77.2% of men's average salaries (footnote 22).

Regular, on-time payment of salaries, especially in the private sector, constitutes an issue of no lesser importance than the size of earnings. For instance, as obviated by focus group interviews involving construction employers and seasonal male construction workers from ger areas, building construction companies are unable to pay out salaries of their workers on a regular basis owing to the financing schedules on the one hand, and sales volumes, on the other. Because of such irregularity of incomes, households are drawn into the vicious circle of borrowing for consumption which entails intensified family disputes and serious stresses for family breadwinners, with single male and female heads of household coming under the hardest pressure.

There is a need to have a close look through the gender lens at seasonal works in land farming and construction sector which make up significant labour markets in Mongolia, as well as the tourism sector that is aspiring to become an important part of the economy. For instance, winter is a season in building construction when men have no great difficulty finding other jobs within the sector while for women it is time to lose their jobs. The challenge is to secure stable incomes for people in order to bring about a sustainable development of tourism and give the opportunity to the local population to enjoy its benefits.

Box 3.

Seasonal works and migration

I came from Khatgal soum of Khuvsgul aimag. My land is beautiful but one can't find work there, so here I am, driving a taxi in Ulaanbaatar. The number of tourist camps has been increasing in recent times, providing more jobs. But those are the only jobs to be found. The tourist camps only operate 2-3 months in a year. The air in Ulaanbaatar is so polluted, it's difficult to live here but there was no other way except for coming here.

Source: An interview by a young man self-employed as a taxi driver

²¹ ILO. 2014. *Application of International Labour Standards 2014 (I)*. Report III (part 1A). Reports Convention 103rd Session App of International Standards 2014-103-1A. Geneva: ILO. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-ed_norm/-relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_235054.pdf

²² NSO. 2018. *Average salaries of workers of economic entities and organizations -2017*. Ulaanbaatar.

²³ Bradley, O. 2017. *Education in Mongolia*. The Blog. The Borden Project, October. www.bordenproject.org/education-in-mongolia/

Retirement pension: Retirement pension is the direct benefit of employment and oftentimes is the sole source of livelihood for elderly women and men. Women's early retirement and the size of their pensions are becoming the causes of poverty for women in their old age²⁴. The "glass ceiling" that prevents women from advancing in their careers is also a factor influencing the sizes of their pensions. According to the 2015 data, women's average pensions were 18.6% lower than men's²⁵. The inadequacy of a woman's old-age pension can be matched only by the miniscule size of a social benefit she may receive on the loss of her breadwinner²⁶. The 2018 figures showed that in the total retirement age population male retirees accounted for 29% and women for 71%²⁷, which produces an impression that women get to be paid more benefits as they receive their pensions for longer periods of time than men. But one should seriously heed the fact that many of these retired women still continue as main caretakers and, moreover, as breadwinners of their families.

A comparative study of women's and men's pensions in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and Mongolia revealed that Mongolia has a relatively smallest gap in pension sizes and the widest coverage of all. However, the study made a note that a failure to apply indexation to pensions for a long period of time has been putting women at a greater risk in times of inflation, and made a recommendation to consider increasing the size of the breadwinner loss benefit for formally unemployed women²⁸.

Amendments introduced in 2018 in the Law on Pensions and Benefits Provided by the Social Insurance Fund, now allow women and men to work until they reach 65 years of age while giving 60-year-old men and 55-year-old women who have paid their pension contributions for not less than 20 years an opportunity to choose by will to have their pensions determined for withdrawal. This reform is expected to have a beneficial effect on the employment and incomes of older people, among them women. Nevertheless, there is a pressing need to address the issue of women taking early retirement not of their own choice but under the pressure of the employers.

Working environment. Working conditions that are tailored to the differing needs of women and men and support the right balance between work and life are not only beneficial in terms of labour productivity but also serve the best interests of the family and society at large. Meanwhile, job insecurity and unavailability of health and social insurance coverages are widespread phenomena in the private sector. Working hours are commonly regarded as insufficiently flexible for women²⁹ and, what's more, a study undertaken in 2010³⁰ established that in public organizations, the number of women having worked overtime was 2.6 times that of men. While attributable to women's employment mainly as administrative staff, this situation is also demonstrative of the uneven workload distribution and of an unwritten rule to give more to do to those who perform.

However, industrial workers in urban areas consist mostly of male labourers prevail among those working more than 60 hours a week on average³¹. The disrupted work-and-life balance is equally detrimental to both women and men but the consequences of such an imbalance affect them differently. Thus, women are burdened with still more work to deal with because of the shortened time for household chores while men lose the opportunity to meaningfully participate in family life. In recent years, the shift work and work away from home for certain periods of time have come to take their toll not only on men's health but also on family relationships.

The number of women employed in mining, construction and transport sectors is not showing any noticeable increase, which is readily explained by a stereotype that these are solely male domains and by the employers' preferences for men workers. However, another veritable explanation is that these sectors are yet to put in place restrooms, lockers and other basic facilities and conditions tailored to suit women's needs³². Lack of employee labour safety and social protection policies in 60% of the companies³³ is one of the root causes of the above situation.

Building construction which is traditionally regarded as a "men's sector", provides an example of how women's working conditions are neglected in a male-dominated environment. In fact, women account for 40 percent of the sector's labour force and team up mostly to do the interior finishing work. These teams almost entirely composed of women do conclude agreements with general contractor companies but, as related by female builders participating in focus group discussions, often are unable to obtain their remuneration in full.

²⁴ Suren, U. 2014. *Gender equality and decent work priority and capacity review of ILO constituents and gender and human rights organizations in Mongolia*. ILO Consultant Report. Ulaanbaatar.

²⁵ MLSP. 2017. *The Law on Promotion of Gender Equality, National Program on Gender Equality and its Action Plan (2017-2021)*. Ulaanbaatar.

²⁶ O'Keefe, P.B. and A. Chłoń-Domińczak. 2016. *The "gender pension-gap" in the aging societies of East Asia: a policy note from the East Asia and Pacific umbrella facility for gender equality*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

²⁷ NSO. 2018. *A study of selective socioeconomic characteristics of the older population*. Ulaanbaatar.

²⁸ EAP Gender. 2018. *The Gender Pension Gap in the Aging Societies of East Asia*. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/26422>.

²⁹ Achim Schmillen, Nina Weimann-Sandig. 2018. *Perceptions of Precariousness: A Qualitative Study of Constraints Underlying Gender Disparities in Mongolia's Labor Market*. World Bank, Washington D.C.

³⁰ NSO, MSWL, ILO. 2010. *Pilot Study of Wage Structures*. Ulaanbaatar.

³¹ General Authority for State Registration and Statistics. 2016. *Labour Market Basic Characteristics*. Ulaanbaatar.

³² MoH and WHO. 2017. *Mongolia-WHO Cooperation Strategy 2017-2021*. World Health Organization. Ulaanbaatar.

³³ Financial Regulatory Commission, National Corporate Governance Council. 2015. *Mongolia National Report on Corporate Governance*. Ulaanbaatar.

Box 4.**Women's employment in the construction sector**

I am a plumbing and ventilation engineer and my working life started in an army construction unit. I have calculated that in the 33 years spent on the job I have hammered some 27,000 kilometres of those thin metal sheets. This is something only I would know. My work takes me roaming the countryside as if I am some kind of a tourist. I go here and there like a gazelle unattached to a place. Have done ditch digging, crawling under the snow, and assembled, all alone in the shaft, the bits and pieces of water well installations. They think women do the light jobs but in truth, women take on many of the works indoors and outdoors alike.

Source: An interview by a female engineer, leader of an interior finishing team

Apart from being family friendly and well suited to the different needs of women and men, a gender sensitive working environment requires an organizational culture that is free from harassment, open, tolerant and respectful of diversity. Many people view their workplaces as overly outdated or too conservative, awkwardly cumbersome and even hostage to the norms and standards of the past command economy system. Managers fearing and mistrusting their employers are not a rare phenomenon (Footnote 29). The findings of a 2017 survey conducted in the trade and services sector and the wool and cashmere industry show that women in terms of gender, young people in the 18-30 age group and people with disabilities were the ones most exposed to workplace harassment³⁴.

Currently work is being done as part of the plan of activities for the National Programme on Gender Equality (NPGE) to develop and put into practice "the guidelines on gender-inclusive workplace designed for private sector entities" and the gender criteria for the identification of lead companies by the Mongolian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Young men under 30 years of age already make up the bulk of Mongolians working in foreign countries and this situation coupled with the interest of the counterpart countries that have been partnering Mongolia in recent years to contract labour, in attracting and employing male workforce pose a clear danger of not only deepening gender disparities in the country's labour market but also precariously tipping the gender balance in the population of reproductive age and aggravating family relationships.

Gender-specific changes fraught with negative consequences are also taking shape in the traditional way of life of the herding community. The primary school enrolment at age of 6 years was introduced in 2007 that have resulted in a situation spreading far and wide in the rural areas where many herder family mothers are moving to aimag and soum centres for the sake of their children's education with husbands left behind alone to tend to the livestock. Changes have been made lately to provide herder families with a choice to send their children to school either at 6, 7 or 8 years of age depending on the family circumstances. What effect this might have on the already transformed lifestyles of the families which have sent their kids to school and on the choices of the herders remains to be seen.

Sectoral gender strategies structure the task of improving people's working conditions and making workplace gender-sensitive as a separate goal. In this context, the private sector-dominated construction and urban development sector, for example, specifies in its gender-responsive policy that introduction and use of human centered and socially responsible management practices and standards are a way to achieve this goal of creating the gender-sensitive workplace (Figure 13).

³⁴NHRCM study, 2017. *Some aspects of the right to work at small and medium enterprises: trade and services sector and wool and cashmere industry.* Ulaanbaatar

Figure 13. *The Construction and Urban Development Sector Gender-Responsive Policy Development Cycle*

Source: *The construction and urban development sector gender-responsive policy (2018-2025)*

Achievement of gender equality in employment is well expounded in the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality and the accompanying Government mid-term strategy but awareness of these provisions is still lacking in both public and private sector organizations. While awareness and also understanding are well developed among employers and employees, there is a need to strengthen the monitoring function of the Labor Code and the Law on Social Security by ensuring their consistency with the LPGE. Its principles have been tabled as amendments to the new revision of the Labor Code currently under discussion

C Entrepreneurship

The variety and quality of Mongolia's domestically manufactured products are steadily improving and the number of business entities is on the rise. Small and medium enterprises (SME) are the ones that attract most attention from the gender point of view. SMEs account for 98% of all economic entities and 25% of GDP, employ half of the workforce and are concentrated in services (34%), trade (37%) and manufacturing (21%)³⁵. Men are predominant in large-scale business operations while women are owners of 64% of SMEs³⁶. Enterprises that meet at least one of the following criteria are defined by the IMF as women-owned businesses. These criteria are: first, women own at least half of the business; second, women make up at least 60% of the senior management; and three, at least 50% of employment contract-holders are women³⁷. XacBank which is pioneering a soft loan approach with regard to businesses with high female participation, uses its own special criteria by singling out businesses where 51% and more is owned by women, a woman-director is one the management team and at least 30% of votes in decision-making belongs to women.

Micro-businesses comprise 80% of all SMEs and more than half of SMEs are found in the capital city. A small share of them, no more than 15%, are working in agriculture and processing industry. About 50% of SMEs have taken bank loans and only 13% have done so for capital investment purposes³⁸. The important role of SMEs in economic growth,

³⁵ NSO, 2017. *Analysis of changes in the number and structure of economic entities and organizations*. Ulaanbaatar.

³⁶ OPIC, 2017. "OPIC, IFC, and XacBank Supporting Women-owned Businesses in Mongolia." Opic Media. June. <https://www.opic.gov/press-releases/2017/opic-ifc-and-xacbank-supporting-women-owned-businesses-mongolia>

³⁷ ADB, 2014. *Gender Toolkit for Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprise Finance and Development*. Manila.

³⁸ Human Development Research and Training Centre/CSO, 2018. *Evaluation of Mongolia's development financing: Diversification of sustainable development financing*. Ulaanbaatar.

employment generation and poverty reduction is supported by many research findings. Thus, a study done in 2004 demonstrates that 1 dollar invested in an SME yields an economic return of as much as 10 to 12 dollars³⁹. As for sole proprietorship businesses, the share of women there increased from 31% in 2005 to 67% in 2018. Women make up 30.8% among all employers as of today. Women's share among livestock-breeders has been declined since 2012 and they represented 42.8% of herders in 2018. In general, business environment in Mongolia is not showing much of tangible progress, which is evinced by the score of 3.1 points on the scale of 7 points in the Mongolia Business Environment Study undertaken in 2017. A closer look would show that Ulaanbaatar and western region have the least favourable conditions for businesses⁴⁰. High taxes, long hours spent to get banking services, expensive rent, lack of skilled workforce, limited financing opportunities and unfavourable loan terms are cited by the IMF as the most typical problems faced by SMEs⁴¹. Because of weak regulation and inadequate governance, banks heavily collateralize their credits and interest rates set by private sector banks and financial institutions are forbiddingly high⁴². Furthermore, findings from the latest research and analyses of challenges facing women in entrepreneurial activities mention limitations in managerial skills and experience, in their access to information and networking, unavailability of time as well as social and cultural norms that create obstacles for women in assuming leadership roles in private sector⁴³, and, alongside these, the lack of collateral movable and immovable assets that hampers their access to financial services. Another barrier to women's entrepreneurship is the tendency of the banks to view women's reproductive function as an additional risk factor for investing in their businesses⁴⁴. The very range of SME activities which is as broad as to become unwieldy is also a cause of the limited availability of investment and financial support.

Group discussions with female and male land-farmers in Orkhon and Selenge aimags indicated that financing from the agricultural support fund is being less accessible for women and young people⁴⁵. Women's businesses are smaller in size as well as turnover and employ fewer workers. These businesses are heavily dependent on infrastructure and support facilities such as water and electricity supply as well as sanitation equipment which are not readily available in the city districts and rural areas.

An issue which has arisen lately in the development of entrepreneurship especially with regard to the rural areas is that of male participation. As evinced by group discussions, women's business activities in Mongolia are dependent on family relationships, namely the behaviour and attitudes of husbands or partners. Supporting women's entrepreneurship without changing the existing gender norms may have adverse impact on family relationships as the lesson of families going as far as to divorce in order to access loans provided to female heads of households in the early 1990s reminds us. In the sphere of household economy and micro enterprise, it is essential to promote and support participation of both the woman and the man of the family in business ownership and operation.

Box 5.

Gender issues in entrepreneurship at the local level

Of those 300 people who came to our wealth creators' meeting only 2 or 3 were men. Men at the local level are really passive. Family and school do not teach boys work skills and life skills, and policies at the top and down here do not seem to be talking about this. Sure there are many successful men but as for those uneducated ones we seem to be in want of something like the army we used to have that made real men out of them.

Source: An interview by a female home-based business operator from Dornogovi aimag

Careful reflection of macro-level factors that are hindering SME development in gender sensitive policy making and planning is becoming a topical issue. For example, food and agriculture sector specialists believe that the competitive capacity and growth opportunities of businesses in the manufacturing and services sectors which employ large numbers of female heads of household are seriously challenged by tax-exempt imports of potato, clothing and other products as well as customs policies of the neighbouring countries. Participants in focus group discussions demonstrated similar perception of higher level problems by pointing out that the emphasis which the Public Procurement Law puts on price rather than quality was a limiting factor for sewing, knitting and wool and cashmere industries where middle and lower class women work in large numbers both in the capital city and elsewhere in the country.

³⁹ M. Makhene. 2010. *Honey Pot in Africa's Missing Middle-Investing in SMEs*. Skoll Foundation Archives, September 23. <http://archive.skoll.org/2010/09/23/honeypot-in-africas-missing-middle-investing-in-smes/>

⁴⁰ MCCJ, 2017. *Mongolia Business Environment Study*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁴¹ ADB. 2016. *Technical Assistance on Gender-responsive Sector and Local Development Policies and Actions, financed by the Government of Japan*. Manila.

⁴² JICA. 2013. *Country Gender Profile: Mongolia. Final Report*. JICA and Intem Consulting, Ulaanbaatar.

⁴³ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). 2017. *Strategy for Mongolia*. EBRD. Ulaanbaatar.

⁴⁴ IFC. Advisory services in Mongolia. 2013. *Corporate Governance Scorecard 2011*. Ulaanbaatar

⁴⁵ DHF. 2018. *Summary of the Participatory Gender Audit within the Framework of the "Food Agriculture and Light Industry Sector-Specific Gender-Responsive Policy" development process*. Unpublished report.

Box 6.***Challenges to rural entrepreneurship development as seen by women***

The SME Development Fund which is implementing its 8% interest rate only for the past 5 years, the Soum Development Fund with its 2% interest rate, Chinggis Bond with its 8% interest rate, also the Labour and Social Protection Ministry's soft loan programme supporting herders' income generation and other projects and programmes are providing development opportunities for small and medium enterprises. But these are short-term initiatives, there is no effective long-term support. Therefore, they are failing to bring about sustainable development and real results. Local areas need a favourable business environment. Undertaking cluster development of industries producing marketable goods, for example setting up model yak milk, camel milk or goat milk collection, processing and marketing projects in suitable locations and supporting their replication, developing small factory building prefabs, supporting private sector initiatives, strengthening local government support, promoting domestic procurement and consumption of domestically produced goods through information campaigns, exhibitions and fairs, organizing skill-building short-term training courses would be very useful.

Source: An interview by a woman dairy farmer

D Infrastructure development

Development of infrastructure as the fundamental facilitator of economic growth and social development is of particular importance for Mongolia with her small population scattered over a large territory and is instrumental in supporting women's and men's business activities and improving quality of life. Road transport in Mongolia accounts for 57.8% of freight and 98.4% of passenger turnover. In view of this, the Government has set a strategic goal of linking all 21 provincial centres by paved roads by 2020 and the successful implementation of this plan is being a palpable support to the life and work of people in rural areas and particularly to improving quality of life for pregnant women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities. In 2018, the length of improved earth roads reached 10,835.8 kilometres (km) and that of paved roads 9023.0 km as against the respective 6,126.7 km and 2,278.6 km in 2005.

This notwithstanding, infrastructural development is rather uneven and more is to be done to meet the needs of the population. For instance, the World Bank's 2013 study noted that Ulaanbaatar where population concentration is at its highest, received only 30% of the roads sector budget and a mere 20% of the energy sector allocations, which resulted in average traffic speeds in the city centre halving over the past decade and in dangerous levels of pollution as the residents of the ger areas have to burn coal during the winter months⁴⁶.

The cost, safety and accessibility of city public transit are important factors from gender perspective. Transportation is viewed as a key development issue in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 which aims at making "cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" and sets a target (11.2) for 2030 to "provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons." A UN backgrounder for SDG 11 highlights the differences in the time, reasons and ways women and men use public transport, and women's fewer financial resources⁴⁷.

The above points are especially meaningful for urban dwellers who spend an average of 24- 36% of the family income on transportation as well as for peri-urban dwellers who experience an additional difficulty of getting public transit services on shortened schedules. Young women work en masse in various service establishments in downtown Ulaanbaatar for long hours late into the night. Meanwhile public transit to the outlying districts of the city stops already at 9 in the evening which not only increases safety risks for women but also turns into a general employment problem for residents of such remote locations. Young participants in focus group discussions talked about employers who denied recruitment to applicants living in peri-urban areas.

The ADB's 2017 rapid assessment of gender-based violence in the Ulaanbaatar ger area communities emphasizes women's and children's safety in public spaces as an issue central to the infrastructural and urban development policies including the ger area redevelopment programme⁴⁸. Participants in this ADB survey termed food markets, schools, shops

⁴⁶ World Bank, 2013. *Mongolia: Improving public investment to meet the challenge of scaling up infrastructure*. Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Sector Unit East Asia and Pacific Region. Ulaanbaatar.

⁴⁷ UN Chronicle, 2015. *Goal 11—Cities Will Play an Important Role in Achieving the SDGs*. UN Chronicle Vol. LI No. 4. April. <https://un Chronicle.un.org/article/goal-11-cities-will-play-important-role-achieving-sdgs>

⁴⁸ ADB, 2017. *Rapid Assessment (qualitative research) of Gender-based Violence in Urban Ger Area Communities*. Ulaanbaatar.

and men's alcohol drinking spots as dangerous. As the risk of falling victim to harassment and violence is high for girls and women in their immediate neighbourhoods, public spaces and public transit, the ADB paper puts forward recommendations to include in the ger area redevelopment programme such measures as creation additional street exits, expansion of narrow streets, installation of street lighting, use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) in critical areas, and inclusion of clauses on the protection of girls and women in the relevant sectoral policies and procedures⁴⁹.

Box 7.

Infrastructure and safety of women and children

They would follow in footsteps. Even I would be followed. So I turn on the cell phone light and start talking loud. This is the only way I find to protect myself. (a woman 46-55 years old)

My daughter studies at School No. 57. When coming back from school she takes a big detour. There is a shorter road but it has no lights. It's summer now which makes life easier. Things turn harder in winter time. (a man 46-55 years old)

Source: ADB. 2017. Rapid Assessment of Gender-Based Violence in Urban Ger Area Communities. TA Consultant's report. Ulaanbaatar.

The living environment in the Ulaanbaatar ger areas has been improving in recent years with the intensification of the work on improving street lighting, installing CCTV cameras and introducing street patrols. However, in-migration keeps up its pace, the city boundaries continue expanding and streets with poor or no lighting are still to be found in the outlying areas.

Putting in place infrastructural facilities for the protection of children and women is becoming a priority in times of peak mining activities and the attendant increases in mobile populations and crime and violence risks. A good practice in this regards has been provided in 2015 by the initiative of the state-owned Erdenes Tavan Tolgoi LLC which undertook to provide the centre of Tsogttsetsii soum with street lighting.

In the densely-populated Ulaanbaatar, young families manage to find homes mostly in smallish apartments located at a distance from the city centre. This and the variances in the availability and quality of child-care centres and schools across districts add streams of heavy traffic into the already congested streets of the city and create acute time shortages for young mothers and fathers.

Box 8.

Good practice: Gender impact of an energy efficiency project

This project implemented by Germany's Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) with funding from the German Government and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), uses energy efficient technologies to address heat loss in older school and kindergarten buildings located in the air polluted ger areas through capital insulation improvement works. The results of a socio-economic impact assessment undertaken for the project in 2016 showed that the duration of sick leaves of children, teachers and other staff shortened by a third and household expenditures on drugs and treatment decreased by about 65%. This alleviated the workloads of women who are the main caretakers in the project's beneficiary families and improved their employment opportunities.

Source: Assessment of energy efficiency of public buildings and socio-economic impacts, 2016. Energy Efficiency Project, GIZ

The UN General Assembly's Resolution "Improvement of livelihoods of rural women and girls" initiated by Mongolia in 2001 and reconfirmed by the UN every 2 years, called on Governments to better the availability of sustainable infrastructure and technologies, and resolve the pressing problems faced by rural girls and women. Agricultural and livestock sector specialists participating in focus group discussions stressed that finding solutions to providing herder families with hot water, improved latrines, washing machines and with access to internet was critically important especially for the health and quality of life of herder women. Among these, of immediate priority are eco-friendly sanitation installations and facilities both stationary and portable, that would meet the specifics of the semi-desert and mountainous grassland regions of the country.

⁴⁹ADB. 2018. Working paper series No.14. *Translating Women's Voices into Action in Mongolia: Addressing Gender-based Violence through Investments in Infrastructure*. Ulaanbaatar

Box 9.***Safe potable water, sanitation and gender***

Although some effective measures were being taken in the sphere of water and sanitation, Mongolia did not achieve target 7.C of the Millennium Development Goals to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. In 2015, 84% of the Mongolian population had access to basic water services and 59 percent to basic sanitation services. In other words, most Mongolians collect drinking water from water kiosks outside their homes and half the population has access to pit latrines. These figures are much lower when the concept of safely managed services in targets 6.1 and 6.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals is applied: as of 2015, only a quarter of the population received water on the premises and only 13% had sewerage connections. Those numbers suggest that both drinking water and sanitation require further attention and must be given due priority by the Government.

The nomadic population tend to use shallow wells or even surface water as their water sources. In the northern regions of Mongolia, small-scale artisanal gold mining is widely practiced and often unregulated. Such unregulated gold-mining activities can chemically contaminate surface water and negatively impact on water quality for the nomadic population, as they are not aware, for example, of the colourless and odourless arsenic in the water. Mongolia must provide an equivalent level of access to services to nomads and non-nomads alike and devise measures to accommodate their lifestyles.

In 2015, the Government established norms and requirements for water, sanitation and hygiene in kindergartens, schools and dormitories. The minimum standard study conducted by the Government in 2015 found that girls during their menstruation cycle had a tendency not to attend school, as they did not want to use the unimproved toilets. Apart from improved latrines, another concern related to the girl hygiene is that access to water and showers is not yet prioritized.

Source: Leo Heller, UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, 2018

Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland, where rural women, similar to Mongolia, have higher educational levels than their male counterparts and are moving to urban areas leaving men behind, view the extension of the digital infrastructure to the rural areas and its development in conformity with the needs of local users as a strategy to restore and maintain gender balance of the rural population.⁵⁰

In Mongolia, the number of internet users went up from 0.8% of the population in 2005 to 92.9% in 2018. The number of cell phone users increased 9.5 times in the same period of time. Rural population use cellular phones not only for communication among themselves but also for active participation in international communication. This is a highly appreciable progress which enables rural women, busy as they are with their household economies, to keep up with the latest news, partake in any sphere of social life and access any information if and when they need it. An example of such information availability and accessibility is provided by the National Emergency Management Agency which uses the cell phone system to alert all families of Mongolia to severe weather disturbances.

The construction and urban development sector gender-responsive policy adopted in 2017, aims at building capacity for gender sensitive urban planning rooted in participation, improving the legal framework to support involvement of urban residents and other partnerships, developing basic standards of quality of life for universal compliance and other broadly ranging initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SPHERE OF ECONOMY:

Long-term:

1. Put in place policy and legal frameworks guaranteeing fair distribution of resources to women and men on equal conditions in economic development policies of all levels in line with Sustainable Development Goal 8 on promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all;
2. Improve opportunities for productive employment for low-income urban and rural women and men by way of diversifying the economy, promoting optimal use of natural resources in agriculture and processing industry, prioritizing creation and manufacturing of value-added products;

3. Strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks to eliminate gender disparities in property rights, institute information and educational mechanisms to enhance public knowledge and awareness on a regular basis;
4. Identify and eliminate barriers limiting the opportunity of women, men and social groups to engage in business enterprise. For instance, put in place a gender sensitive and accessible system of financial services which allocates high priority to a government-backed and trust-based lending for female and male operators of micro businesses;
5. Promote economic efficiency and profits of domestic producers by taking government action to maintain price stability for all agricultural products, protecting domestic markets, establishing marketing infrastructure and chains in aimag and soum centres, supporting public and private sector procurement;
6. Support research and development as well as the attendant production of technologies necessary for land and animal farming households to save labour, process animal raw materials, milk, vegetables and medicinal herbs into marketable products, and to introduce home conveniences into their lives;
7. Implement recommendations which the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations addressed to Mongolia with regard to promoting productive employment, eliminating gender disparities in the labour market, implementation of Conventions 111, 100 and 103 as well as Mongolia's Labour Code;
8. Ascend to the following ILO instruments: Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (C156), Part-time Work Convention (C175), Home Work Convention (C 177), Maternity Protection Convention (C183);
9. Support implementation of the gender policy for the construction and urban development sector with the transport, energy and environmental protection sector policies and collaboration, develop basic quality-of-life standards and ensure their universal implementation through cross-sectoral coordination as a strategy to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11 which aims at making "cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

Medium-term:

1. Strengthen, across all sectors and at all levels, the coordination necessary for effective implementation of activity plans of the National Programme on Promotion of Gender Equality and the gender strategy of the Population, Labour and Social Protection sector, intensify partnerships and collaboration for the elimination of all forms of discrimination inhibiting women's employment rights and opportunities;
2. Develop a gender disaggregated information and data collection system for banking services;
3. Study the nature, dynamics and impacts of property rights in terms of emerging changes within family relations and inheritance of land, immovable and other property, improve collection of gender disaggregated statistical data and its accessibility.
4. Introduce approaches that carefully consider risks to the stability and wholesomeness of family relationships in policies and activities promoting property ownership and supporting micro, small and medium enterprises;
5. Establish legal and regulatory instruments aimed at facilitating the elimination of gender stereotypes related to property and inheritance rights. In this context, legalize and enforce use of marital agreement;

6. Ensure consistency of the rules and procedures to be issued upon passage of the revised Labour Code with the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality through a package of measures which include, among others, the development of appropriate gender equality guidelines for relevant bodies involved in the process, as well as inclusion of standards for prevention of sexual harassment and other forms of gender based violence and discrimination in workplace related policies and procedures;
7. Disseminate information and knowledge of the concept of work-life balance of female and male workers to the executives and managers in public, private sector and civil society organizations, put in place the necessary legislative regulations;
8. Transfer the duty of paying employee's childcare leave benefit from Employer to the State in order to better harmonize the policy aimed at promoting population growth with measures seeking to combat gender discrimination and achieve gender equality in employment;
9. Introduce gender-sensitive methodology in the procurement processes and practices of the public and local development organizations;
10. Implement policies supporting SME operating households and female entrepreneurship by establishing, at national and sub-national levels, business incubators that would encourage the emergence of value chains, business clusters and networks rather than turning each and every person and household into several production units;
11. Implement senior citizen employment policies and programmes in a manner consistent with national specifics and accessible to both urban and rural seniors. For example, consider supporting a rural woman who is taking care of her grandchildren by providing per student compensation. Likewise, design and support apprenticeship programmes run by veteran herders, farmers, industrial workers or craftsmen;
12. Encourage state owned and private companies in the mining areas to contract local herders for procurement rather than recruitment and to support them by providing them with necessary information, and training as well as machinery and equipment;
13. Identify and duly reflect the different needs and lifestyles of urban and rural young families, children, women, the elderly and people with disabilities in urban and infrastructure planning, improve relevant legal and regulatory frameworks;
14. Develop mobile public services units and home designs with hot water supply and sanitary latrines meeting the herders' needs and lifestyles, ensure production of these facilities and their national and international replication as best practice in the implementation of the resolution on improving the livelihoods of rural girls and women.

Short-term:

1. Implement Objective 3 on putting into practice gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) as set forth in the Gender Strategy to be implemented by organizations and agencies under the authority of the Finance Minister, mainstream GRB into the work processes of development funds;
2. Improve the generation of gender disaggregated statistical information and data on both registered and unregistered unemployment as well as informal employment, and use the data in designing and establishing locally-based outreach and support mechanisms;
3. Create information mechanisms for women on maternity leaves to keep up with the developments at their

workplaces, undertake feasibility study of flexible work schedules and remote jobs to design, pilot and establish the best arrangements for women;

4. Develop and institutionalize national standards for health and safety risk mitigation services designed for male seasonal and shift workers in mining, construction and infrastructure sectors as well as men working abroad as migrant labour away from their homes;
5. While introducing the guidelines for gender-inclusive workplace for private sector companies to facilitate the development and implementation of their gender action plans, put in place a policy using economic incentives to support their initiative. This, for example, could be tax breaks for the establishment and not-for-profit operation of children's nurseries, kindergartens or nursing rooms either for own employees or local population;
6. Increase support and assistance specifically targeted at women who mainly operate home-based and micro-businesses that tend to fall through the cracks in the excessively broad and therefore unwieldy SME classification system;
7. Conduct gender impact assessment of the availability and scheduling of urban public transport, introduce a user-feedback based service improvement system.





2 | SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER

The period of demographic window began in 2008 when the share of working age population reached to its highest and there are all indications that this period of demographic window is likely to continue up until the year 2030. This would have a positive impact on economic growth, however, if sufficient number of appropriate jobs are not created that meet the demands, then it could have a negative fallout, such as increased unemployment, higher poverty rate, growing brain drain and work force from the country.

Continuing inland migration from the rural to urban areas, alarming decrease in the number of population in some of the rural parts of the country and the fact that people of working age, young people, particularly, young women account for the majority⁵¹ of the inland migrants could result in the disruption of the balance in the age and gender of the urban and rural population. Women, irrespective if they are the head of that particular family or not, are the key decision makers when it comes to migration. A study carried out by the International Organisation of Migration reveals that a ban introduced in 2017 on migration to Ulaanbaatar is contributing to an increase in the number of unregistered urban migrants.

Access to information in the Mongolian society is improving and the involvement of the citizens in the country's social and political life is growing. Notwithstanding, on the other hand, the failure of the social development policy to drive and guide the expertise and energy of the citizens is contributing to misinterpretation of values, intensification of disparities, and fanning up disconcertment, stress, contradictions and violence.

A Households and families

Marriage shall be based on the equality and mutual consent of the spouses who have reached the age determined by law states Article 16.11 of the Constitution of Mongolia (1992). Since the adoption of the Mongolian Law on Family in 1999, civil society organizations were also engaged in the adoption and enforcement of the Law to Combat Domestic Violence, the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child and other related laws of Mongolia. In 2003, the Government of Mongolia adopted and implemented the "Policy on Family Development" which was amended and revised in 2014. The amended and revised policy put forth much more concrete gender-related objectives, such as ensuring equal participation of the father and mother in family development, care and protection of their children, ensuring equitable involvement in the family's property relations, and creating positive legal and social code environment designed at consistently reducing domestic violence and rights violation of the members of a family.

The total number of households in Mongolia in 2005 was 611,026, which increased by 1.46 times in 2018 with 894,496 households. 35.3% of all the households were living in the capital city in 2005, which had grown to 43.3% in 2018. A population and housing census, carried out in 2010, put this figure at 3.74% in the rural areas, and 3.48% in the urban areas. The number of extended families or a family that includes in one household near relatives is twice more in the urban than in the rural areas because of the such relatives have come to the urban areas for the purpose of studying and other reason⁵², but this figure is high primarily owing to the fact that either young families do not have their own homes (56.8%), or are unable to manage their life independently (19.8%), whereby they come and live with their parents. Earlier extended families were being created as young people continued to live with their elderly parents so they could take care of them, however, this trend has changed today and it is becoming increasingly common for young people to live with their parents to be taken care of by the latter.

The average marriageable age among women between 1990 and 2010 had delayed by 3.1 years to become 24.2, while the marriageable age of men has been delayed by 2.9 years to become 26.2. A 2010 census reveals that 86% of men and women were registered as officially married, while the percentage of couples who have not registered their marriage is 8% in the rural areas and 16.5% in the urban areas. According to Article 3 of the Law to Combat Domestic Violence, the applies to persons who are presently residing together but not officially registered at authorized public organization, but the Law on Family does not have legal provisions either defining or regulating domestic partnership.

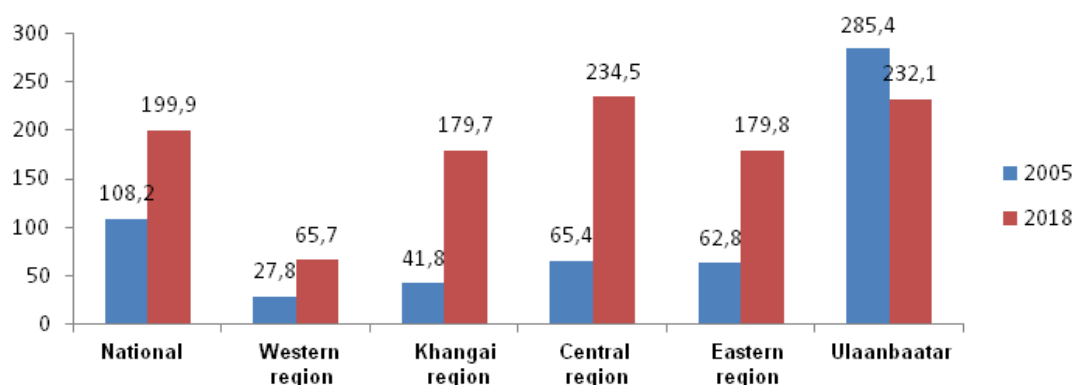
The number of marriages registered annually increased by 1.4 times between 2005-2018 while the number of divorces increased by 2.6 times. During this period the number of marriages increased significantly in the capital city, while it was decreased in the khangai, central and eastern regions of the country, depopulating rural areas. (Table 1)

Table 1. Marriages and divorces in 2005-2011, by region

	Number of marriages		Number of divorces	
	2005	2018	2005	2018
National	14 993	21 020	1 622	4 201
Western region	2 443	2 694	68	177
Khangai region	3 735	3 344	156	601
Central region	3 855	2 913	252	683
Eastern region	1 211	1 179	76	212
Ulaanbaatar	3 749	10 890	1 070	2 528

Source: NSO.1212.mn

Although, the increased number of marriages and divorces is relevant to the population growth, divorce per 1000 marriages shows that the stability of family is getting more fragile in the regions as compared with the capital city (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Number of divorces per 1000 marriages in 2005-2018, by region

Source: NSO.1212.mn

The average age at first marriage of working young people is earlier than the unemployed contemporaries, which proves that employment is the primary factor for the increase in the number of families, and improving the standard of living of households and families.⁵³ Today the country still does not have the economic and legal environment to provide small loans, support and assist young parents to build their own private houses, and engage in farming and business, which is a major impediment to their independent livelihood and growth⁵⁴.

The level of education has a relatively different effect on the status of marriage by women and men. As regards men, their chance of getting married gets slimmer if they are poorly educated, while this trend is the reverse for women. The first marriage of women with either higher education or without any education was a little late, at an average age of 24.6 to 24.8 years, while women with primary and basic education was a bit early, at an average age of 22.7 to 22.9 years according to the 2010 Census. The situation was the same in the year 2000 also. Primary administrative units now register families, accordingly a priority action in this regard is the creation of the environment for young people to conduct their wedding ceremony and allocating the necessary funds for this purpose.

Nationality and race too have an impact on marriages. For instance, the share of unmarried population in such tribes and races as the Tungus, Bayad, Dorvod, Ujemchin, Myangad, Uriankhai, Kazakh, Zakhchin, Torguut, Khoton, Tuva, Darkhad, Kalmyk, Uzbek and naturalised Mongolians of foreign origin (other than Russians and Chinese), and the Tsaatan or the reindeer breeding peoples is higher than the national average (Footnote 52). It would be fitting if the Family Research Institute takes this matter into consideration.

A study on families, carried out in 2012 (Footnote 53), shows that 38% of the divorces are happening among young couples 6-7 years after their marriage, which means that these couples were unprepared for a married family life. But

⁵³ Oyun-Erdene, B. 2012. *Specifics of the Structure, Form and Relationship of Mongolian Families and Pressing Issues*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁵⁴ Burenjargal, T. 2005. *Family Sociology*. Ulaanbaatar.

another study, carried out in 2018⁵⁵ revealed that 51.6% of the couples who had been divorced were married for more than 10 years, and 26.5% of such couples had had been married for 7-9 years. Researchers have linked this break up in families to the disruption of stability within a family. In 2005, alcohol abuse was noted as the primary cause for family conflict, followed by financial and cash issue, and according to another study conducted in 2012, financial and cash issue had come to the top as the primary cause of family breakdown.

It cannot be denied that new lifestyle, such as working overseas and working periodically (seasonally) are also factors contributing to the instability of families. As a matter of fact, the average age of Mongolians working overseas is 31.3 and the majority of them are young men. However, only a very small fraction (1.8% according to the 2012 study) of people working overseas are living with their families, children and relatives (Footnote 53), and this woeful picture makes it imperative for the authorities to give more careful attention to contracts and agreements on exporting labor. Also careful consideration should be given to the fact that economic, social protection and other sectoral policies and decisions impact, first and foremost, on family relations. For example, the decision to grant 500 MNT thousand incentive to newlyweds directly contributed to a sudden spike in marriage registration as well as legal separation of families in the ensuing years.

Herders' family issues require a serious attention for further analysis and action. According to the agriculture sector's integrated registration report of 2011, 13.6% of employees engaged in the livestock-breeding or 46217 herders remain single as men made up 70.6% or 32625 of them and while women 29.4% or 13592. The 2017 report showed even worsened situation where single men represented 78% while women 22% of un-married herder population. The introduction of system of enrolling children in schools at the age of six, more than benefitting the children themselves, has become major factor impacting not only the relations of the families of rural herders but has also become a key reason for rural families to live separately.

Information and knowledge about family relations must be given to all men and women of all ages corresponding to life cycles and age specifics. Likewise, households must be provided with greater opportunities and choices to address the confronting problems more than handing out cash incentives, and equipping them with skills according to their needs. One of the most pressing tasks is to give young people family education, including develop the skill to manage family finances, build and repair their own homes, and to handle household chores, while efforts must be made to give senior citizens greater opportunity for them to share their knowledge and experience, and a choice to contribute to social life. Furthermore, it is also important to improve the legal environment related to marriage and divorce, and monitor their implementation. This relates not only to Mongolian citizens starting a married life, but also to the Mongolians marrying foreigners. Consideration should be given to follow up on the legal status of Mongolian citizens living overseas with their foreign spouses, to create a mechanism for sharing information with them, and to accede to relevant international treaties and conventions so as to improve the legal protection of such Mongolian citizens.

B Education

"Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030" states that the objective of the sustainable social development will be to ensure gender equality, improve the quality of and access to health care services, create a healthy, safe living environment for the citizens, provide equal education of high quality to every citizen, and build a national system for lifelong education.⁵⁶ The Government is investing heavily in providing equal and accessible education services to the spare population of Mongolia spread over a vast territory and although the country has reached the level of industrialised countries of the world in terms of literacy rate and primary education coverage (99.0% and 97.5% respectively), a lot remains yet to be done to improve the outcome of education, and access to education at all levels.

According to a Report of the World Economic Forum, Mongolia in terms of its gender gap index had slid back from 48th to 53rd place between 2006 and 2018 primarily because of the education indicator. As regards school enrollment, the disparity indicator became 0.780 in 2018 as compared to 0.704 in 2006, and the country shifted backward from 20th to 70th place. The ratio of girls and boys at the intermediate education level was 1.14 and at the higher education level - 1.64 in 2006 and although these indicators had improved to 1.11 and 1.43 respectively in 2018, the country was unable to overtake the positive changes that had occurred in other countries across the globe.

Teachers of pre-school, primary and intermediate education are predominantly women, which is a common feature across the world, but compared to other countries, there is serious gender disparity in Mongolia. 96% of all teachers and workers at pre-school education establishments, and 81.2% of basic teachers of general secondary schools were women as of 2017. Stereotype concept of gender regarding same profession of men and women, as well as the size of the salary

of teachers are impacting the above state of affairs.

In order to address the earlier-mentioned issue, gender objectives have been reflected in the legal and policy environment of the education sector, and an education, culture, science and sports sector gender responsive policy (2017-2024) was adopted. This policy, the purpose of which is to promote gender equality at all levels of sectoral policy, planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring processes, covers not only schoolchildren and school staff but also defines and leads actions towards changing gender stereotypes that create obstacles in ensuring gender equality in the society.

Pre-school education: Pre-school education enrolment apart from preparing boys and girls for school, is also designed at increasing employment opportunities for women. In Mongolia, 70% of children aged between 3 and 5 are covered under official pre-school education program while another 10% of them are going to the so-called ger or mobile kindergartens designed specifically for the nomadic herder families and with these figures Mongolia is on level with East European and Latin American countries. Mongolia has set the objective of bringing pre-school school enrolment to 90% by the year 2030.

Although boys and girls, in gender terms, have equal access to pre-school education, children living in peri-urban areas of towns and cities, children of rural herders, of Kazakh families and from low-income families are likely to have lower access to pre-school education⁵⁷. The number of kindergartens as well as their enrolment figures are growing fast particularly in Ulaanbaatar. In the last 5 years, there has almost been no increase in the number of children of herder families enrolled to pre-school education (29,493 children in 2017), however, the number of physically challenged children, thus enrolled, has grown by 16.9% or has reached 1,599 children⁵⁸.

The increased percentage of privately-owned pre-school education institutions (38% in 2017/2018 academic year as compared with 28.4% in 2013/2014) shows the tendency of children's access to kindergartens depending on varying income of their parents. Today, because of the insufficient number of kindergartens, lots are being drawn to enrol children, which obviously is not an effective means of solving the problem. However, state as well as private sector organisations have come up with a new initiative and are setting up kindergartens for their own staff members, workers as well as for rural children, which is not only increasing access to kindergartens but is also becoming an effective experience for ensuring a work-life balance.

Primary and secondary education: Girls in the majority were being enrolled to primary schools after 1995, however, since 2011 the number of boys started prevailing and the difference in their ratio has been gradually growing since. In 2017 girls enrolment reached 98.5%, and that of boys - 98.7%. The number of boys in schools tends to decline as children advance to next classes, although the improvement was observed in gender ratio among middle school students. Special measures have been taken since 2006 based on the decision of the Minister of Education, Culture, Science and Sports to ensure that boys make up at least 48% of children being promoted to 9th grade.

Destitution and morbidity are the predominating factors that force boys, aged 6-14, to drop out of school, according to statistics. However, the number of boys that have dropped out of schools because of destitution, as compared to girls, is starkly different, whereby one is involuntarily led to come to the conclusion that the mystery behind this could perhaps be child labour (Table 2). A study carried out in 2013 into child labour⁵⁹ showed that there are eight out of ten boys working outside of the households, while this figure for the girls is two out of ten, and the average age of the majority of such working children is 15 and 17 years old.

Table 2. Number of school dropouts, age category and reason for dropout in the 2017-2018 academic year

Causation		Never been to school						Been to school but dropped out					
		Age 6-11			Age 12-14			Age 6-11			Age 12-14		
		Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Total	682	462	278	184	52	40	12	58	47	11	110	98	12
Life destitution	161	98	64	34	3	3	-	15	14	1	45	41	4
Don't want to learn	35	4	2	2	1	1	-	6	6	-	24	23	1
In order to work	9	7	4	3	-	-	-	-	0	-	2	2	-
Owing to illness	222	131	74	57	40	31	9	28	20	8	23	18	5
Reason unclear	255	222	134	88	8	5	3	9	7	2	16	14	2

Source: NSO. Briefing on the Education Sector. 2017

⁵⁷ Rabia Ali and Pagma Genden. 2017. "Early childhood education in Mongolia – who is still excluded?" World Bank Blog. <http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/early-childhood-education-mongolia-who-still-excluded>

⁵⁸ NSO. 2017. Briefing on the Education Sector. Ulaanbaatar.

⁵⁹ NSO, ILO. 2012. Report of National Child Labour Survey, 2011-2012. Ulaanbaatar.

Destitution in life, which has been given as a response, alone cannot be linked with poverty because the peculiarities of nomadic livelihood, including the long distance from home to school, are also contributing factors. One half of the children who had dropped out of schools, who were covered in the 2013 survey,⁶⁰ lived on an average almost 10 kilometers from schools, of whom 56% walked to their schools, 12.2% had vehicles, 3% of the children went to school either on horseback or riding a camel, and only 2% were taken to schools by their parents on motorcycles. For instance, in the Gobi desert region, there are children who have to travel 130 kilometres to their schools. If herder parents are unable to find a family or a dormitory for their children and if the children have poor academic performance, they would rather prefer their children to help them tend to their family animals.

The introduction of the minimum age of 6 for school in 2005 put to test the availability and quality of school dormitories. For instance, dormitory burden in Bayan-Olgii aimag had exceeded by 45%, in Uvs aimag by 48%, in Khovd aimag by 71% and in Dornod aimag by 50% respectively, according to a study carried out by the Mongolian National University of Education in 2017.⁶¹

Box 10.

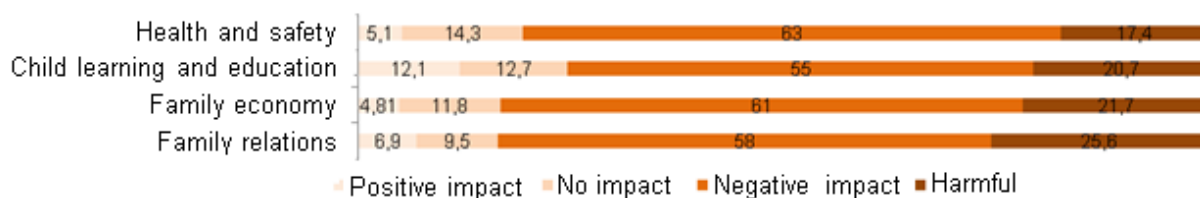
Education policy and gender parity in a herder household

The question of the enrolment of a 6-year-old child to school in the rural areas and the resulting gender-related consequences must be once again taken up at the policy level. Parents, concerned about their children of young age, will raise the question of one of them being together with their children or the children dropping out of school. Or a young family is living separately. One of the parents is living in the soum or the aimag centre to care for their children while the husband stays back to tend to their livestock herds. In some instances, such a situation is leading to breaking up of families, while some women, who have become accustomed to life in a settlement, does not want to return to the rural countryside. Distance learning has been introduced in the country. At least, mobile teachers could be trained and mobile trainings can be organised at the baghs and khoroos.

Source: From a group discussion of education sector workers

As part of this gender-related analysis, a survey was conducted involving 1,200 people, and the majority of the questioned responded that the enrolment of children to schools at the age of 6 have had negative impact not only on the health, safety, academic performance and education of children, but also on the economy and family relations (Figure 15). Although the children of herder families have been given the opportunity to enrol at the age of 8, the herder parents are still unable to decide as to when is the best age to send their children to school.

Figure 15. Assessment by the participants in a survey to determine the impact of 6-year-old children's enrolment in schools on herder households



Source: From a survey conducted among 1,200 people involved in small and medium enterprises

The Government has introduced a nation-wide midday tea programme and children of low-income households are being provided with textbooks, which is helping reducing disparity. Nonetheless, factors conducive to creating disparity at the level of school environment still persist. For instance, school uniform, stationary, cost of textbooks, contributions collected from children for furnishing classrooms, discrimination by their contemporaries, and violence in the school environment are pushing children from low-income families to drop out of schools, and in particular, the boys are being driven to child labour.

Schoolchildren have insufficient understanding about gender-based violence and sexual harassment, and neither

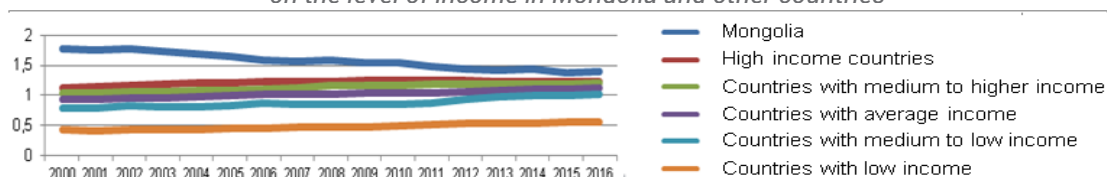
the parents nor law enforcing agencies are paying due attention to these issues⁶². According to a 2014 study, 40% of school pupils complained of unwanted touching, 38.6% said they were shown unsuitable photos and videos expressing sexual relationship, 33.6% complained they were victims of some kind of sexual violence and 10% said they were subject to gestures of sexual nature. Violence in the school environment is particularly obstructive to the learning by boys of poor migrant families⁶³. As regards girls, by going to schools, they are exposed to greater security and are being protected against early pregnancy (Footnote 6).

The question of school environment and making safe roads from homes to school for children are not only a concern of the education organisation but also of the town planning, transport and infrastructure departments and they must work in collaboration in this regard. First and foremost, priority actions are required for addressing the difference in the number of students in a classroom and the erratic enforcement of the education standard are hindering the elimination of discrimination and disparity at schools. For instance, the government is covering from the state budget variable costs of private schools, which although appears to be promoting equality, in reality it is contributing to increasing disparity and it is high time the government acknowledged this fact. Also the divergent needs of the school children are not being taken into consideration, according to the 2013 survey⁶⁴. For instance, the government is not allocating additional budget for improving the learning environment and the quality of teaching for children who are physically challenged children and who live in remote areas, such as the children of the Tsaatan or the reindeer breeders.

Beside equal access to education, it is important that the learning environment, curriculum of teaching, text books and materials should be gender-sensitive, which would only then make it possible for boys and girls to fully and equally enjoy the benefits of education. Although child-age and mentality-specific sectoral standards have been included in the curriculum and teaching methods, a breakthrough is yet to be made in terms of taking into consideration the variable needs of girls and boys. The creation of gender-sensitive infrastructures at schools remains an urgent question. Quite a bit is being done to build separate lavatories for girls and boys but schools and dormitories in rural areas still have open-air toilets, which do not at all meet the hygienic requirements of girls and in particular, if these facilities do not have electrical lighting they create additional risks of girls being subject to violence. The above matters must be taken into consideration and reflected when developing policies and plans in the future. Since 2004, work had been done to study gender sensitivities in textbooks and to develop standard gender for application in the education sector with UNESCO support, but their results are being used neither in education policy planning and implementation.

Higher education: There is a serious gender disparity at colleges and universities of Mongolia as well as in professional orientation, which are definitely become upsetting indicators in terms of gender. In 2016 the gross enrolment ratio of female and male students was 1.4, which was higher (1.22) than in the industrialised countries that promote higher education for women (Figure 16). Although this abnormality is being associated with the importance given by parents to girls's education, it is actually linked to the growing number of higher educational institutions (See the part on property ownership), and the overriding interest to provide training in business and law, social and humanitarian disciplines that are not only cheap but also attract a high rate of enrolment.

Figure 16. *The ratio between females and males enrolled at colleges and universities, based on the level of income in Mongolia and other countries*



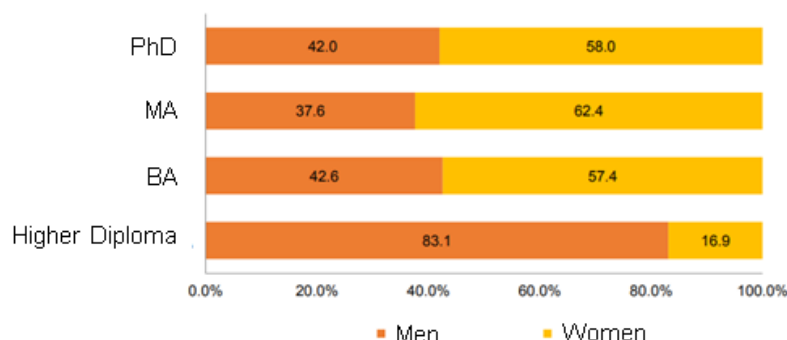
Source: World Bank. World Development Indicators (2018).

The share of women in all levels of education degrees is dominant and accordingly, the share of women doing Master's Degree is the highest (Figure 17).

⁶² Mongolia Women's Fund. 2017. "Securing State Investment for Prevention of Gender-Based Violence in Schools" project. Ulaanbaatar: Mongolia Women's Fund. <http://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20unwtf/publications/2017/final%20report%20summaryonescompressed.pdf?la=en&vs=719>

⁶³ Hepworth 2013 in UNESCO. 2015. *Education For All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges*. Paris, France: UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002322/232205e.pdf>

⁶⁴ Economic Research Institute and Mongolian Education Alliance. 2013. *A Survey of the Education Sector*. Ulaanbaatar

Figure 17. *Students at higher educational institutions, by gender and educational degree*

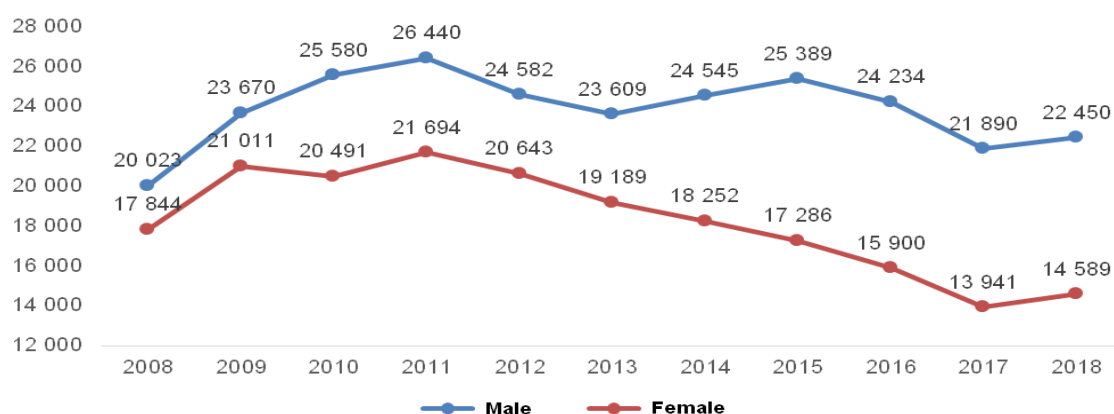
Source: NSO. *Briefing on the Education Sector - 2017*

Women studying at colleges and universities are in the majority in such disciplines as education (females 20%, males 7%), health (females 11%, males 3%), and humanitarian (females 10% and males 6%). Whereas the men are predominantly studying in engineering (males 23% and females 8%) and services (males 12% and females 3%) (Footnote 29). This indicates that the horizontal gender disparity in employment would continue in the years ahead. However, information on disaggregation by sex contained in the statistics, reviews and infographics of the education sector is not only incomplete and what's more, research on gender is not being applied in follow-up study on the employment status of college and university graduates.

As the percentage of young people enrolling in colleges and universities would grow in the near future, a significant number of students with poor skill would be studying at colleges and universities with a likely substantial decline in the impact of education, concludes a study⁶⁵ carried out in 2018 under the ADB-financed «Higher Education Reform» Project. This means that in the conditions where there is a disruption in gender parity among students, the gender disparity in terms of employment and salary would also be affected and increase significantly.

The country does not have neither a policy nor any kind of coordination of specifically reflecting gender equality related education content in the curriculum of higher education. And students of tertiary education institutions are graduating without any understanding and attitude with regard to gender equality and gender diversity without any knowledge on preventing gender-based violence and discrimination. In view of this, there is an imperative need to determine the gender skills of citizens with higher education and include it in the curriculum, in particular, in the curriculum of general basic subjects.⁶⁶

Technical and vocational education: Technical and vocational schools witnessed a decline in the period after the country transitioned to market economic relations, however, their demand started increasing especially with the revival of national industry in the past decade. There were 35 technical and vocational schools in 2005 and their number had grown to 83 in 2017 predominated primarily by private technical vocational schools. Thanks to the efforts of such donor organisations as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Millennium Challenge Corporation, Swiss Development Agency (SDA) the curriculum was renewed, the capacity of the teachers were built, and the learning environment was improved, as a result of which the number of students increased. In the 2005-2006 academic year there were 7,000 graduates and this number increased to 19,500 in the 2015-2016 academic year. However, an observed trend has been that the number of males have been predominating, while the number of female students had shown signs of further decline in recent years (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Number of students at technical and vocational schools in 2008-2018, by gender

Source: NSO.1212.mn

gender disparity has been observed in the choice for profession among the students. A study carried out in the Western region showed that 40% of the female students were acquiring skills as cooks and seamstresses, while the male students were learning in many more skills.⁶⁷ There is gender disparity in the quality of practical lesson and efficiency that are vital for acquiring technical and vocational education, the reason for which is connected with the stereotype idea about gender by the leadership and workers of the organisations that are hosting the trainees. To illustrate, almost 50% of the girls that had done their practical at construction companies were not made to work according to their profession but were made to work as cooks and caretakers, and teachers of professional training and production centres during their group discussion revealed that their students, after graduation, were being rejected for their skills.

Today when income gap is increasing in the society and cultural contrast is growing among different social groups, the education, cultural, science and sports sector has a decisive role to play in terms of creating a system of values that acknowledge and support gender equality principles, gender diversity, and developing high level of morality among the adolescents and the younger generation. It is also important to study the kind of impact the education sector policy and actions are having on social life, and in particular, on the life pattern of low income urban and rural households, on their economic and financial decisions, population movement, concentration and settlement.

Although the average lifespan of the Mongolian population and the potential employment duration is getting longer, people aged 40 and above have less chance of acquiring and converting to new profession and skills. There is an urgent need to develop gender-sensitivity in the lifelong learning system

Box 11.

Lifelong learning and stereotype thinking

The Government does not have a systematic policy on lifelong learning and acquiring professional skills, which is designed at changing the stereotype thinking and attitude that it is sufficient to learn once and acquire a profession during one lifetime. It has become a commonplace practice to consider age 35 and above as the maximum age a person can learn after which the person is considered old.

Source: From a group discussion of education sector workers of Selenge aimag

In order to provide women and men an equal employment opportunity in the socio-economic sector, and ensure that the work they are doing is equally assessed in the society, it is therefore incumbent not only to provide opportunities to girls and boys to acquire profession, but also to implement the provisions of the Mongolian Law on Promotion of Gender Equality which says that "Adult men and women shall be provided with equal opportunities and conditions to receive alternative educational and non-formal training that aim to decrease differences in the level of education between genders, and to access continuous educational services".

⁶⁷ Mongolkhatan, T. & S. Enkhtüvshin. 2015. *Gender survey among TVET teachers and students in the western region of Mongolia*. GFA Consulting Group, funded by the SDC. https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/countries/countries-content/mongolia/en/VET_Gender_Survey_TVET_2015_Mongolia.pdf

C Health

Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision had set the goal of eliminating poverty in all its forms, improving the living environment of the Mongolian people to lead a healthy and long life; increasing life expectancy at birth to 78 years and placing the country among the first 70 countries on the ranking of countries by human development index by the year 2030. Average lifespan in Mongolia has extended by 4.69 years per annum since 2005, maternal mortality has decreased two fold, infant mortality rate has dropped by 1.9 times, and hepatitis B virus has been controlled. Notwithstanding, the level of mortality owing to communicable diseases, injury and accidents is comparatively higher than other regional countries. The country continues to have higher showing in the world in terms of the percentage of deaths caused by liver cancer and in recent years the spread of tuberculosis is not waning.

Besides reducing the discrepancy in the average lifespan among men and women, and ensuring equitable access to health services, it is also extremely important to exert greater effort towards promoting reproductive health. Morbidity caused by air pollution in the cities is becoming a completely new health challenge. The health sector, basing on medical assistance and services to the population, is making structural, organisational and human resource plans and budgets, and directing health assistance and services towards preventative measures, which would have a positive impact on gender.

Maternal and child health, and protection of mothers: Mongolia, within the framework of its Sustainable Development Vision, had set forth the objective of reducing by the year 2020 maternal mortality rate to 25 for every 100,000 live births, reducing under-five mortality rate to 15 per every 1,000 live births, and reducing infant mortality rate to 13 for every 1,000 live births. Mongolia successfully overcame the challenges in maternal and infant health services during the years of socio-economic transition. Maternal mortality between 2000 and 2015 dropped from 160 to 44 per 1000,000 live births, and became one of the 9 countries to successfully accomplish Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

A tendency towards further reduction in maternal mortality rate has been observed since 2015, which in 2017 was 22.7, and 25.2 as of the first eight months in 2018⁶⁸. In 2005, the birth rate was decreased to 1.95 lowest in Mongolia's history, which then gradually increased up to 2.8 in 2017⁶⁹.

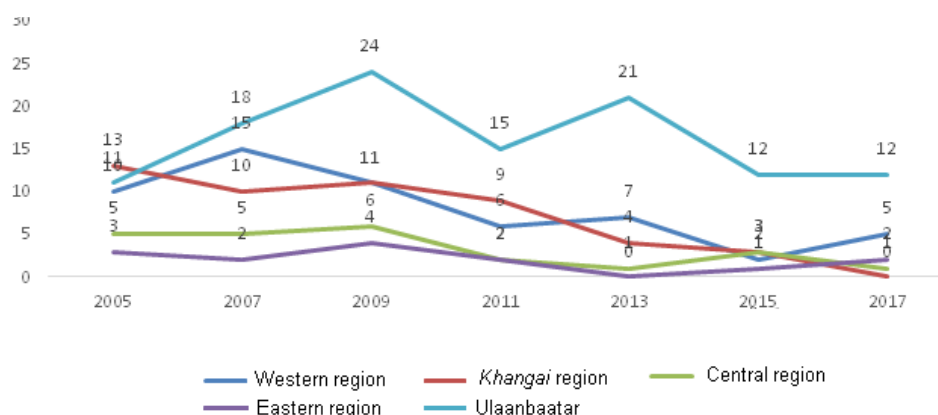
Mongolia, as per the World Bank defined development indicators, with its health and reproductive indicators ranks high not among the regional countries but also at the global level (Table 3). Mongolia has been able to reduce maternal mortality by way of creating a powerful legal environment for promoting maternal health by ratifying relevant international treaties and conventions, including the issue of maternal and child health in the Constitution, the Law on Promoting Gender Equality and Government health policy and programme. Mongolian mothers, besides having access to free medical services during pregnancy, birth and after birth, rest centres for vulnerable pregnant women have been established in the rural areas and tele-medical services are being introduced.

Table 3. Maternal health and reproductive health indicators in Mongolia and other countries

Indicators	In Mongolia	In the East Asia and Pacific region	Global
Percentage of birth among adolescent girls (per 1,000 births)	15.0	21.64	44.1
Lifelong maternal mortality risks (%)	0.13	0.11	0.56
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	44.0	59.0	216.0
Pregnant women covered under hospital observation (%)	98.7	95.1 (2012)	83.9 (2012)
Mothers who have received medical services and have delivered (% of the total)	98.9 (2013)	93.6 (2013)	78.3 (2013)

Source: World Bank. Global Development Indicators. 2017

Maternal mortality, up until 2012, was predominantly in the rural areas but since, regional indicators have improved and maternal mortality rates have dropped below that of the capital city (Figure 19).

Figure19. Maternal mortality rate in 2005-2017, by region

Source: NSO.1212.mn

However, there are issues that need priority consideration in terms of the quality of services. According to NSO, only 37.3% of pregnant mothers in 2013 had received antenatal care (ANC)⁷⁰. But according to UN Population Fund (UNFPA) 45% of maternal mortality is connected to poor quality antenatal, during childbirth and postnatal medical assistance and services. Some government organisations have been swamped in proposals and complaints from pregnant women who have been discharged early from maternity homes because of the shortage of beds⁷¹. Internal migration and civic registration related complications affect on maternal mortality. A 2013 report reveals that every third migrant woman who had moved to Ulaanbaatar was not covered under health insurance (Footnote 42) which proves that migrant women may be encountering restrictions in accessing medical assistance. The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends that 5-15% of all the births could be performed through surgical procedure, but in our country birth through surgical procedure was relatively high or 25.4% in 2016⁷² and in view of this, there is a vital need to research into its reason and its after-effects.

There also is a need to improve the quality of services for mothers, for instance, it is important to develop the right infrastructure and build up the capacity of human resources to cater to the special needs of physically challenged mothers. There are no special-purpose beds for mothers with spine disabilities and neither are there doctors nor nurses who have learnt sign language to cater to mothers with hearing impairment, according to the participants in a health-sector discussion.

There is the need to review some of the rules and procedures in connection with the social changes in the country. For example, an incident when a mother had delivered her baby in the taxi which had entered the wrong entrance gate of the Mother and Infant National Health Centre in 2018 corroborates the need for hospital receptions to pay attention to the fact that pregnant mothers are now able to come on their own to the hospital for delivery without the help of an ambulance service, and also provide emergency medical service irrespective of the jurisdiction of domicile, and the need to carry out internal organisational restructuring at hospitals by instructing the entire hospital staff to deliver the incoming patients without delay to the reception ward.

Infant and Under-Five Child Mortality: In recent years infant and under-5 mortality rate has been dropping rapidly to meet the goals of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. When this mortality rate in 2016 was compared with 1990, infant mortality rate per 1,000 of live births had decreased 3.8 times and Under-5 mortality rate has dropped by 4.2 times. Infant mortality once again increased in 2016 with an outbreak of incidence of measles, and an update for October 2017 showed that measles was in a dropping trend. On a long-term perspective, infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births had dropped from 26.1 to 13.6 from 2005 to 2017, while Under-5 mortality rate had dropped from 20.8⁷³ to 16.7.

Although the rate of infant and under-5 mortality rates are relatively higher in the rural regions than in Ulaanbaatar, the difference has been narrowing down especially after 2005. Under-5 mortality rates in the Eastern and Western regions, including in the remote Uvs and Sukhbaatar aimags were high in 2005, which had dropped to reach the rates in other rural regions in 2017. Judging by the information on infant and under-5 mortality rate, disaggregated by gender, we find that deaths among boys are predominant (Table 4).

⁷⁰ MoH and UNFPA. 2018. *Global Sustainable Development Agenda and the Mongolian Sustainable Development Vision 2030- Linkages with Sexual and Productive Health and Rights*. Ulaanbaatar: UNFPA Mongolia.

⁷¹ Solongo Alгаа. 2015. *Country Profile. On Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health: Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: MONFEMNET. <http://arrow.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Country-Profile-SRH-Mongolia.pdf>

⁷² Health Development Centre. 2017. *Health Indicators-2016*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁷³ UNICEF. 2009. *Report on Mongolian Children and Women*. Ulaanbaatar

Table 4. The state of gender disparity in child mortality in 2017

	Boys	Girls	Gender ratio
Number of children born alive	38538	35790	1,076
Early death during infancy	282	193	1,46
Late death during infancy	94	78	1,2
Under-5 mortality	693	551	1,25

Source: HDC, Health Indicators 2016

In Mongolia it is a common practice to report under-5 child mortality rates only in comparison with the previous year and what's more, gender ratios were more often than not never emphasized. According to WHO, owing to biological reasons, boys tend to be delicate during the perinatal period, which is why the capacity to live among newborn infant girls is higher than that of infant boys. In some countries around the world, mortality rate among girls tend to be high because of the discriminatory attitude towards them. Whereas in Mongolia, boys account for a larger share of under-5 children that have died and gender disparity was higher than the global (1.22) and regional (1.10) averages. This trend was maintained⁷⁴ since 2005, which is a matter for careful consideration. The reason for such a disparity is unclear and there is a shortage of related information. The rate of mortality among boys is higher in the Eastern and Western regions (gender parity 1.8), which could potentially be linked to animal husbandry or access to kindergartens.

It appears that there is a need to improve the health control of under-five children besides raising the health education of the parents. In recent years, for instance from 2015 onwards the issue of cavities among children of young age is being given priority attention. The final assessment of a national program "Healthy Mouth" conducted in 2015 revealed that the prevalence of cavities, the main source of cardio-vascular and kidney disorders, tonsillitis or inflammation of the tonsils, in the capital city among children aged 5 to 6 was 76.1%.

Air pollution in towns and settlements has lately become the most destructive factors seriously affecting the health of mothers and infants. Air pollution is a contributing factor to slow foetal growth, premature birth, miscarriage, and infant weight loss.⁷⁵ Public Health Institute of the Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences in their study done in Ulaanbaatar has directly associated preterm birth with air pollution. Bronchitis and asthma, diseases that wear out children the most, are also caused by air pollution (footnote 76). Pneumonia is the major cause of deaths and in particular, functioning of the lung among under-5 children as compared to that of children living outside of Ulaanbaatar city is poor by 40%. This more than others relates to children living in the peri-urban ger (traditional round felt dwelling) districts in Ulaanbaatar. Besides outdoor air pollution, indoor air pollution is also seriously affecting the health of women and children, and especially those women who spend hours inside the ger tending to stove fire.

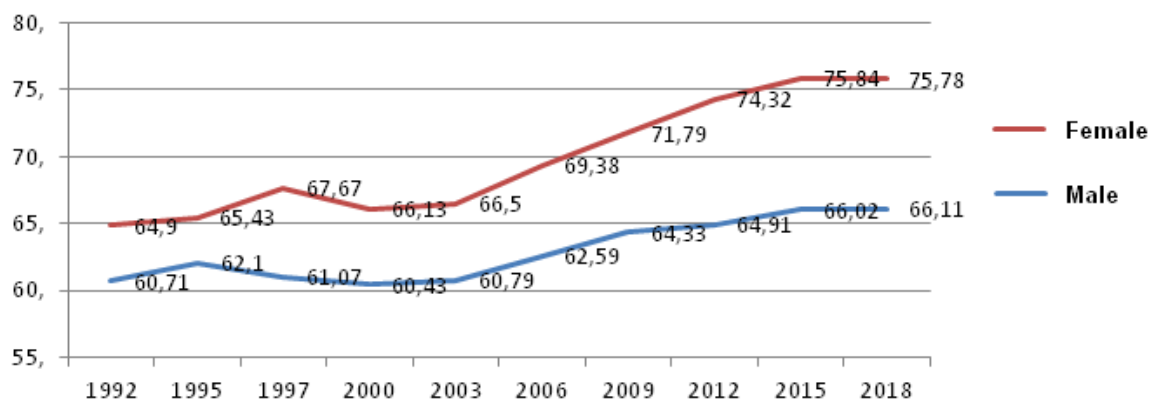
The National Programme of Reducing Air and Environment Pollution, adopted by the Government in 2017, notes that 80% of sanitary facilities of more than 190 thousand households in Ulaanbaatar's ger districts do not meet standards, and in particular, emphasises that air pollution related respiratory disorders among children and old people are growing. The use of powerful detergents by households⁷⁶, residents of the ger districts reusing waste water for washing floor and the habit of throwing greywater in the open street etc., are all contributing not only to the air and soil pollution in the city, but are also increasing health risks to mothers and children.

Men's health: Within the framework of health, the most critical gender issue is the gap between female and male average life expectancy. At the global level, women on an average live 4.3 years longer than men, in 2018, this figure for Mongolia was 9.67 years, compared to 4.19 years in 1992. But the average life expectancy of men dropped suddenly in the years from 1995 to 1998, which was the negative impact of the transition to a free market economy. However, after 2000, average life expectancy has been growing consistently, while gender inequality has been increasing (Figure 20).

⁷⁴ Notes: The percentage of infant and under-5 mortality rates in the World Development Indicators are higher than the National Statistics Office (NSO) data.

⁷⁵ Davy, P. L., G. Gunchin and A. Markwitz. 2011. *Air Particulate Matter Pollution in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia: Determination of Composition, Source Contributions and Source Locations. Atmospheric Pollution Research*, 2, 126-137.

⁷⁶ Sayed, M. N. Uddin et. al. 2015a. *Opportunities and Challenges for Greywater Treatment and Reuse in Mongolia: Lessons Learnt from Piloted Systems. In ACF, Sustainable sanitation for vulnerable population in peri-urban areas of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Compendium of 14 thematic papers.*

Figure 20. Average life expectancy in 1992-2018, by gender

Source: NSO.1212.mnn

Gender inequality in average life expectancy is quite significant depending on the geographical location within the country (Table 5).

Table 5. Gender gap in life expectancy in 2005-2018, by aimags

	Man		Women		Difference in average life expectancy of men and women	
	2005	2018	2005	2018	2005	2018
National total	62,11	66,11	68,61	75,78	-6,5	-9,67
Bayan Olgii	65,34	70,31	69,54	75,36	-4,2	-5,0
Gobi Altai	60,31	65,09	66,24	74,34	-5,93	-9,32
Zavkhan	61,6	67,92	65,72	73,27	-4,12	-5,35
Uvs	59,72	64,31	66,08	73,3	-6,36	-8,99
Khovd	63,01	69,2	69,2	75,42	-6,19	-6,22
Arkhangai	62,78	68,63	67,33	73,08	-4,55	-4,45
Bayankhongor	60,37	66,98	64,58	71,85	-4,21	-4,82
Bulgan	64,24	68,76	69,67	76,41	-5,43	-7,65
Orkhon	64,48	70,77	73,6	82,51	-9,12	-11,74
Ovorkhangai	62,89	67,83	67,41	73,43	-4,52	-5,6
Khuvsgul	58,69	63,52	63,33	71,62	-4,64	-8,1
Gobisumber	66,28	72,6	71,07	76,29	-4,79	-3,69
Darkhan Uul	59,24	64,37	67,09	74,59	-7,85	-10,22
Dornogobi	60,43	66,55	69,02	77,29	-8,59	-10,77
Dundgobi	65,2	70,82	71,39	78,62	-6,19	-7,8
Omnogobi	62,9	68,08	69,15	77,23	-6,25	-9,15
Selenge	62,39	67,67	70,66	78,49	-8,27	-10,62
Tov	64,44	70,44	70,09	75,21	-5,65	-4,77

Dornod	57,8	65,25	64,9	73,89	-7,1	-8,64
Sukhbaatar	61,75	67,58	70,84	77,75	-9,09	-10,17
Khentii	62,97	69,3	68,16	76,29	-5,19	-6,99
Ulaanbaatar	61,25	66,83	68,95	75,05	-7,7	-8,22

Source: NSO.1212.mn

Women in Gobi-Altai, Uvs, Khovd, Arkhangai, Bayankhongor, Ovorkhangai, Huvsgul and Sukhbaatar *aimags*, and men in Gobi-Altai, Uvs, Huvsgul, Darkhan-Uul, Dornod *aimags* have lower life expectancies.

The gender gap in terms of average life expectancy is the highest (stands at 11.74 years) in Orkhon *aimag* and over 10 years in Dornogobi, Dundgobi, Selenge, Sukhbaatar *aimags*. Therefore, important to study why there is such a discrepancy in average life expectancy in the rural areas.

Shorter life expectancy among men is typically ascribed by unhealthy life habit, including, improper diet, less exercise and movement, risky habits and higher vulnerability to injuries and accidents. For instance, a report by the Mongolian Men's Association and National Centre for Public Health shows that at least one half of the male population is dependent on, one way or the other, on alcoholic drink, and 45% of all men are smokers.⁷⁷ However, it must be remembered that behind all the above are factors that have an affect on mental health that pushes someone to become alcoholic addicts, commit suicide and resort to violence. A latest study⁷⁸ carried out in 2013 paints a gloomy picture revealing that mental health disorder is spreading fast in the country, which notes that in just one decade the number of alcoholic addicts grew 25 times, relentless anxiety shot up 8 fold, and depression 7 times and also the fact that 65% of all the population covered in the study were encountering some mental condition (anxiety 18.5%, insomnia 17.1%, chronic exhaustion 16.2%, depression 6.6%, alcoholic addiction 6.2%). The outcome of the study proves that stress-related mental disorder owing to social factors is likely to increase. Men who participated in the focus group discussions named emotions like grievance, anger, depression and anxiety as main reasons for addiction to alcoholism according to the "Men-healthy family center" (NGO) in the years of 2014-2016. With this indicator Mongolia occupies the 7th place in mental depression and in the 3rd place with other types of mental disorders from among the countries of Asia-Pacific. But the health system in Mongolia catering to patients with imminent mental health conditions is weak and there is almost no experience in providing primary mental health care. In recent years boys are becoming addicted to computer games, which makes it ever more important to improve services in this area and relevant sectors must find a way to promote collaboration.

In 2016 cardio-vascular disease-related death rates were 20.45 per 10,000 of the male population and 14.46 for every 10,000 female population, which compared to 2007 is showing a tendency towards decline. But deaths among men aged 45 to 64 caused by coronary heart disease is 4.7 times higher than that of women, brains stroke is double, and hypertension-related deaths are higher by 1.4 times (Footnote 72). While the number of men seeking assistance from health institutions are 2.3 times lower as compared to women⁷⁹. What's more, deaths owing to injuries, accidents and other external factors (24.9%), and deaths due to cancer (19.4%) are higher than the global average (footnote 81). Suicide and traffic-related death rates are high in Mongolia and the majority of the victims are men. A 2015 study by WHO puts Mongolia in the third place in the world in terms of suicide cases and 86% of people committing suicide are males⁸⁰.

Alcohol use disorder not only negatively affects the health, but also obstructs employment, increases domestic violence and poses a serious threat to child safety. From among children of poor families, children whose parents are alcoholics tend to drop out more from schools, become victims of child labour and go in for begging on the streets (Footnote 16). Regrettably, the Government is failing to take consistent measures to address this problem because of the conflict of interest in as much as there are many among the Mongolian Parliament members who own distilleries and also because a sizable portion of the budget comes from tax on alcohol and alcoholic drinks.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Tsengel, K. 2017. "Can helping men in Mongolia improve life for women?" Global Post. 20 December. <https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-12-20/can-helping-men-mongolia-improve-life-women>

⁷⁸ WHO. 2013. *Prevalence of Common Mental Disorders among Population*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁷⁹ SDC. IRIM. 2014. Tsolmon Begzsuren and D. Aldar. 2014. *Gender Overview-Mongolia*. A Desk Study. Ulaanbaatar.

⁸⁰ Alison Brody and S. Sharkuu. 2018. *Mongolia Country Gender Profile*. The European Union Economic Governance for Equitable Growth (EG4EG) Project Mongolia. Ulaanbaatar.

⁸¹ OArmstrong, S. and B. Tsogtbaatar. 2010. *The dual nature of alcohol use and abuse in Mongolia: Reflections through policy*. Asia Pacific Journal Public Health 22(3). Hong Kong.

Box 12.**Alcohol use and men**

There is a communal house in front of my place. There are many students and young people in the dormitory. They quarrel a lot, mainly because of drinking. I've lived there my whole life. I hear from many women that they struggle for life and stand at the counter all day selling stuff. Men just look after the children, if they are good enough. When I tell them to get their husbands to work at the counters, they say "oh no, he'll drink all up." There is too much alcohol consumption. (Woman, over 55 years old)

Unemployed men have nothing to do at home. They gather together with other jobless people, collect the money they have, buy vodka, and drink all day. In the evenings, they come home drunk and trouble their wives and children. (Man, over 55 years old)

Source: ADB. 2017. Rapid Assessment of Gender-Based Violence in Urban Ger Area Communities. TA Consultant's report

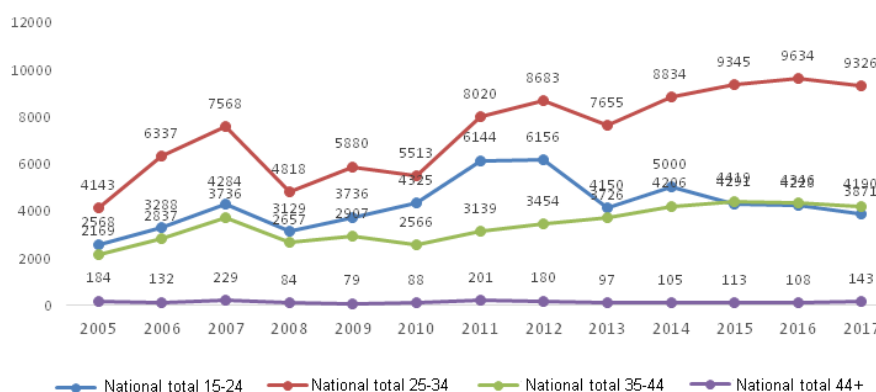
In 2015, women members of the State Great Khural (SGKh) initiated and adopted a Law on Control on Tobacco, according to which kiosks and shops selling cigarettes and tobacco items would be located at a certain distance away from schools and kindergartens, and which smoking in public places were banned. This law is being successfully enforced and has positive impact on the society. However, changes and amendments were made to this law which permitted the setting up of smoking areas in breach of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Incidence of industrial accident especially in the construction, mining, road and transport sectors is particularly high in Mongolia. 2016 statistics show the percentage of deaths at work place owing to industrial accidents in 21 countries was on an average 3.3 per 100,000 workers, and this figure was 4.7⁸² in Mongolia. 68.4% of the people who had become victims of injury and accidents at workplace were men (Footnote 29). Although Mongolia has acceded to ratify the Convention 155 concerning Occupational Safety and Health, the country to date has not acceded to the Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention and Convention 81 concerning Labor Inspection in Industry and Commerce adopted in 1947.

There are ever increasing news in the society about the growing incidence of inflammation of the prostate gland or prostatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STI) among men, but both concrete data and information are few and far apart. As of the first eleven months of 2018 a total of 267 HIV/AIDS cases were registered in the country, of which 20.6% were rural inhabitants and 79.4% residents of Ulaanbaatar. It was confirmed that all the registered cases had been sexually transmitted. 20% of all the HIV/AIDS registered cases were people aged 15 to 24, and 40% were people from 25 to 34 years of age, and 18.4% of all the registered HIV/AIDS cases were women, and men accounted for 81%.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights: Ulaanbaatar city has the most number of abortions which in 2017, as compared to 2005, had more than doubled. In 2011, abortion among girls aged 15 to 19 had witnessed a sudden spike or had reached 40%, which however started dropping between 2012 and 2017 by almost 60%. Abortion among other age groups has been witnessing a declining trend in the last 2 to 3 years (Figure 21). "72 hours – emergency contraception" usage that preventing from pregnancy may have affected decreasing abortion cases which needs to be studied thoroughly.

Figure 21. Number of abortions in 2005-2017, by age groups



Source: NSO.1212.mn

⁸² International Labor Organization. ILO Stat (accessed January 2018).

In 1998-2012 unemployed women and housewives, and in 2012 working women had been primarily going in for abortion. The percentage of herder women who have been having abortion has been witnessing a trend towards constant decline⁸³. However, attention must be given to the fact that the number of abortions at private clinics is on the increase. Judging by individual interviews it has been found that women are going in for abortion for a number of reasons, such as the need to repay debt and for this purpose retain their jobs and income, the need to continue with education, extremely short inter-pregnancy interval, there is no one to care for young infants, lack of support from the family and husband, unpleasant relationship with either the husband or the partner, pregnancy owing to casual sex and so on and so forth⁸⁴.

54% of all women aged between 15 and 49 were using some kind of pregnancy-prevention method. Birth rate among adolescent girls witnessed a slight fluctuation in the period between 2000 and 2016 but has been declining from 25.5% to 24.3% thereafter⁸⁵. 50% of girls who had delivered babies in 2013 were not educated, while 25% of them had "financial problems."

Access to health services: Mongolia ranks higher than the East Asia and Pacific, and even Global indicators in terms of access to hospital beds and medical staff (footnote 88). But the size of budget being allocated to the health sector is insufficient. The average health budget per person in the East Asian and Pacific countries was US\$893 in 2014, which was only US\$565 in Mongolia, whereas the percentage share of expenses borne individually is higher than the global average, which goes to show that access to health services is greatly dependent on the paying capacity of the service seekers.

The National Program on Gender Equality and its Action Plan (2017), the Health Sector Action Plan for ensuring Gender Equality (2017) both include provisions for training health workers capable of providing assistance and services compatible with the special health needs of men, and to set up men's consulting rooms at aimag and district polyclinics. However, actions have yet to be taken to immediately train doctors for men and in particular, give priority to the imperative need for doctors for men in the rural areas, and to outlay finances for these purposes.

Box 13.

The demand for men's health services

The prevalence of sexually transmitted infections is particular high in Orkhon aimag, according to a survey carried out by the public health authority. Although the majority of such patients are men in the age bracket of 18 and 45, they refer to hospitals for women as there are no hospitals for men. Although most of the men go to private laboratories for testing, such laboratories do not have doctors specializing in men's diseases and so men are instructed to refer to reproductive and women's hospitals. Three years ago there used be one doctor for men working in Orkhon aimag, but after the doctor retired not a single medical center has opened specializing in providing medical assistance and services to men.

*Source: From an interview with "Onosh" laboratory doctor L. Baigalmaa, 2018
erdenetpost.mn/show/180400008*

The Ministry of Health in collaboration with international partners is implementing an initiative to set up an adolescent and young people-friendly clinic in Bayangol district, Ulaanbaatar and to develop a programme on sexual health for students, the scale and scope of the initiative are however inadequate and in particular, they are inaccessible to children and young people, especially, those living in remote rural areas.

D Women's leadership in politics and decision-making

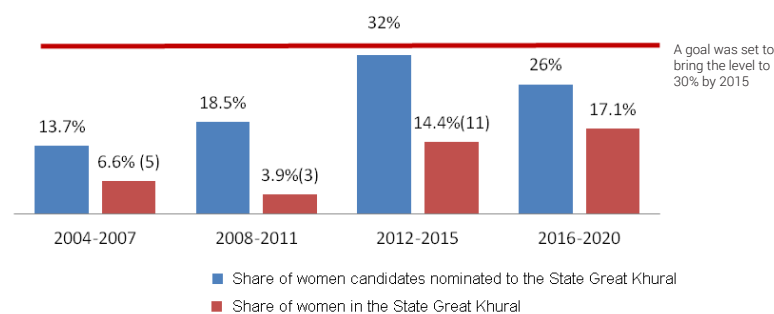
Citizens of Mongolia, irrespective of their sex, have equal right to take part in decision-making, in particular, to elect and be elected to the highest national and local legislatures, and although the women of Mongolia, as compared to their counterparts in many countries around the world, had long time early in 1924 had been Constitutionally guaranteed the right to be involved in politics, their involvement in politics and decision-making process continues to remain low.

Leadership of women in national and local parliaments. The number of women candidates nominated to run for office in the State Great Khural has been constantly on the rise since 2005 accounting for 32% of the total nominations and although the number of women legislatures had increased from 3 to 13, Mongolia failed to accomplish the 2015 MDG objectives to bring the total percentage of women in politics and decision-making to 30 percent. 2016 witnessed a historically highest percentage of women elected to the State Great Khural to 17.1%, however, this accomplishment is

still lower than the global average (23.7% in 2017) and also the average showing in the East Asia-Pacific region (19.7% in 2017). In terms of political empowerment, Mongolia was ranked in the 107th place (Footnote 2) from among 144 countries, according to the World Gender Report 2017 of the World Economic Forum.

The National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE), nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and international agencies in the last 16 years have been constantly carrying out promotional activities to change the stereotype notion about gender in the society regarding women's participation in politics, thanks to which political parties and coalitions succeeded in including in the Law on Elections to the SGKh of Mongolia the minimum quota (20%) for women eligible for nomination by them. There is no denying that this kind of persistency emboldened the women and consequently, the share of women being nominated to the State Great Khural had gone up (Figure 22). Immediately after the adoption of the Law on Promoting Gender Equality for the first time a woman candidate (N. Udval) entered in the 2013 Presidential election, which was no doubt the result of the above effort as well as the impact of the 2011 LPGE.

Figure 22. Share of women nominated and elected to the State Great Khural, according to election years



Source: General Election Commission of Mongolia. 2016

Although a 30% quota for women candidates nominated from parties and coalitions was first introduced basing on best international practices, the size of this quota was reduced on the eve of the elections on the grounds that there were insufficient number of women candidates, which was however once again restored in 2012 and 2016. It must be noted that such an indecisiveness on the part of political parties with respect to the promotion of women's participation in politics deals a blow to civil societies standing for gender equality and to women candidates, thus giving doubts to rise.

Changes and amendments were made to the Law on Elections on 5 May 2016, which pointed out that at least 20% of candidates nominated by a party or coalition shall be represented by one gender (Article 126.2.), which is consonant with the substance and the spirit of the LPGE. However, the experience of the past elections prove that the suggested quota becomes a purely symbolical in nature in the event the above legal provision is not enforced, and when the mechanism of accountability is left out of the law. Politics in Mongolia is becoming more and more "murky" with every passing year and election expenses are growing, which are increasingly restricting women's political participation, an issue that must be given serious consideration from the legal framework. The country had spent MNT 7.8 billion in the 2008 parliamentary elections, MNT 35.6 billion in 2012⁸⁶, and according to media reports, MNT 34.3 billion in 2016.

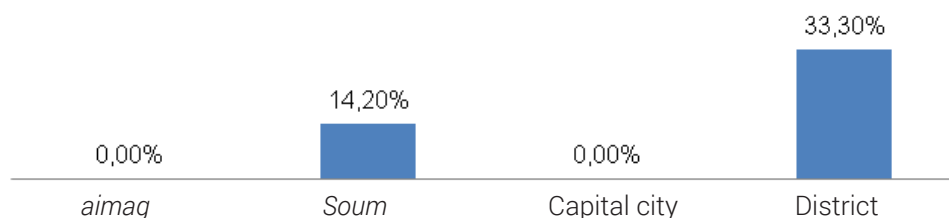
Today people at both the national and local levels expect that concrete contribution is made to not only increasing the number of women in the Mongolian parliament but also they ensured greater political empowerment for establishing more social justice, ensuring gender equality, more equitable distribution of development benefits so that they would have noticeable impact on the life of households and individual citizens of the country. However, the growing number of major business representation at the political decision-making level is contingent on the women being elected to the SGKh and the local assemblies. This has a negative impact on the confidence and expectations from the society on the women at this time when the income gap is growing bigger, which could have the potential of further restricting women's participation in politics. This prompts the need to further empower women already involved at the level of political decision-making, nominating women to SGKh and local elections, retain their seats thereof, introduce quotas promoting women at all level of party structures and organisational set up, and to ensure that campaign finance and system are just and fair in terms of gender.

Although quotas are not being applied, as in the elections to the SGKh, when women are being nominated to run in local elections, the returns of the 2016 local elections show that 26.7 percent of members of the *aimag, soum*, capital city

⁸⁶ General Election Commission. Integrated election expenses of parties, from the website: <http://gec.gov.mn/news/309/359>

and district Citizen's Representative Khurals (CRKh), 27.8% of the presidium members, and 13.8% of the chairpersons (speakers) of the local parliaments were women (Figure 23). But there is not a single woman who has ever served as the Governor of the *aimag* or Ulaanbaatar city mayor or chairperson of the CRKh.

Figure 23. Share of women in the members of the aimag, soum, Capital city and aimag, district Citizen's Representative Khurals, during the 2016-2020 election years

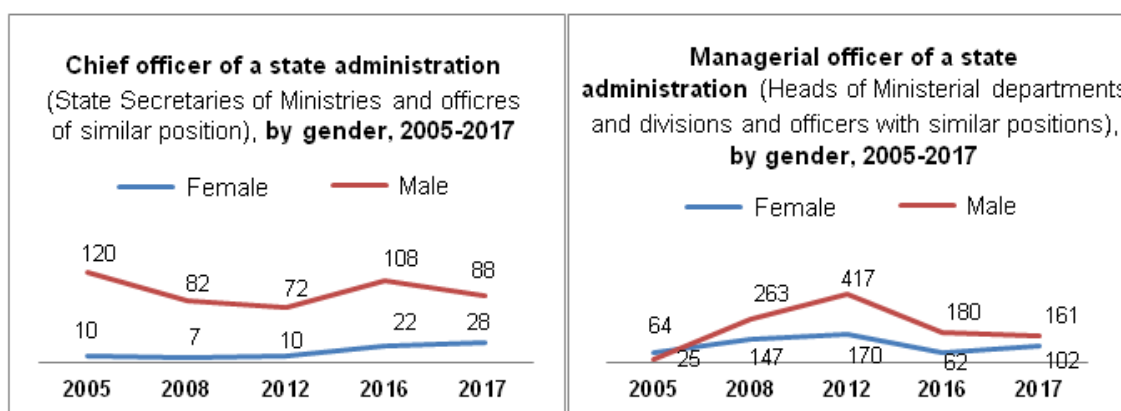


Source: Report of the General Election Commission of Mongolia. 2016

In order to paint a realistic picture about women's participation in the decision-making process, it is important to train and develop future women leaders than just tallying the handful of women at the highest state office levels. The MDG goals implementation report noted that the goals to ensure women's participation in politics and decision-making process had not been met is connected with the fact that the percentage of women nominated to and elected in the SGKh was emphasized. But in 2005 women accounted for 33.7% of the workers in the state administrative decision-making level. Although this figure changed to 25.2% with the structural changes and job cutting in 2015, it once again grew and became 34.3% as of 2017.

The provision (10.1.2) in the LPGE to the effect that "Representation of any one sex in decision-making positions in public administration shall not be less than 15% among state secretaries and heads of agencies, 30% among heads of department in ministries and agencies" was designed at ensuring gender parity at the central public administrative level. Since 2012, the percentage share of women as top-level executives at state administrative institutions grew gradually to reach 24% in 2017. The percentage share of women holding managerial functions in the state administration was 28.9% in 2012, which changed and decreased to 25.8% in 2016 following structural changes and job cutting in the Government. However, since 2016, the share of women has been increasing and today 38.7% of all managerial officers are women (Figure 24).

Figure 24. Heads and managerial officers at the ministries, by gender, 2005-2017



Source: NSO. Number, structure and changes in the civil servants of Mongolia, 1995-2017.2018

The fact that state administrative system, its structure and organizational set up are changing constantly once every 4 years after the elections and executive officers are being given political appointment are becoming a barrier to women to be promoted to executive positions and to ensure their stable functioning. However, the introduction of a "merit" system in selection, appointment, dismissal, performance assessment, promotion, and rewards and incentives for civil servants, as outlined in the Law on Civil Service (2017), which came into force as of 1 January 2019, has given hopes that

women are now getting a better opportunity to be promoted to top executive levels of government office.

E Gender-based violence

The Government of Mongolia, in the course of its implementation of the National Program on Gender Equality (2002) had been giving priority to creating the legal environment for guaranteeing gender equality, to eliminate violence against women and combat domestic violence. Thanks to the support of international organisations and the efforts of activists of national women's NGOs, the Law on Combating Domestic Violence (2004), the LPGE, and the Law on Combating Human Trafficking (2012) were adopted, which clarified the legal framework for combating and eliminating gender-based violence, establishing and removing their causes and factors, and regulating the legal environment towards protecting the rights of survivors of violence and victims. Gender-based violence, from the legal point of view, has been defined as "any action or inaction prompted by the victim's gender that inflicts or has the potential to inflict a physical, sexual, emotional, and economic damage to a victim."⁸⁷

Before 2005 there were two shelters for victims of domestic and sexual violence in the capital city Ulaanbaatar and Dundgobi aimag, run and managed by the National Centre Against Violence (NGO)⁸⁸ and today, there are 8 government and NGO managed shelters and 14 one-point service centers for survivors of violence against children, domestic and sexual violence, and human trafficking.⁸⁹ Starting in 2005, temporary shelter and care service was included under and as part of the social welfare service, the size of the operating cost for service per person was fixed, and eventually in 2009 a service standard at shelters was enacted.

Integration of information and related database is important in the fight against gender-based violence. Specific registration of domestic violence cases in the statistics on crimes and offences of the police started in 2008 and today, the police have been able to set up an integrated internet database on domestic violence cases. However, information and data from all organizations providing services to domestic violence survivors have not yet been fully covered in the police database.

In 2017, the National Statistics Office (NSO), basing on internationally recognized methodology, for the first time conducted a national study "Breaking the silence for equality - Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Mongolia", which made it possible to have an overall view of the present status of GBV. The study revealed that more than one half of (59.7%) all Mongolian women are victims of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence⁹⁰. This is a much higher figure if it is compared with another study carried out in 2005 which showed that 36% of all Mongolian women were being exposed to violence⁹¹.

So far, crimes such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, rape and human trafficking have been predominant crimes related to gender-based violence in Mongolia. Incidence of gravest violence-related crimes committed against women, such as domestic violence, human trafficking and sexual harassment had not dropped in the country. Although the initial legal environment for combating gender-based violence has been formed, the system of registration and information is far from being perfect, inter-sectoral collaboration capacity is weak, and the mechanisms of prevention and protecting victims is not functioning smoothly at all levels. In particular, the urgency of protecting survivors of gender-based violence and improving assistance and services to them continues to remain high on the agenda.

Domestic violence. 88.3% of domestic violence are against women and 64.6% against children and one half of children and one fourth of senior citizens are becoming victims of domestic violence⁹². According to UNFPA, domestic violence is one of the most serious and common crimes in Mongolia, which is being committed regularly in violation of human rights (footnote 96). 48% of respondents to a question whether domestic violence is an issue in Mongolia fully agreed that it is an issue, while 32% of the respondents have acknowledge that it is a problem but in "some respect."⁹³

The Law on Combating Domestic Violence was renewed basing on the bitter grief of women, children and their near and dear ones who had become victims of this crime and who have lost their lives and on the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Law, which was ratified by the SGKh in December 2016. This is an acknowledgement of the fact that domestic violence is a crime which inflicts enormous damage on families and the society, and which is committed

⁸⁷ Law on Promoting Gender Equality (LPGE), Article 4.1.8.

⁸⁸ Note: The National Centre Against Violence, founded in 1995, is the first professional NGO that has been working to eliminate sexual and domestic violence against women and children. It is also the first NGO in Mongolia to open and run its own shelter for survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

⁸⁹ Note: According to the integrated database of the Ministry of Justice and home affairs of Mongolia on shelters for victims of domestic violence, there are six one-point service centres and 11 temporary shelters in the country.

⁹⁰ NSO, UNFPA. 2018. Breaking the silence for equality: 2017. *National Study on Gender-based Violence in Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁹¹ MoH. Health Development Center. UNICEF. 2005. *A Study into Domestic violence Against Children and Women*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁹² UNFPA. 2016. *Mongolian Parliament Approves Domestic Violence Law*. <https://mongolia.unfpa.org/mn/node/14513>

⁹³ Center for Insights in Survey Research. Government of Canada. 2016. *National Survey of Mongolian Public Opinion*. Ulaanbaatar.

deliberately based on mutually inequitable power and authority in relationship. The main concept of the newly revised law is the promotion of cross-sectoral coordination in combating domestic violence. The law gives priority attention to prevention of domestic violence and the Coordination Council for Crime Prevention at the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs (MJHA) is responsible for coordinating and enforcing the law at the national level. The new revised law was conducive to the implementation at all levels the integrated legal framework of the system of prevention, early detection, combating of domestic violence and protection of the survivors. Accordingly, positions were created at the aimag and district departments to oversee domestic violence related matters and "joint teams" were formed at all primary-level administrative units, which is a proof that sound grounds have been created for the system to function in an adequate manner.

Box 14.

The second wave against domestic violence

"It was not easy in the beginning to secure the approval of the Law on Combating Domestic Violence. There was strong resistance in the SGKh as MPs, during the course of the discussion of the bill, deplored the idea of passing such a law just for hitting the wife" said D. Enkhjargal, national gender expert, who carried out effective advocacy for the approval of the first independent Law on Combating Domestic Violence (2004) and the revised amended law and who served as a member of the working group on drafting the bills. Continued D. Enkhjargal "After a very strong resistance, finally the Parliament decided to leave open changes and amendments to other laws and approved the above law in isolation". As the issue of protection of survivors of domestic violence was not reflected in our legal framework save one or two provisions in the Law on Family, it was important to at least have an independent law to start with.

"From the time the law was adopted and enforced, the National Center Against Violence started to work to influence the creation of an integrated system of protecting the survivors, and as a result of consistent evidence-based advocacy efforts 12 years later the Law on Combating Domestic Violence was revised (2016). Initially domestic violence was being considered only at the level of quarrel/conflict, this situation was changed and actions that have inflicted and/or could have inflicted serious damage to life and health were defined as a crime, and actions that did not resort to physical assault and cause damage were defined as offence. A system of protecting the survivors (laws, policy, their implementation structure, mechanism, integrated services, rules, standards, internet-based information database) has been created and there is cross-sectoral coordination in place.

"Although we had these and other progress, we made one step backward in terms of bringing to justice perpetrators of the crime. In order to put in place a comprehensive regulatory structure for the protection of the victims, the new Law on Combating Domestic Violence was developed and approved in very close coordination with the Criminal Code, the Law on Infringement, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Infringement Review and Procedure Law. But these key laws on criminal legal framework as well as the Law on Combating Domestic Violence were revoked on the grounds that they were not published in the journal "Toriin Medeelel" (State Information) and ratified. After a definite period of time, it was once again considered at the SGKh and approved but the period for the enforcement of the sentence banning travel (ban on moving out from the place of residence, ban on moving to a certain place, to move around in the direction fixed by the court, and changing place of domicile with the permission of the relevant authority), other than incarceration, was delayed until 2019. A bill⁹⁴ on extending this delay to 2021 was discussed by the Parliamentary Legal Standing Committee and the motion for its consideration at a plenary session of the SGKh was approved. This has made it impossible to give any sentence other than imprisonment. This inaccurate situation around accountability could force victims of domestic violence not to approach the police and seek protection under the law.

Source: From an interview with national gender expert D. Enkhjargal

However, the mechanism of accountability has been weakened in the new revised Law on Combating Domestic Violence, which, according to pertinent experts, is having a negative impact on the registration of crimes related to domestic violence (Figure 25). 12 domestic violence-related deaths were registered in 2017 and 9 in 2018. If we compare this with the figures in the years prior to the approval of the law, when 24-26 deaths were registered in the previous years, the number of deaths seemingly appears to have dropped, and the figures once again underline the important of further intensifying the efforts to ensure, without delay, the safety and security of the victims in high risk.

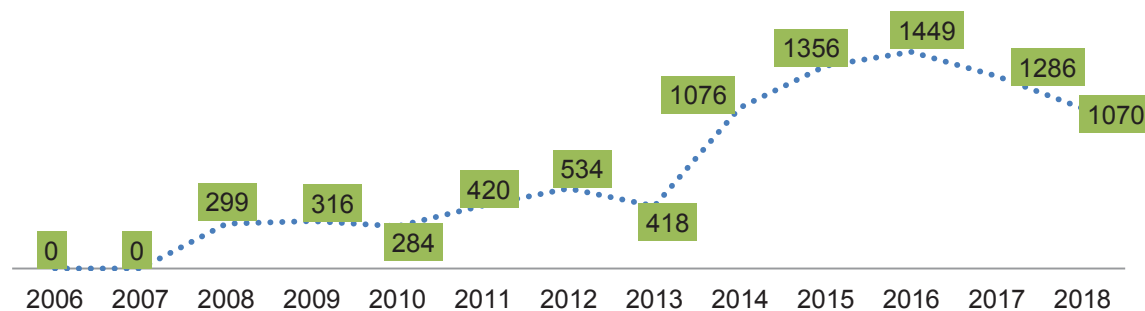
Box 15.***A tragic case of a victim of domestic violence***

In April 2012, a young woman G, aged 22, lost her life on her way to the court when she was stabbed 12 times by her husband. The woman, according to the 2004 Law on Combating Domestic Violence, had approached the police several times seeking protection for her life and health, but her husband, an alcoholic, would be detained at the police sobering station for one night and released the next day, without making any formal charges against him. G had also approached the court for a divorce but the court did not accept her request, instead asked her to reach compromise with her husband, and delayed her request for divorce for two months.

Her husband became more aggressive, he would shadow her and threatened to take her life and although G once again complained to the police who rejected her complaint saying “If you have already submitted a petition for divorce, you need to go to the court.” And so G asked the court to pass a decision to restrict her rights and to “instruct her to temporarily live separately,” and although the social worker of the one-stop service center and the shelter had warned that the risk to G’s life was indeed very high, the warning was not heeded by the court rejecting it as “unconfirmed.” As soon as the two months given for compromise and reconciliation expired, G decided to go to the court to once again seek approval for her divorce request, and on her way to the court, just 30 minute before the court was to go into session G lost her life to her husband leaving orphaned a 3-year-old son, and 6 months later G’s mother also passed away because of the mental stress and pressure .

Source: From a document of the National Centre Against Violence

Figure 25. Number of domestic violence-induced crimes, 2006-2018

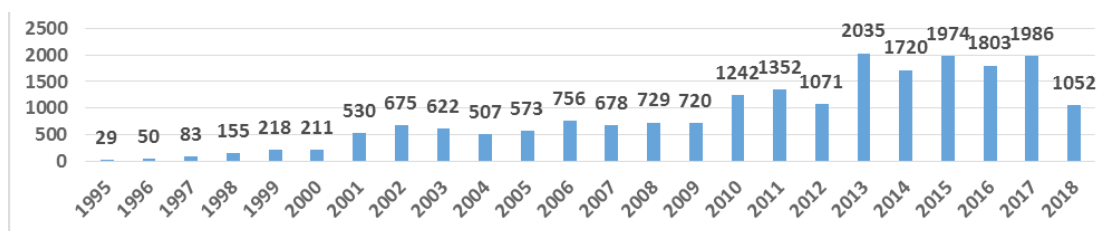


Source: NSO.1212.mn

Judging by the domestic violence-related crimes registered in 2017 with the police, 93% of the survivors were women and 7% were children under the age of 18. From among them, 53.5% are wives of perpetrators of domestic violence, 17.1% are one living with a partner, 3.4% are children born of the parents and 3.5% are children of adopted fathers. Almost 20% of the survivors had been subject to 1-3 years of constant violence, 60% were victimized 1-2 times, 2% were regularly subject to violence and 46.1% of all the survivors of violence are unemployed.

However, the above data relates only to those who have approached the police and there are many other girls and women who have not come and registered with the police, who have not chance of going to the police, who are unable to seek assistance or service, and who are living in remote inaccessible areas. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of people who have lodged complaints with the National Center Against Violence (NCAV) far exceeds those survivors of violence who have registered with the police (Figure 26).

Figure 26. Number of clients of the NCAV (basing on first timers), 1995-2018



Source: NCAV Statistical Data on Clients

A survey carried out in 2015 reveals that 15% of herder families experienced domestic violence issues, and among them herders of 35 to 49 years of age are predominant. However, researchers believe that this figure could be much lower than the actual figures as the women in these households could not be asked individually (Footnote 6). There is obviously a vital need to tailor the assistance and services rendered to victims of domestic violence specifically to suit the specific conditions and situations of those engaged in nomadic livestock breeding and in particular, herder women.

Box 16.

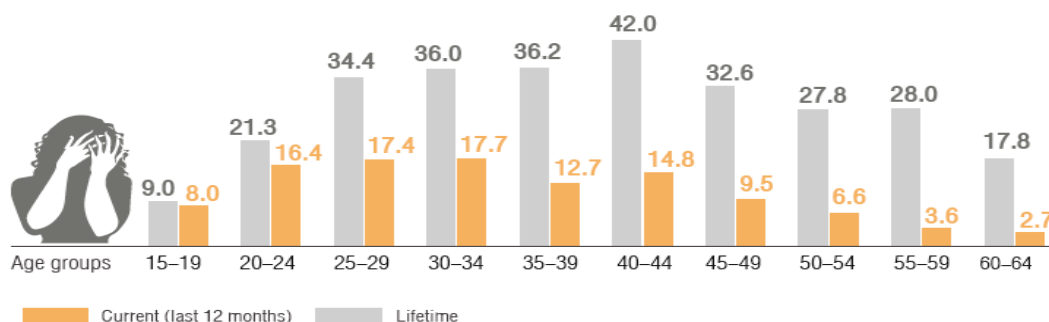
The issue of herder women – survivors of domestic violence

When an emergency call is made related to a domestic violence crime reporting, the perpetrator is taken to the town of Erdenet, and is charged MNT 100 thousand for overnight. Therefore, instead of getting into debt in this manner, it becomes much easier to escape with your child. It is most difficult in winter. What next and what to do when a herder woman becomes a victim of domestic violence, this is one of the most difficult issues.

Source: From a group discussion with herder women in Orkhon aimag

Victims of violence vary according to their age groups (Figure 27). Women aged 40-44 mostly subject to physical and sexual violence, while young girls aged 15-19 are most subject to restraints abuse.

Figure 27. Percentage of ever-partnered woman who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, by age groups and reference period, 2017



Source: NSO, UNFPA. *Breaking the silence for equality: 2017 National Study on Gender-based Violence in Mongolia*

Women tend to continue to put up with violence despite the fact that the legal framework is in place and public awareness and knowledge about the issue are improving. This trend is increasingly observed among rural women, and also as women advance in their age, however, it is lower as the education level of the women becomes higher. 62.2% of all women relate excessive alcohol abuse, 36.2% - jealousy, and 13.1% - disobedience as the major sources of domestic violence. According to a report released in 2014 (Footnote 80) rural women not only put up more with both sexual and physical violence, but this trend appears to lower as their education level increases but increases as they grow older in age. The consequences of domestic violence are grave. 42.8% of all women who have become victims of physical

violence have suffered injury and trauma, and 71.6 % of them have suffered serious trauma. 35.5% of women victims of sexual violence, 20.5% of those who are victims of physical violence and 36.5% of women who have suffered both physical and sexual violence want to commit suicide, while 27.4% of them have attempted suicide (Footnote 94).

Although domestic violence is committed primarily against girls and women, the main victims turn out to be children. Recent years have witnessed a spike in the number of children exposed to domestic violence, but there still is no legal regulatory framework in place according to which child victims of violence can be taken away from the jurisdiction and protected from their perpetrators, provided psychosocial and medical assistance, and their parents educated to raise their awareness of the issue. As the content of compulsory teaching for perpetrators of domestic violence has not been fully defined and regulated, behaviour change efforts are turning out to be mere lip service without the expected outcome.

Box 17.

Domestic violence and children

Domestic violence account for almost 90 percent of the crime and acts of violence that are being committed against children in our country

Source: From an interview by B. Javzankhuu, Head of Child Protection and Service Department, National Authority for Children, 2013

Sexual harassment at workplace: The Law on Promoting Gender Equality defines “sexual harassment” as an “unwelcome sexual advance made in verbal, physical and/or other forms, intimidation, threat and/or other forms of coercion that makes sexual intercourse an unavoidable option for the victim or that creates an unbearable hostile environment and/or causes damage in terms of the person’s employment, professional, economic, psychological and/or any other form of well-being”. The law also prohibits sexual harassment at workplace and has defined the rights and responsibilities of the employers. But the law does not define how and to what extent a perpetrator of workplace sexual harassment can be made accountable and brought to justice, thereby rendering the above provision of the law merely declarative in nature, and in this connection an alliance of NGOs working on combating workplace sexual harassment believes that there is an imperative need to make a number of changes and amendments to the Labour Code and the Law on Infringement.

Sexual harassment reflected in the Criminal Code, which was, however, removed from the law in 2017 when changes and amendments were made to it, just rendering sexual harassment as not a crime whereby it has become impossible to impose any fine or punishment and compensation for damage owing to sexual harassment. What’s more, there is no legal framework in place according to which no justice can be meted out if workplace sexual harassment case has not been reported.

Box18.

The protection for victims of sexual harassment at workplace

When a survey was carried out among 300 people more than 10 years ago, it was found that every one out of five people were subject to workplace sexual harassment, and someone responded that every third person was subject to this kind of abuse. From among these 300 people, there was only one person who had referred the case to the relevant organization, which was resolved. Last year when we carried out a similar survey, the result had not changed. And the protection and related services rendered to survivors of the sexual harassment are still being shouldered by NGOs.

Source: From an interview by G. Ganbayasakh, head of the Center for Gender Equality Rights

A victim of sexual harassment has the right to lodge complain with the NHRC, but there are very few who take advantage of this right. The NHRC had received 240 complaints related to labour rights between 2008 and 2017, while it had received only 21 complaints in the last four years related to sexual harassment at workplace. What’s more, the NHRC has restricted authority when it comes to taking actions against reported cases of sexual harassment at workplace.

Box 19.***Sexual harassment at workplace and the NHRC***

When a petition is submitted to the NHRC, it gathers evidence and testimony from the victims, witness(s) and the alleged perpetrator of abuse. If the NHRC deems that the case is indeed sexual harassment, it would file a claim and recommendation to a ranking official of the given organization and the Council monitors the response action taken within 7-30 days after the claim is filed. The claim filed by the NHRC demanding action against the official guilty of sexual harassment to the higher authority of that organization. If the case of sexual harassment has elements of a crime or if force has been used, then the law enforcing agencies take over the case for investigation.

Source: From an interview with Z. Unurjargal, Senior Officer, NHRC

The NHRC carried out a study in 2014 covering more than 500 people from 24 different organisations, it found that these people had poor understanding or knowledge about sexual harassment and the response action, and also that there was no mechanism for investigation and confirmation of alleged sexual abuse. The NHRC also believes that it is difficult to reveal if sexual harassment crime has been committed or not because its victims, out of fear, normally do not lodge a complaint and has recommended that this issue needs to be included in the newly revised Labour Code.

Box 20.***A provision under discussion towards including sexual harassment at workplace issue in the newly revised Labour Code******Provision eight. Prohibiting coercion in professional and labor relations***

- 8.1. It is prohibited to exert pressure on the worker or an individual by the employer and a third party involved and also to exert pressure on the employer, third party and other workers by the worker or an individual in the course of developing labor relations, during employment and during professional training.*
- 8.2. It is prohibited to express sexual motives through words, body language or any other forms when the employer, worker and the third party have not expressed their desire, and to exert sexual pressure as provided for in the Law on Promoting Gender Equality.*
- 8.3. A person who is allegedly a victim of pressure within the framework of professional and labor relations, reserve the right to lodge complaint with the National Commission on Human Rights.*
- 8.4. The employer shall incorporate the sexual harassment at workplace-prevention, combating and resolving the complaints related provisions in the organization's internal labor procedure and rules*

Source: Guide to the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions

Civil society organisations of Mongolia are powerful voices seeking an end to and prevention of workplace sexual harassment. An online survey carried out in 2016 by the Mongolian Women's Fund (MONES) revealed that 97.5% of victims of workplace sexual harassment are women, and 2.5% are men. The survey also showed that 97.5% of sexual harassment perpetrators are men, 87.4% of them have higher education and 69.1% are top executive managers. In 2016 the MONES had carried out a survey involving 753 workers with higher education (87% of them were women) and the questioned had commented that workplace sexual harassment was common and 97% of the women in the survey said they had experienced sexual harassment at workplace or at colleges and universities while they were students, and 2% of men had responded saying that they were subject to sexual harassment from employers and high-level female managers. It was revealed that they were either dismissed from their work, demoted or were assigned more work for resisting sexual harassment.⁹⁵

The LPGE does have provisions on prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace by the employer and creation of a working environment free of sexual harassment, but neither the state, NGOs nor the economic entities have sufficient knowledge on the zero-tolerance to harassment which remains an outstanding issue. In particular, labor relations are not restricted to workplace alone, they continue during mission assignments, in other places related to the functions of the given organisation, and so not only a staff member of a given organisation but also trainees, consultants, paid and contractual workers even have high risk of being subject to sexual harassment, which is not noticed and there is a misconception that sexual harassment is likely only between an employee and the employer, and this kind of sentiment is quite common. In recent years, state organizations have started incorporating in their internal procedures specific norms for prevention of sexual harassment in their workplace. It is laudable that the NCGE Secretariat issued guidelines⁹⁶ for

⁹⁵ TA92UN-PAGE. 2016. *Gender Mainstreaming in Green Development Policy of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar.

⁹⁶ Note: The guidelines were developed jointly in 2018 by the Government of Mongolia and the Asian Development Bank under a technical assistance project "Gender-responsive sector and local development policies and actions" (TA9201-MON: project) financed by the Poverty Alleviation Fund of the Government of Japan.

development and implementation of the “gender-inclusive workplace action plans designed for private sector entities” and has already started briefing the companies jointly with the Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions and the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

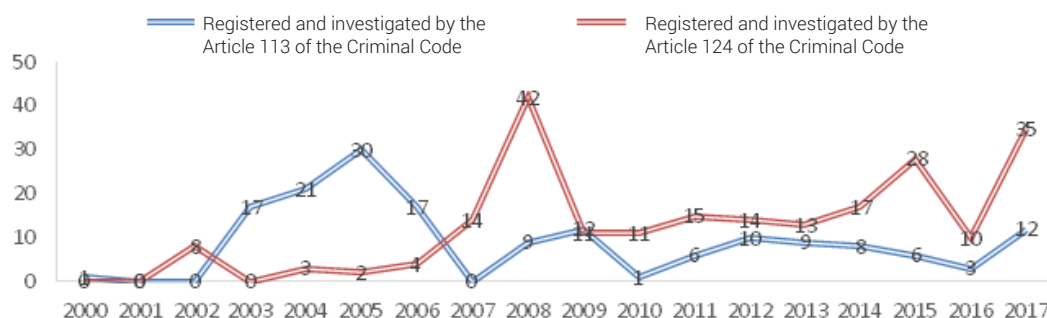
It is important for educational organizations of Mongolia to implement policies and measures with regard to workplace sexual harassment. More than 50% of secondary school pupils had become victims of sexual harassment, according to a study carried out by an NGO in 2008, and the majority of these victims were girls. Although sexual harassment has become a serious problem at colleges and universities, their management is not taking any action. As of today the Mongolian National University alone has in its internal procedures a provision banning sexual harassment, however it has overlooked such issues as prevention, reporting, investigation and meting out justices for any incidence of sexual harassment which but makes it difficult to cater to the complaints of victims because “there is no policy regarding this matter.”⁹⁷

There are instances of girls dropping out of schools and even committing suicide by jumping from school and building rooftops because of sexual harassments in the school environment. Apart from the school environment, a matter of grave concern is that girls and women engaged in training and other activities at theatres, sport and art institutions are falling victims to sexual harassment, thus limiting their capacity to prove their artistic and sport capabilities to the public. The NGO on combating sexual harassment at workplace, through its network has reported that 25% of women and 13% of men aged 18 to 24 are being subject to online sexual harassment.⁹⁸

Human trafficking. Mongolia, having acceded to international instruments concerning trafficking in persons, has committed itself before the international community to consistent combat this type of crime. As a country with a high-risk human trafficking quite a number of years have passed by since concrete actions have been taken by Mongolia at the state legislative and policy levels to expose, combat and prevent this kind of crime, the fight against and elimination of the crime of trafficking in persons continue to remain one of the pressing agenda issues before Mongolia.

There was only one case of human trafficking registered in Mongolia in 2001, but in 2018 more than 300 such cases were registered and are under investigation. 2001-2017 statistical data of law agencies on trafficking in persons show that the police have registered and have investigated 161 cases of human trafficking under Article 113 of the special section of the Criminal Code, and 227 cases related to involving others in commercial sexual exploitation and organization of forced prostitution⁹⁹ (Figure 28).

Figure 28. Number of crimes related to involving others in commercial sexual exploitation and organization of forced prostitution registered by the police, 2000-2017



Source: National Police Agency of Mongolia

The booming mining activities in the south of Mongolia have contributed to both local and international movements of people, in particular, they are contributing to increasing risks of trafficking in persons in and around the Chinese-Mongolian border, according to the reports released in 2018 by the US State Department.¹⁰⁰

Human trafficking crime is both blatant and clandestine, and because of the poor system of protecting its victims, the victims themselves have little or poor knowledge about the crime and also there are not many cases that are being resolved by the law enforcement organizations, and what's more, statistics related to this crime tend to be unrealistic¹⁰¹. Furthermore, because of the non-existence of a uniform idea about this type of crime, the methods in which the crime

⁹⁷ Individual interviews carried out as part of analysis by ADB's gender consulting firm under TA9201. June 2018. Ulaanbaatar

⁹⁸ Chinchuluun, N.. 2017. *What is workplace sexual harassment, and how to prevent and interrupt it at employment, education and cultural spheres?* Ulaanbaatar.

⁹⁹ Council for Coordinating Crime Prevention in Mongolia. 2018. *White Book of Crimes in Mongolia-2017*. Ulaanbaatar.

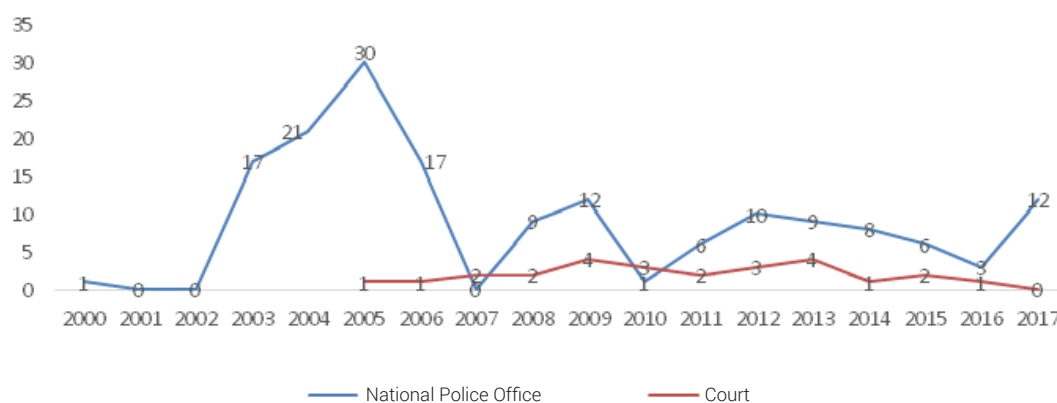
¹⁰⁰ <https://mn.usembassy.gov/mn/our-relationship-mn/official-reports-mn/2018-trafficking-persons-report-mn/>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.legalinfo.mn/annex/details/7908?lawid=12751>

is being investigated are imperfect and because of the non-existence of a system of protecting the victims and the witnesses, crimes related to trafficking in persons are not registered with the police, even if they are registered they are not resolved in the court, and are dismissed, the court even alters the classification of the crime and there are many instances when the case is decided under Article 124 of the Criminal Code. This is because looking at the cases related to human trafficking, women are exploited for the purpose of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, in practice it is difficult to differentiate and classify this type of crime from the organised manner in which others are lured to prostitution or forced to prostitution¹⁰².

Only a small fraction of the cases registered and investigated by the police are being decided by the courts (Figure 29). The police, between 2005 and 2017, exposed and investigated 127 human trafficking-related crimes but only 26 of them were decided in the courts.

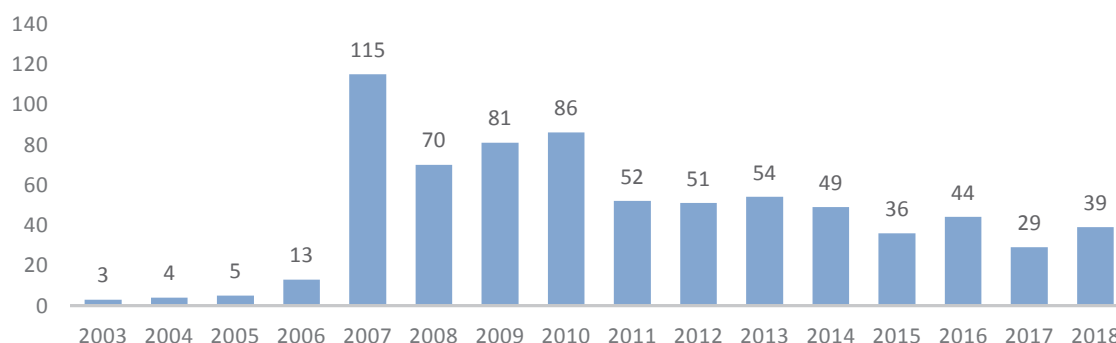
Figure 29. Cases of human trafficking crimes resolved in 2000-2017



Source: National Police Office and the Judicial General Council of Mongolia

According to the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality, assistance was given to 3 victims of human trafficking in 2003, the number of victims who had sought assistance had increased to 731 in 2003-2018 (Figure 27).

Figure 30. Number of victims of trafficking in persons that received services from the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality, 2003-2018



Source: Data of the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality

Human trafficking crimes in Mongolia are being committed in different methods and forms, such as labor and sexual exploitation, trading in human body parts, arranged marriage, illicit child adoption. A study conducted into trafficking in persons by the Institute of Research and Development of the Law Enforcing University shows that sexual exploitation predominates this type of crime. Data of the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality on services received indicates that sexual exploitation accounts for approximately 71 of human trafficking crime, labor exploitation - 22% and arranged marriage through an intermediary - 7%.

Sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons: It is becoming quite common to find crimes related to human trafficking being committed such as prostitution being organized by luring customers from public places, recruiting so-called masseurs under cover of working in a sauna or in a massage parlor, and bargirls to work at entertained centers, and also placing ads in the internet media offering sex services. Also girls and women are being deceived into prostitution in foreign countries by offering them highly paid job opportunities, scholarships to schools and colleges, and arranging marriage with foreigners and the police have registered such cases when women in this manner have become victims committed overseas.

The victims of human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation are mostly girls and young women. Within Mongolia, girls aged between 13 and 18 are being forced into organised prostitution, while women aged 18-35 are becoming victims of sexual exploitation in foreign countries including in China, South Korea, Japan, Macao, Malaysia and Turkey.

Victims of trafficking in person are predominantly girls and women aged between 16 and 35 coming mostly from poor families with low income, who are either orphans and single, who have no one to care or ask for them, and from families where their members are alcoholics or where violence is kind of norm. From among underage people and young women, children coming from poor families, and in particular, children of families who had migrated from the rural to urban areas, are more likely to be at a higher risk¹⁰³. Also women and girls are at a higher risk of being sexually exploited along the transport routes of mining companies that are linked to border with China, and also they also face higher risks of being sexually exploited when working over long shifts at mines and when they have left behind their children at homes in the urban areas¹⁰⁴.

Forced labor exploitation: Besides women, men are also falling prey to human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation. There have been cases of companies and individuals, pretending to be brokering employment by way of placing fake advertisements, have trafficked Mongolian citizens in groups across the border to third countries through Mongolia as well as the neighboring countries for the purpose of exploiting their labor.¹⁰⁵ As of 2003-2018 the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality was approached by 158 victims of human trafficking for labour exploitation, of whom 74.6% (118) were men and 2.6% (4) were under age boys.

Furthermore, children are being exposed to forced labour in the informal sector by making them take part in horse races as jockeys, work as contortionists, as housemaids, tending livestock animals, begging on the streets and picking garbage etc. These kinds of child labour are being registered and the courts are meting out justice not as a case of human trafficking but classified under a different kind of crime. To date, not a single case of human trafficking for the purpose of forced labour has been decided in the court and what's more, there is neither any study nor information related to this kind of crime.

Arranged marriage: Arranged marriage with certain kickback began to thrive in Mongolia after 2003 when girls and women, under cover of so-called "Arranged Marriage," were married off to foreigners. Most of the Mongolians, who had resorted to the services of illegitimate marriage brokering companies and individuals, are marrying foreigners in foreign lands are becoming victims of violence and living in conditions of slavery and bondage. 45 persons, who had become victims of such arranged marriage had approached and sought service from the Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality and 2 other Mongolian citizens had approached the Human Rights and Development Centre for help.

Provisions on trafficking in persons were included in the Criminal Code in 2002 but the courts had passed judgment on only 6 cases related to this type of crime between 2002 and 2008.¹⁰⁶ Some changes, compatible with the UN Palermo Protocol, were effected in the Criminal Code in 2008, whereby there was a small progress in this regard and 20 such criminal cases had been taken up and resolved in the years from 2009 to 2017.

In 2011 Mongolia passed an independent law related to human trafficking and in 2006 passed its second National Programme. Although the state and government are giving priority to streamlining the related legal environment, the country still lacks the resources and the capacity to provide comprehensive protection and services to victims of this kind of crime. It is the NGOs which are bearing the burden of protecting and providing services to human trafficking victims. The Mongolian Centre for Gender Equality NGO, since 2007 to this day, has been taking the entire responsibility for providing services, otherwise that should be provided by the state, to victims of human trafficking¹⁰⁷ it almost does not receive any kind of financial support from the Government, which had allocated only 5 million MNT in 2011 and another 7 million in 2012 for the maintenance of the shelters being managed by the Centre. As of 2007-2013, there were only two such centres in the whole of the country, where cumulatively 514 people had received assistance and services.

In 2014, the Law on Protecting the Victims and Witnesses was put into force, but the victims cannot receive the necessary support under the law up and until a case is registered under the Criminal Code and what's more, 26 cases of human trafficking crime, that were being investigated, were dropped while the newly revised Criminal Code was under consideration (footnote 115). Also the incorporation of the concept of sexual exploitation and human trafficking

¹⁰³ HSPSC. 2012. *Final Report: Program to Combat Human Trafficking in Mongolia*. Supported by SDC.

¹⁰⁴ <https://mn.usembassy.gov/mn/our-relationship-mn/official-reports-mn/2018-trafficking-persons-report-mn/>

¹⁰⁵ Gender Equality Centre, Swiss Development Agency, Human Security Research Centre and the Ulaanbaatar City Intelligence Agency. 2009

¹⁰⁶ Gender Equality Centre, Swiss Development Agency. 2010. *Mapping Human Trafficking in Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar.

¹⁰⁷ US Department of State. 2018b. *Trafficking in Persons Report 2018*. Washington, D.C.

separately under Articles 12.3 and 13.1a of the Criminal Code had made it difficult to decide the case and besides, there are still many outstanding issues related to legal framework, for example, the right to seek compensation for material, reputation, and emotional damage, as provided for in Article 15 of the Law on Combating Human Trafficking cannot be enforced as this provision is incompatible with the Criminal Code and the Civilian Law, emotional damage is still not considered in court practice and the fact that the provision on compensating victims of human trafficking from the Fund for Compensating Victims of Crimes has been removed from the Law on the Special Fund of the Government.

Incidence, causation and circumstances of human trafficking are not decreasing simply because the activities of the organizations and institutions that are responsible for enforcing the law are unclear, their staff members do not have a common understanding of fighting this kind of crime, coordination within their organization is poor, and the legal framework for promoting close cooperation with foreign countries and organizations is imperfect. In view of this, there is the imperative need to overhaul the structure and methods of fighting this crime of crime by expanding international cooperation on preventing and combating human trafficking, and studying the causes, circumstances and influencing factors of human trafficking.¹⁰⁸

The legal framework of combating gender-based violence has not taken into consideration the special needs of physically challenged women, LGBTs, senior citizens as well as men, who have been left out of the methodology of collecting data of gender-based violence, which is primarily directed at women of reproductive age. The public, apart from poor knowledge about GBV, continue to have a biased attitude towards the victims of gender-based violence. Even the media continue to fan up negative attitude towards them by making public personal information of the survivors, pointing figures at their behaviour and the way they dress up, and even criticizing their presence in certain public places.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SPHERE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

1. Integrate critical concerns in terms of providing support to young and recently married couples for their independent and sustainable livelihoods as well as in social development policy planning. Facilitate implementation of relevant provisions in given local communities. For instance, by providing soft loans to young couples in urban and rural areas for housing, running business and farming as well as life-skills knowledge;
2. Develop a system that provides information and knowledge on family relations for women and men of all ages in line with their ages and life cycles;
3. Incorporate the objectives outlined in the framework of the "Education, Culture, Science and Sports Sector Gender-Responsive Policy" with all newly approved sectoral legal and policy documents and reflect them in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes;
4. Conduct studies on the economic value and benefit of higher education on a regular basis from gender perspectives and use the findings for determining college and university fees and standards. For instance, set a standard for university and college campuses;
5. Develop life-long education system in line with up-to-date labor market demand; improve accessibility to formal and non-formal skills development educational opportunities for adult population namely for women and men above average age; and post the relevant publicity information to the general public;
6. Expand public health care and services; strengthen the relevant information and communication capacities at all levels in line with varying needs and age of women and men nationally;
7. Conduct studies on social factors that lead to harmful behaviors of men that tend to lower their life- expectancy; discuss stress-driven psychopathology and computer addiction of young men among with experts of the health, education and social protection sectors; and implement the inter-sectoral specific and targeted policy and programs;
8. Integrate the expenses intended for pregnant women, infant and children under 5 who are at living under high health risks of air pollution, into the air-pollution reduction budget;
9. Establish an effective and permanent training system for young women leaders for political, public service,

business and civil society organizations in order to increase women's participation in decision-making as well as implement the mentorship programs;

10. Enhance activities providing professional and methodological support to the public and local-level organizations on implementing legal provisions and preventing GBV, gender based discrimination, human trafficking, domestic violence and eliminating other forms of GBV as well as strengthen the cooperation and capacities of law enforcement organizations;
11. Build capacities of preventing GBV in the economic sector and local administration primary units. For instance, train child rights protection inspectors on how to provide consulting and support to girls and boys discriminated against by gender. GBV prevention content needs to be included in capacity building and training packages designed for livelihood support for use by council members.

Medium-term:

1. Conduct studies on the changes of household compositions and family relations. Facilitate coordinating relevant legal provisions with changing social needs. For instance, integrate different forms of marriage (partner) in "Family Law" and pursue relevant legal measures;
2. Create a legal environment that integrates the "families living together" needs into employment related policy and planning as well as organizational action plans, Most importantly, reflect these needs in the "work-force exporting" agreements and contracts;
3. Plan so that young children could be equally enrolled in pre-school kindergartens irrespective of their home locations or income of their parents as well as implement these measures with balanced participation and engagement of public and private sector entities and local residents;
4. Introduce financial and taxation leverage for public and private sector entities in support of establishing kindergartens for children of their employees;
5. In order to rectify the decreasing number of boys entering higher grades, certain measures are needed to eliminate peer pressure and discrimination around schools, other types of violence and child labor; and increase dormitory accessibilities and capacities; as well as introduce training curricula and methodology that is in line with needs of boys;
6. Develop and implement gender-responsive policy in the health sector;
7. Encourage joint advocacy campaigns with media institutions towards improving parents' knowledge of preventing their young children from cavities. Improve the health of children under 5 and expand related sex-disaggregated data and analysis;
8. Carry out training and provide information to the public within the framework of health educational programs through family health centers in a gender-sensitive way in order to change livelihood behaviors that affect soil and air pollution and adequate use of detergent, etc;
9. Conduct GBV-prevention advocacy actions on a regular basis together with the Youth Development and Family Development Centers and carry out GBV pertinent complaint and solution-related public advocacy campaigns jointly with media institutions;
10. Develop legal, health and psycho-social care and services for victims and survivors of human trafficking in a gender-sensitive manner and enhance the activities providing professional and methodological support in combating human trafficking.

Short-term:

1. Direct the activities of the Youth Development Support Fund toward promoting well-being of young families and their lasting and stable relationships;
2. Improve legal provisions in relation to divorce and monitor implementation;
3. Identify needs in inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation in support of the Education, Culture, Science and Sports Sector Gender-Responsive Policy;
4. Encourage studies, gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data collection in order to decrease horizontal gender segregation through coordinating tertiary and technical & vocational education with labor market demand as well as improve pertinent inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation;
5. Integrate issues of persons with disabilities (PwD) and LGBT persons in the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Program being developed by the MoH and MECSS; encourage their participation; and prevent them from discrimination;
6. Facilitate improving the quality of services designed for mothers and coordinate pertinent procedures and regulations with changing social norms;
7. Ensure that the Elections General Commission administers and Includes political party activities outlined by the Law on Promotion of Gender Equality (LPGE) when they submit their political agenda/program;
8. Enhance gender justice by nominating women to central and local parliament elections, promoting women at all levels of political party life, reserving seats, providing financial support and improving the political system. For instance, change the current not less than 20% quota of women nominated to the SGKh to 40% in order to increase women's participation in decision-making processes as well as set a minimum threshold for reserving seats for the central parliament elections;
9. Finance the required expenses of "joint teams" working in primary administrative units from state and local budgets;
10. Conduct analysis on procedures and regulations to support implementation of the Law on Combating Domestic Violence from the perspectives of the law's concept and content; abolish legal over-ruling procedures and eliminate duplications and gaps;
11. Provide coordinated and integrated management for implementation of the Law on Combating Domestic Violence and violence-prevention related policy and procedures; encourage the cooperation and partnerships of experts and NGOs that provide direct services to survivors of violence in order to enhance inter-sectoral collaboration;
12. Integrate the provisions of the Labor Law that prohibit any form of harassment and pressure in terms of employment and labor relations including provisions that prevent and eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace.





3

CHAPTER

ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER

ENVIRONMENT AND GENDER

Gender equality related issues had primarily been a subject of discourse within the social and economic framework, but today there arises a need to look at this matter carefully from the viewpoint of nature and environment according to the sustainable development agenda. Mongolia defined its Green Development Policy (2014) in close tie with the Rio+20 and global economic development initiatives,¹⁰⁹ and set forth the high objective of becoming one of the first 30 global countries in terms of its green economic vision and sustaining ecological balance in its green development policy. The government and its partners continue to make concerted efforts to reach this objective as evidenced by the fact that between 2005 and 2017 the size of investment made in Mongolia in nature and environment protection and rehabilitation grew 11.15 times.

However, nature and environment issues are becoming increasingly serious owing to the global climate changes in recent years as well as man-made impacts which are having a relatively different affect on population groups, changing the life patterns and employment opportunities of households and families, and are becoming key factors checking sustainable development of rural areas and nations.

Box 21.

Environmental degradation and climate change

Mongolia's rapid growth, harsh climate, unique geography, and proclivity toward natural disasters, combined with the economic dominance of mining and pastoralism, create significant environmental challenges and complicate Mongolia's efforts at inclusive and sustainable development. These challenges are amplified by the impacts of climate change, which have become increasingly evident since 2010 recent years.

Source: ADB. Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Assessment Mongolia 2017–2020

80% of Mongolia's territory has been subject to desertification and the remaining plots of territory are in a state of vulnerability¹¹⁰ according to 2013 estimation by the Ministry of Environment and Green Development. 16% of all rivers, 21.8% of springs, and 28% of lakes and ponds had dried up completely and disappeared in the period from 2007 to 2017. Although serious physical changes are not evident in the 9.9% of the lands desertified to one or another degree between 2010 and 2015, territories that had been exposed to serious desertification has increased from 6.7% to 17%. Precipitation had dropped in the last decade, and the number of hot days with temperature topping +30°C and more has increased leading to serious aridity never recorded ever before in the last 75 years. The incidence of dangerous and disastrous atmospheric phenomena has increased. Annually an average of 30 such dangerous phenomena were registered in the years between 1990 and 2000, but their incidence had more than doubled from 2001 to 2016.¹¹¹ Since 2000 the acreage of forest areas have been shrinking on an annual average rate of 0.7%, which is higher than the global average (0.1%)¹¹².

In 2011 the country adopted a National Action Program on Climate Change, which was an expression of the priority given at all levels in 2005-2018 to evaluating, adapting to and overcoming climate change impacts. The programme emphasises that the incidence of gastroenterological disorders, diarrhea and cardio vascular disease have increased due to inadequate food storage conditions under warmer temperatures and frequent hot weather conditions. The program notes the importance of upholding justice, transparency, human rights and gender equality in its implementation.

The Sustainable Development Vision 2030 has also defined as major principles of environmental sustainability, the support for clean technology and encouragement of low-waste and sustainable production and consumption, development and enforcement of environmental rehabilitation at international standard level and also promotion of participation of local residents and people at large to ensure environmental sustainability and encouragement of environment-friendly attitude and appropriate behaviour.

The Environment Sector Gender Strategy (2014-2030), adopted in 2013, emphasised the need to consider on an equal footing the differentiated needs of women and men, and social groups in policies, programmes and actions, and defined them as the driving forces of development and the strategy was significantly important as it defined the road map for the activities between the sectors in addressing environmental challenges and carrying through the above sustainable development principles. The strategy action plan clearly outlines activities designed at studying and collecting data on environmental issues from a gender sensitive perspective, and apply them in policy and planning; and on the other hand, promoting and guiding the active participation of rural households, men and women on the basis of differentiated knowledge and expertise, and resources.

¹⁰⁹ Parliament of Mongolia. 2008. Millennium Development Goals-Based Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia. Ulaanbaatar. <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/node/23633>

¹¹⁰ Zoljargal 2013 in PAGE. 2014. *Mongolia's transition to a Green Economy: A stocktaking report*. UNEP. http://www.un-page.org/files/public/mongolia_green_economy_eg_full_nov16_web.pdf

¹¹¹ Trankmann, B. 2016. "Steppes under Strain." *Our Perspectives Articles*.

UNDP Mongolia. November. <http://www.mn.undp.org/content/mongolia/en/home/ourperspective/ourperspectivearticles/2016/11/18/steppes-under-strain.html>

¹¹² UNEP. PAGE. 2014. *Mongolia's transition to a Green Economy: A stocktaking report*. Ulaanbaatar.

Regrettably, the strategy is not being implemented, there are no gender-disaggregated information in the environment sector, and both the Government and the civil society organisations still lack the capacity to carry out gender-based analysis and apply its results in policy, planning and activities. In view of this, although we can clearly see the changes in the urban and rural environments impacted by the climate change, we are still unable to assess its impact on family relations, everyday life, the role of men and women in their families and the society, and in their values.

A Environmental issues in the rural areas

Gender analysis of environmental issues in the rural areas on the one hand, is an examination of differentiated impacts on women and men living and working in the countryside and on another, their participation and engagement towards protection of surrounding environment and preserving natural resources. Albeit, limited information and data help conduct analysis, herder women and men's issues are being dealt with. Herder men and women, engaged in nomadic livestock breeding, are the chief beneficiaries and protectors of the natural resources of Mongolia and caretakers of its ecological balance. Today, nomadic livestock breeding accounts for 84.9% of the country's agricultural economy and 19.2% of all the households in the country are herder families.¹¹³ Although the role and involvement of men and women of nomadic herder households in animal husbandry is based on the traditional division of labour, their significance and value have been always proportional, which has been the very sole and foundation of a relative gender equality of the Mongols, and the basis of a natural relationship and the free status of the women. Herder women are involved in nature and environment protection through their daily activities. For instance, women play an important role in preparing their food and drinks for their family members, protecting their families and the enviroing lands, rearing their children and passing on to them the experience of the forefathers in caring for and protecting the nature and environment, which is the earnest of their livelihood and herder lifestyle. Male herders, besides managing external family matters such as tending their animals, digging wells, erecting and maintaining animal yards, assessing the environmental conditions, and managing their household economy, they also are sensitive to rational utilisation of natural resources and take part in meetings and gatherings organised by the local administration, and play a substantial role in decision-making at the local levels. But the role of women in decision-making is not to the expected level.

Herder families in Mongolia are encountered with many serious challenges, besides the serious natural disasters as droughts and dzud such problems as pasture land degradation and water shortages caused by the climate change. Internal migration levels have increased owing to degradation and shortage of pasture lands, and moreover, herders are coming to loggerheads over grazing pastures and land.

Box 22.

Climate Change Witness, Maruush's Story



My name is Maruush Narankhuu and I am 67 years old. This is my home land – Tsagaan gol (White river) of Chandmani soum in Khovd aimag. My ancestors lived here as herdsmen for a long time. I have been a herder since childhood and I did not attend school. I gave birth to 14 children four of whom became herders while others live in the cities.

This place was really beautiful when I was young with lush greenery in summer time and an abundant spring, fall and winter. Unfortunately, for the past 4-5 years, Khar Us lake here has evaporated quickly. Bore wells are getting dried up. There were many small ponds around the lake and none of them exist now. This spot where we have a ger now used to be all water.

Over the past four five years, we've been through tough times, herds are quite thin and weak and our wellbeing is dependent on nature and weather. Cattles graze near the riverside and pasture land here is shrinking. There are almost no springs and ponds to water animals around as the lake is shrinking. Herders are trying to live closer to the lake and some settled on lake's island to manage water shortage.

Well, I am getting old and I worry whether my children and people here would continue live as herders. All of us here expect the government to have wise policy and take adequate measures. I do not know the ways to increase precipitation and humidity and curb desertification and air dryness. And there are numerous projects and programs ongoing towards resolving burning environmental issues. For instance, there is an environmental conservation community named "Summit Jargalant" at the Tsagaan River and members of this community are engaged in making various wool products for the market instead of increasing the number of herds and cattle.

Source: WWF in MET. 2014. Environmental Sector Gender Strategy 2014-2030. Ulaanbaatar

¹¹³ NSO. 2017. A Review on the Agricultural Sector-2017. Ulaanbaatar.

In 2017 there were 169.7 herder families owning 66.2 million heads of animals, who were using the grazing pasture lands. Before 2005, the number of animals for ever one hectare was 100-400 heads, estimated in sheep, then this figure in 2015 had increased to 400-500 heads of sheep. And there is a need to study how the increased number of livestock, in today's over-grazed pasture-land is impacting on the livelihood of herder households in particular on daily chorus of herder women and men. There is improvement in the livelihood of the herders with an increase in their livestock population, but on the other hand, pastureland degradation process has been expedited because of the waning capacity of a piece of pasture land sufficient to feed a certain number of animals. The decline in the growth of pastures, the changes in the structure of vegetation, the decrease in the hay yield, and the shrinking duration during which animals can feed on rangelands owing to excessive heat during summer are all creating preconditions leading to dwarfing of the size of animals, and decline in their productivity.¹¹⁴

The composition of animal herds too have an important significance. Traditionally herders have been raising three sheep to every one goat in their animal herd, but this ratio in the last 10 years has changed to an average of 2 sheep to 2 goat in the herd, which can be explained by the fact that cashmere from goat has become a major source of herders' income, but this is nothing other than an effort to earn quick short-term benefits with serious implications for the nature and environment. We are also witnessing a regrettable situation of losing some of the advantages of nomadic culture where emphasis was given to leading an environment-friendly way of life by passing on the next generation of herders tradition of protecting the land and water, and utilising to the full, without creating any waste, the productivity of the animals to meet the needs of the household. The income being generated from goat cashmere is not being spent on improving the living conditions and environment in the locality, building hygienic toilets, wells, and facilities for hot water, and promoting the development and production of animal raw materials-based products, but on the contrary the herders are enrolling their children primarily in colleges and training them in skills and professions that are not on demand on the labour market, meaning the herders are investing in a future when their children will leave their home and migrate to urban settlements.

Box 23.

How are herder households spending their earning from cashmere?

I have bought two cars with the money I earned from selling goat cashmere. My four children now have higher education. And we have bought an apartment in the city from the cashmere earning so that our children could go and live in the city. Once our children settle down in the city, we ourselves plan to migrate and settle down in the city. We hear that this year cashmere prices are going to go up.

Source: From an interview with a herder from Tov aimag

In this manner men and women of herder families, through their own respective gender responsibilities, are contributing to the proliferation of the so-called "consumer mentality." For instance, women primarily decide on the daily consumer needs of a herder family, and now when trade and commerce are penetrating deep into also remote rural areas, thanks to the development of infrastructure, herder women, like in the earlier times, have stopped trying producing their own household needs on their own and are instead more interested in buying ready-made goods and products, and this trend is gaining ground. To illustrate, there is an increase in the consumption by herders of ready-made butter cookies, noodles and canned food. Similarly, they are opting for cheap, tax-free manufactured shoes and clothes, that have been manufactured through recycling, as a consequence of which there is a rise in household waste, which is also contributing to environment pollution.

Box 24.

Differentiated education needs of young herders

We are concerned that we are processing and producing less dairy produce from the milk that we get from our animals. Dairy produce alone can help every region to have their own specific local brand. But the young people are not learning in the art of processing milk and dairy produce. There are no facilities where we could teach boys how to make fetters and halters, and the girls how to master the technology of making dried curds and cheese. Animal population is growing but the processing of dairy produce is declining. Secondary school girls must be taught all this, and special classes must be opened at vocational training and production centres.

Source: From an interview with a male administrator in Dornogobi aimag

Young male herders have poor capacity to adapt to social changes, they spend more time training horses for races for business purposes than keeping to traditional culture, and as a result of which they pay the price in winter and spring, according to participants in a discussion held at Dornogobi *aimag*. “A gender analysis into disaster-related risks”¹¹⁵ carried out in Khentii and Bulgan *aimags* cites that young male herders, because of their poor education level, are unable to apply climate change-related information for long-term planning in their life. The report further notes that this matter has not been duly reflected in the *soum* development policy owing to which local herders fail to plan and develop their livelihood and animal husbandry business in a coordinated manner, and are developing a mentality of “let’s take advantage when there is a chance, and if things do not work out, then we shall migrate and settle elsewhere.”

Scientists are suggesting that climate change adaptive capacity and policies must be developed that nurture and strengthen social networks through gender-sensitive community participation to enhance group-based adaptation approaches.¹¹⁶ In 2010 the Minister of Environment and Tourism issued procedures on establishing association of citizens to oversee and protect, utilise and manage certain kinds of natural resources and in keeping with these procedures, herders’ and forest-user groups were established, which were appreciated by the rural herders seeing in them a new opportunity to generate additional revenue outside of livestock breeding having realized the importance of cooperation in promoting the protection of the nature and environment. Such good practices are spreading around the country. What is gratifying is that women herders are taking an active part in these associations and are leaning in both producing value-added animal-based produce and collective environment protection management. Such best practices are becoming fertile soil for building up the capacity of the locals in promoting eco-tourism.

An international Conference, “Sustainable Development Goals: Gender and Development” was held in Ulaanbaatar in June 2018, which adopted the “Ulaanbaatar Declaration,” passed a set of appeals designed at encouraging international cooperation and partnership towards climate change adaptation and mitigations as well as improving the livelihoods of rural women and girls (Annex 1). The appeals called for the immediate gender-responsive strategies to facilitate sustain the ecological balance of the steppes and reducing the negative impact of climate change on the traditional nomadic lifestyle with due consideration of the historical role played by the herders, including women, in protecting the nature and environment, and preserving the natural resources.

Another social group that is impacting on the nature and environment with the type of work it is engaged in and with its own specific lifestyle are the private gold-diggers. In 2016 artisanal mining was being carried out at 96 units on 1637.71 hectares of land in 34 soums of 16 aimags. A survey carried out by the Swiss Development Agency (2013) reported that 71% of the artisanal miners were men and the remaining 29% - women. In the earlier phase, men were primarily engaged in artisanal mining, but during the peak of its evolution, even women, their children and entire families also got involved, which turned artisanal mine sites into arenas for violence and exploitation. Although money from the government budget is being spent on rehabilitating areas destroyed by artisanal mining, to date no estimation has been made regarding the aftermath of the water from rivers and wells, contaminated by hazardous materials such as mercury and heavy metal, which is being used by men, women and children. The Government has been taking concrete actions, such as organising small-scale miners into cooperatives and giving them licence in specific areas for mining, but without any effective outcome. The Government should further explore and study, from a gender-perspective, the long-term impact on the rural nature and environment, and the rural inhabitants by the mining operations of the so-called “Ninjas” as the artisanal miners are termed in the country.

B Quality of life in urban setting

The population of the city has doubled since 2005 and 46% of Mongolia’s population are now living in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. The trials and challenges men and women alike are experiencing in the transitional move from semi-nomadism to a sedentary mode of life has become a part of the question of the city’s living environment.

Urbanisation process, because of poor planning and coordination, in many respects is proceeding in the form of expansion of the peri-urban ger districts. The size of the territory of the ger districts in Ulaanbaatar is expanding on an annual average by 5.7 thousand hectares. Residents in the ger districts account for almost one half of Ulaanbaatar’s population and 790,000 of them are living in conditions without reliable drinking water supply and improved sanitation facility. Households in the ger districts burn coal in the winter season (extending from October to March or 6 months in a year), which is estimated to contribute to 80% of the air pollution in the city. The level of not only sulphur dioxide (SO₂) but also nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is increasing owing to the growing number of vehicles in the city, making smoke, dustiness and air pollution a grave issue and there are all indications that that the questions of soil contamination and water supply would become serious challenges in the years ahead. Although the volume of solid waste is growing, not enough actions are being taken to help residents learn in the habit of classifying their wastes. In 1996-2000 there were almost, on an average, 200 kilograms of household waste for every resident of Ulaanbaatar, which had grown to reach 360 kg in 2018. Only 70% of the wastes in Mongolia’s towns and settlements and almost 40% of wastes in the rural areas being

¹¹⁵ Second phase of a joint UNDP, National Emergency Management Agency Project “Improving disaster risk management”.

¹¹⁶ Chandan Kumar et al. 2017. *Migration as adaptation strategy to cope with climate change: A study of farmers’ migration in rural India*. International Journal of Climate Change Strategies and Management. Emerald publishing Limited.

collected¹¹⁷, and the remaining percentage of wastes are being left to contaminate the environment.

Starting in 2007 funds were allocated from the state budget when air pollution in Ulaanbaatar exceeded the “Air quality standard” in addition to the implementation of target projects with the financial support of international organisations (the World Bank, JICA, ADB, KOIKA, GIZ). Further, the SGKh in 2011 adopted a Law on Reducing Air Pollution in the Capital City, which set the ground for receiving international (approximately USD 60 million worth of projects were implemented by the Mongolia Millennium Challenge Account, the World Bank, ADB, JICA and other organisations) support. But even today we are unable to sum up at the national and present the outcome of the air pollution reduction efforts by the Government as well as the international investors. 2013 witnessed the peak level or 13.5 tons of nitrogen dioxide emission in air per person, which coincided with the period when projects and programmes with the highest level of investment were being implemented, consequently people started questioning their effects according to civil society organisations, who also approached these investments, projects and programmes with scepticism.¹¹⁸

Today, environment pollution in the capital city has reached hazardous level and the population of the city are being exposed to 7 times higher than the World Health Organisation Air Quality Guidelines annual mean for Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5) and 3 times higher than the Mongolian National Standard average annual permissible level or 25 µg/m³. In particular, fine particular matter (PM2.5) concentrations are more than 100 times higher than the highest permissible levels in 24 hours in the peri-urban get districts in winter.¹¹⁹

In the last 10 years, environment pollution has grown to become a pressing problem not only in the Capital city but also in the aimag centres with a population of more than 10 thousand, and although the government has not officially announced that they have reached disaster level, it is admitting that environment pollution has reached a level posing hazard to the health of the people, including in particular pregnant women and children of young age. Owing to smoke, which reaches hazardous levels especially in winter, prevalence of respiratory disease for every 10,000 of the population abruptly increases 2.7 times, lung inflammation become the second major cause of under-5 mortality, and the difference in foetal death between summer and winter grows 3.5 times.

Lately, scientists and researchers have been warning against the impact of environment pollution on pregnant women, fetus weight and stillbirths. A study into stillbirths has revealed that the majority of the pregnant women were from the per-urban ger districts, prevalence of stillbirth was 15.5 for every 1,000 live births, and incidence of stillbirths increase especially in spring.¹²⁰ An increase of sulfur oxide emission by 10 units during the first, second and third trimesters of pregnancy increases the risk of stillbirth, while nitrogen oxide emission impacts the entire period of pregnancy doubling the related risk factor. Although priority research is being carried out on studying the impact of environment pollution on fetus, the outcome cannot be simply restricted with the above alone. There are no detailed data and information on the how environment pollution is affecting the health of population groups disaggregated by age, gender and geographical location. Respiratory infections, which accounted for 33 percent of all the deaths of infants aged from 0 to 5 in 2014, were caused by PM2.5 induced air pollution.¹²¹

In one year 147 million US dollars were spent on treating diseases caused on human health by air pollution in Ulaanbaatar, which accounts for 8% of the GDP of the Capital city, and 3.8% of the national GDP. What's more, the cost of fuel in addition to the medical costs for treating smoke-induced illnesses are putting additional burden on the living standard of low-income families in the city's ger districts.

¹¹⁷ UNECE, EPR 2018. *Environmental Performance review of Mongolia*. Geneva.

¹¹⁸ Mongolian Surveillance Union NGO, 2018. *A compilation of studies, projects and programmes carried out since 2011 in reducing air and environment pollution*. Ulaanbaatar.

¹¹⁹ World Bank. 2011. *Air quality analysis of Ulaanbaatar: improving air quality to reduce health impacts*. Ulaanbaatar.

¹²⁰ Gantuya, D. 2018. *A study into the impact of air pollution on the weight of foetus, stillbirth and premature birth*. Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics of the School of Public Health, National University of Medical Sciences. Unpublished report.

¹²¹ Statistical data and health survey of countries by WHO and UN partner organisations (January 2015) <http://www.who.int/gho/countries/mng.pdf?ua=1>

RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE SPHERE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Long-term:

1. Learn from neighboring, regional and other countries on their best practices encouraging local residents' participation and improving their roles and responsibilities in environmental sustainability and resilience in times of ever aggravating and fragile environmental challenges. Promote cooperation;
2. Develop and disseminate climate change, desertification prevention and disaster-mitigation related information and communications in line with the roles and needs of women, men and households with varying lifestyles and residing in urban and rural areas as well as facilitate building needed capacities;
3. Facilitate developing responsible mining and encourage participation and empowerment of female and male members of communities and different social groups in the pertinent rehabilitation processes.

Medium-term:

1. The environment sector Gender Council calls for intensifying implementation of the Environmental Sector Gender Strategy and developing an inter-sectoral joint team work/action plan;
2. Introduce environment-friendly progressive technologies based on the needs of herders, farmers, local and rural communities that use available raw materials in a gender-sensitive way.

Short-term:

1. Create an environmental sector related sex-disaggregated data base and use them together with gender indicators while conducting environmental assessments;
2. Coordinate activities related to the protection of pregnant mothers and infants from air pollution especially during winter months in urban settings with the pregnant mothers check-up and infant care programs;
3. Train journalists and cooperate with media organizations on dissemination of the "urban-culture" and "air pollution-free lifestyle" related coverages in a gender-sensitive way;
4. Within the framework of efforts in reducing air and soil pollution, improving hygiene and sanitation systems in Ulaanbaatar, facilitate introducing advocacy actions in the pertinent projects and programs using and applying various household-level advanced technologies in an accessible and understandable way with young and old women and men, girls and boys.





4

CHAPTER

NATIONAL MECHANISM FOR GENDER EQUALITY

NATIONAL MECHANISM FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The idea to deal fairly and equally both women and men had been reflected in the four Constitutions of Mongolia, adopted first in 1924, then in 1940, 1960 and 1992 respectively, and the country had acceded to and ratified the relevant international treaties and conventions. The Government and its partners, through their joint efforts, have played a key role in the formation of the national legal and policy framework, and the system for its implementation to ensure gender equality, as well as in the accomplishments of Mongolia in realistically guaranteeing gender equality. According to an evaluation of the policy and system of ensuring gender equality, Mongolia had received a mark of 3.5 points in 2005-2010, and 4 points in 2018, which are higher than the average (3.3 points) in the countries of East Asia and the Pacific (Footnote 87).

Box25.

Constitution of Mongolia (1992) and gender equality

- “All persons lawfully residing within Mongolia shall be equal before the law and the courts” (§14.1),
- “Every human being shall be a legal person” (§14.2),
- “No person shall be discriminated against on the basis of ethnic origin, language, race, age, sex [gender], social origin and status, property and assets, employment occupation and official position, religion and conscience, conviction and opinion, and education” (§14.2),
- “Men and women enjoy equal rights in the political, economic, social, economic, cultural fields and in marriage (§16.11),
- “The marriage shall be based on the equality and consensual relationship of the spouses who have attained the age determined by law. The State shall protect the interests of a family, motherhood and the child” (§16.11),

A National mechanism for gender equality: development, achievements and lessons learnt

The adoption of the National Program on Empowerment of Women (1996-2001) in 1996 by the Government of Mongolia with the objective of addressing pressing changes encountered by women during the transition marked the beginning of a national gender-sensitive policy framework. In the course of implementation of this program, the “Gender and Development” approach from the national level discussions was taken up at the policy level and accordingly, there arose the need to pay equal attention to the challenges of girls, boys, women and men. Proceeding from this premise, the Gender and Development approach formed the backbone in the development of the NPGE (2002-2015) (NPGE), which reflected the specifics of gender issue in Mongolia.

A NCGE was set up in 2005 under the leadership of the country’s Prime Minister, which set in motion the process of creating a national mechanism for promoting gender equality. In compliance with the NCGE’s Charter, starting from 2006 the line ministries established their Gender Councils and Committees at the *aimag* and district-levels. And gender focal points (GFPs) overseeing gender issues, were recruited at the government ministries. By 2013, not only the line ministries but also the capital city and the *aimags* recruited their gender focal points, which became the key human resources reserve for the NCGE to carry forward its activities to its affiliates and the rural areas.

An independent Law on Promotion of Gender Equality (LPGE) was passed in 2011 thanks to the joint effort of the NCGE, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working for women’s empowerment and gender equality and international development agencies. The law became the legal framework for promoting gender equality in Mongolia, which defined the basic principles and strengthened the national mechanism for promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. The law is important for its clearly spelled out roles and responsibilities of the state organizations/duty bearers with regard to promoting gender equality. The NCGE was restructured in 2011 under a Resolution 323 of the Government, and the new Committee Charter, structure and composition were adopted.

Box 26.***The Law on Promotion of Gender Equality (LPGE), 2011***

This law ensures the equal rights to women and men as guaranteed in the Constitution (1992) and provides the organization, management of pertinent activities as well as specifies the roles, responsibilities and accountability lines of implementing agencies - duty bearers. The LPGE has 6 chapters, 27 articles. The principles and policy for gender equality (Article 5) play critical role in mainstreaming gender in all pertinent areas and at all levels as well as in the national, sectoral, and local-level gender-responsive policy planning and implementation processes.

5.1. Gender equality shall be based on the following principles:

5.1.1. Principle of equality: men and women shall have opportunities and conditions to enjoy equal rights in political, economic, social, cultural, family and other relations, and to equally participate in social life and equally access the benefits of development and social wealth.

5.1.2. Principle of non-discrimination: men and women shall be guaranteed enjoyment of human rights and freedoms without any discrimination or restriction on the basis of the differences in terms of their age, sex, vocation or rank, views, marital status or education.

5.1.3. Principle of government responsibility: The State shall fulfill all the commitments related to promoting equality of men and women in Mongolia provided for in the Constitution of Mongolia, international treaties and other legislation and be accountable for the results achieved.

5.1.4. Principle of gender mainstreaming: Development policies shall be made gender sensitive through incorporation of gender concepts in laws, government policies, programs and projects.

5.1.5. Principle of gender sensitive data and information: The State shall ensure the availability and accessibility of sex disaggregated statistical data and other information.

5.2. The state policy on gender equality shall be aimed at ensuring conditions for equal rights, opportunities, and treatment of men and women and, furthermore, at preventing and eliminating gender discrimination.

The guarantees for equality, as defined in the Law on Promoting Gender Equality, are today reflected in the relevant provisions and are being implemented in the Law on Families, the Labor Code, Law on Promoting Employment, Package of Laws on Education, the Health Law, the Law on Child Protection, the Law on Combating Domestic Violence, the law on Combating Human Trafficking and the Law on Elections.

A Gender Consortium of scholars, researchers and teachers was established in 2012 with the purpose of enhancing public education on gender, and providing expertise and methodological support in implementing the gender policy, within the framework of strengthening of the national mechanism. The Consortium, together with the NCGE Secretariat, organizes annual conference on gender issues, and is working to include in the curriculum of colleges and universities' gender content and building up the relevant capacities.

In 2014, an independent National Gender Experts Group was established at the NCGE. These experts conduct the studies on emerging critical areas of concern with regard to ensuring gender equality, carry out gender audit, and work on policy recommendations. Currently, there are seven national gender experts.

A Mid-Term Strategy on the Implementation of the LPGE was adopted in 2013 and priority was given to primarily strengthening the capacity of the Gender Councils and Committees. A strategy performance assessment was made in 2016, which was the first ever assessment of the legal and policy frameworks to promote gender equality. According to this external evaluation, which was carried out using the Government monitoring and evaluation method, 60.1% of the planned activities under the strategy had been accomplished and this conclusion became instrumental in developing the NPGE (2017-2021) which was approved by the Government Resolution 129 in 2017. This program aims to facilitate improving gender statistics and analysis, mainstreaming gender in the sector and local development policy-levels, and intensify gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) processes at all levels.

In 2015 the Government passed a Resolution 46 assigned a central state administrative agency to oversee and manage gender related issues and accordingly, Secretariat of the National Committee on Gender Equality was brought under the jurisdiction of the Population Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. This change was criticised by the civil society and international partner organisations as a step backward in the national mechanism of guaranteeing gender equality. While the NHRC recommended the reorganisation of the NCGE Secretariat in order to

make it possible for inter-sector coordination of gender issues, and to create the conditions for it to carry out its functions at the national level. The NHRC in 2017 made an assessment of the activities of the relevant state agencies with regard to the implementation of the LPGE and concluded that these agencies are underperforming in their duties lacking initiative and activeness.

Mongolia has ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the country has been regularly reporting on the actions taken within the Convention and the regular 8th and 9th reports were submitted for consideration by the CEDAW Committee. The CEDAW Committee welcomed and appreciated the efforts to adopt the Law on the Promotion of Gender Equality, which improved the policy framework for speeding up the process of eliminating discrimination against women and consolidating the relevant rights. The Committee also recommended the development of a system for regularly monitoring and evaluating the national framework of promoting gender equality, strengthening the National Committee and benchmarking the progress and accomplishments. The Government, in order to comply with the CEDAW Committee recommendations, set up an inter-sectoral working group headed by the Vice Minister of Labour and Social Protection.

As an initiative of the Prime Minister of Mongolia, the government adopted two Resolutions 111 and 285 in 2018 deciding to provide the NCGE Secretariat an independent status but working under the Prime Minister as part of the Cabinet Secretariat by increasing the number of its staff and approved budgetary operational expenses, thus rectifying the previous mistake, which created new favourable conditions for the implementation of the LPGE and the National Programme. In compliance with Article of the Committee Charter, the NCGE passed a Resolution 02 of 2018, setting up the Media Council, and with its Resolution 03, the National Gender Experts Group was formed, and with its Resolution 04, the Gender Consortium was newly organised. Today, the NCGE has 26 members with equal representation from state and civil society organisations. It has 31 Gender Committees in *aimags*, capital city of Ulaanbaatar and its 9 districts. It also has 13 sector-level Gender Councils at line ministries as well as an independent Secretariat office.

Box 27.

Best practice: Budget allocation promoting gender equality

The NCGE Secretariat was financed from the state budget. MNT 43.1 million was allocated in 2010 the Committee before the adoption of the Law and when the Mid-Term Development Strategy of the Government was being adopted, MNT 111 million was allocated exclusively for the expenses of the Secretariat office (for staff salary, office rent, stationary, and communication), and in 2019 a budget of MNT 706.8 million was approved for the implementation of the programmes.

Source: NCGE Secretariat report

Sector and local development gender-responsive policy planning: In recent years the pace of gender-responsive policy planning processes at the sectoral and local rural levels has been gaining momentum within the framework of implementing the LPGE and the NPGE strategies in the environment sector, of the organizations and agencies under the Minister of Finance, and the integrated policy of law enforcing organizations were adopted in 2013, 2015 and 2016 respectively, which were the first moves towards mainstreaming gender equality principles in the relevant sectoral policies and actions.

The following 4 sector gender-responsive policies were adopted in 2017-2018 basing on previous experience and in compliance with the integrated methodology and guidelines:

- Education, Culture, Science and Sports Sector Gender-Responsive Policy, 2017-2024;
- Population, Labor and Social Protection Sector Gender-Responsive Policy, 2018-2024;
- Construction and Urban Development Sector Gender-responsive Policy 2018-2025;
- Food, Agriculture and Light Industry Sector Gender-Responsive Policy, 2018-2025.

These sector-specific gender policies and action plans were developed with participation of the sectoral management, staff members and employees, and more than 500 people from each sector took part in the development, discussion and approval processes of the documents. They partook in the policy and action plan development processes reached consensus on promoting gender equality and also gained experience "learning by doing".

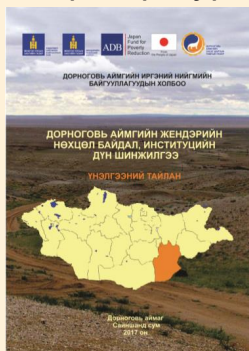
The sectoral policies are, first and foremost, designed at improving the knowledge and experience about gender issues of the management and employees of the relevant sectors, and making their working environment more gender-

inclusive. Furthermore, each sector, through the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the sector gender policies and action plans are learning to define ways and means of promoting gender equality, and developing relevant comprehensive programmes. The ministries of health, defence, foreign affairs and mining are working to develop their sector-specific gender-responsive policies in 2019.

The *aimags*, capital city and the districts have also developed and are implementing their gender-responsive local development sub-programmes. The NCGE Secretariat issued guidelines for the development of gender-responsive local development sub-programmes in 2018 and accordingly 14 *aimags* and two districts have today their own gender sub-programmes. 7 districts of the capital city and 7 *aimags* have set the objective of developing and adopting their own specific gender policies and action plans before the end of 2019. In order to encourage and support gender policy and planning processes, every year the NCGE Secretariat has been selecting the best Gender Council and Subcommittee. For instance, in 2017, the Gender Council at the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development and the Gender Committee of Dornogobi *aimag* and in 2018 the Gender Council of the Ministry of Mining and Heavy Industry, and the Gender Committees of Bayankhongor and Dornod *aimags* were selected as the best performers of the year.

Box 28.

Good practice: Civil society engagement in the gender-responsive local development policy planning processes



The assessment on the implementation of the Mid-Term Strategy (2013) pointed out that no sector and *aimag*, district partnered with civil society organizations in monitoring of the gender-responsive policy implementation processes as outlined in the LPGE. Therefore, the NCGE Secretariat provided a "guidelines on the development of gender-responsive local development sub-program" so that local civil society organizations would conduct "local situational analysis and institutional assessment". And CSOs in Selenge and Dornogobi *aimags* conducted the situational analysis and institutional assessment in their respective provinces thus, improving their capacities towards monitoring the implementation of gender-responsive sub-programs in their *aimags* which would serve as good example for other provinces, capital city and districts.



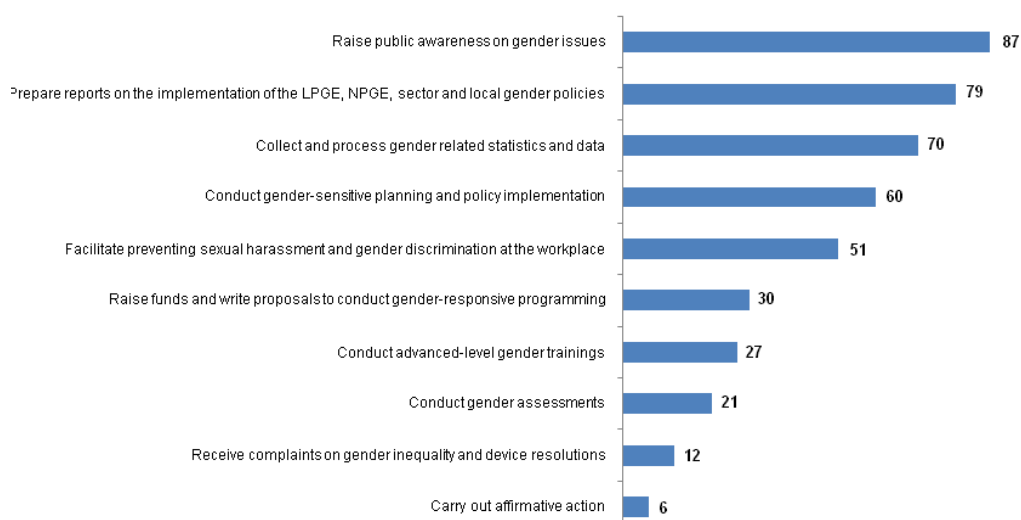
Gender Focal Points: The development and implementation of the sector and local development gender-responsive policies and action plans in 2014 significantly increased the duties and responsibilities, the work load and the scale and scope of activities of the gender focal points (GFPs), who in the course encountered numerous challenges too. The main challenges were the indefinite nature of their responsibilities, the issue had not been fully mainstreamed in the key development policies and the GFPs had limited resources and opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge on gender issues, according to a report of the ADB in 2016 entitled the "Institutional Analysis on the Structure of the National Committee on Gender Equality of the Government of Mongolia."

44 gender focal points took part in a questionnaire-based study, carried out as part of the gender situational analysis. These GFPs had been working on the gender issues on an average for 3.8 years, and their average age was 40 and majority of them (93.0%) were women. In one month they were spending on an average 4 days and were part-time managing gender-related activities besides their own primary duties and responsibilities. Before their appointment as gender focal points, there was almost not a single person who had received a systematic training and information about gender issues, they were not officially appointed and in essence they were learning and working at the same time. Trainings and discussions, which were organised by the NCGE Secretariat, were the main source for related information on gender and it is believed that in recent years they learnt a lot from the national gender experts while they were also engaged with them in the development of sectoral and local development gender-responsive policies and sub-programmes. The NCGE Secretariat has been pursuing a policy of providing step-by-step training for gender trainers in 2018, with support from UNFPA and SDA, a gender training module was developed to train gender focal points as gender trainers in 21 *aimags*,

capital city and its 9 districts.

More than 50% of the GFPs were appointed in the last 2 years, which goes to show that there is quite a heavy level of turnover among these experts. Even now GFPs are not being appointed officially by their related top executive managers by issuing orders and resolutions, but are been assigned the task through “gentlemen’s agreement.” These focal points are primarily engaged in work to improve the knowledge of the public on gender issues, write reports, and collect data but are unable to perform satisfactorily when it comes drafting policies and action plans, preventing gender-based discrimination, attending to complaints and making evaluations, and if more effort is not put to build up their capacity in these areas, there is the risk of the gender-responsive sector and local development policies and action plans falling short of implementation (Figure 31).

Figure 31. *The state in which gender focal points are performing their functions*



Source: DHF. Questionnaire-based study. 2018.

In order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the national mechanism for promoting gender equality, it is recommended to appoint full-time gender focal points at the sectoral Gender Councils and Committees, and preferably these gender focal points should be included as staff members of the organization’s policy planning unit/s.

Box 29.

Best practice: International conference “Sustainable Development Goals: Gender and Development” and the “Ulaanbaatar Declaration”, 2018



In June 2018, the Government of Mongolia convened an International conference “Sustainable Development Goals: Gender and Development” and expressed its readiness to take the lead in implementing the “Ulaanbaatar Declaration” to promote an open and effective cooperation, not only at the regional, but also at the international level. With this objective in mind the international conference was organized, primarily for the purpose of promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls as proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2015 “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” The conference

was aimed at creating the environment for countries to exchange experience and promote partnership towards implement the SDGs and in particular Goal 5 by mainstreaming in the activities and policies globalisation-induced mutual economic dependency, and the impact on gender by the rapidly altering climate change

B Contributions made and issues to heed by duty bearers and other stakeholders and partners

SGKh and its affiliated institutions: The SGKh is an important body of supporting through law and finances gender equality by taking stock of the progress and accomplishments in promoting gender equality at the national level, and the performance of the Government in this regard. According to the law, once every two years the parliament has the prerogative right to review, discuss the progress report of the work being done to promote gender equality and pass recommendations, but regrettable to date the Government has not made a single report. The **National Human Rights Commission** under the SGKh is responsible for receiving and addressing complaints and related to violation of gender rights, workplace sexual harassment (WPSH) and sexual discrimination; the **Civil Service Council of Mongolia** is responsible for ensuring that there is no place for gender discrimination in civil service, and the **National Statistics Office** (NSO) is responsible for collecting statistical data disaggregated by gender, analysing gender issues, and sharing them with the consumers and the public at large. Despite the existence of such a powerful mechanism, backed by law, it is unable to make a dent in reducing gender-based violence (GBV).

NSO, starting in the 1990s, has been conducting the Time Use Survey (TUS) once every four years, which made an important contribution to developing gender-specific data and information. The Mid-Term Strategy of the Government of Mongolia (2013-2016), designed at intensifying the implementation of the LPGE, pointed out to the need of basing policy planning and activities at all levels on gender-related statistics and analysis, and the NSO was assigned the task of developing a gender-sensitive information database. Accordingly, the NSO Chairman issued an Order 1/104 on 12 September 2013 under which the basic gender-specific statistical indicators were adopted and "Gender Information" - a compilation of gender-related statistics with 216 indicators is being released once every two years.

The NCGE and NSO signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 14 November 2018, with the objective of ensuring transparent, open and accessible gender-specific statistical data and information that is envisaged by the LPGE and NPGE, creating a gender-specific information database, collecting the sector and local development-relevant sex-disaggregated statistical data and developing methodology for their application in policy planning and implementation processes. It is recommendable that in recent years NSO has started conducting thematic research on gender issues.

However, at the local administrative level, there is lack of knowledge and understanding regarding sex-disaggregated information database and the database itself, and do not have the necessary capacity to apply policy planning, which has become a serious impediment in taking forward this important undertaking.¹²²

Local self-governing bodies: Local assemblies have all the rights of adopting and financing policies on promoting gender equality, and promoting partnership collaboration at the local levels under their jurisdiction. As of 2018, only some of the *aimags* had developed their gender-responsive local development sub-programmes, which have been approved by the local CRKh making it possible to finance the programs. The NCGE Secretariat has shared the guidelines for development of the gender-responsive local development sub-programs with the *aimags*, the capital city and the district, which has made it possible to support the national program through an integrated policy and ensuring it in compliance with the needs of the local communities.

Civil society organizations and women's movement: The movement to guarantee the rights of Mongolian women, which started in the mid 1990s, marked a watershed in bringing to open the gender issue in the Mongolian society and ensuring that the gender equality agenda was mainstreamed into the state policy. Vibrant women's organizations are providing leadership to more than 7,000 civil society organizations active in the country. From among them, very active even today are such organizations as the National Center against Violence, which since 1995 has been making consistent effort to set up a national network for combating domestic violence and violence against women, and protecting the survivors of violence; Since 1994, over 10 years the Women Lawyers' Association worked consistently and professionally towards developing and getting approval of the Law on Combating Domestic Violence and the LPGE; the Mongolian Center for Gender Equality, which since 2000 had been fighting against gender-based violence and human trafficking, and rendering assistance and support to their victims; MONFEMNET National Network, which has been working to protect the rights of women, becoming the voice of women in the society for their struggle for gender justice, writing a shadow report to the CEDAW Committee on the implementation of the Mongolian LPGE and thus influencing the Government of Mongolia, and the Mongolian Women's Fund, which is giving priority to empowering women, and which is supporting and financing the network against sexual harassment at work place.

The Mongolian women's movement is being constantly replenished with new and young dynamic women, who are contributing to addressing pressing social challenges. To illustrate, an NGO called Women for Changes is implementing a program supporting leadership capacity of women, and creating opportunities for learning from the mentors. Another NGO the "Gunj" Centre, focus on girls with physical challenges, those living in school dormitories and in streets, and those who do not have caretakers as the majority of teen pregnancy and maternal mortality are constituted by girls under the age of 18 and who have been left outside of the spheres of policies, and movements to support them are being initiated and launched by the Centre.

¹²² NHRCM. 2017. *Sixteenth Report on Human Rights and Freedom in Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar.

Lately, women's NGOs have been taking up issues related to discrimination against the marginalized and sexually minority women and their vulnerability. Starting in 2015 organizations were set up focusing on men's problems and increasing their involvement in gender issues and combating violence against women, and are becoming increasingly specialized. An NGO "Men and Family Development Association" in recent years has been taking the lead in marking the annual international "White Ribbon Day" campaign, carrying out public promotional activities on raising awareness on the importance of participation and contribution of men in reducing gender-based violence, and breaking the gender stereotype.

Mongolian NGOs that have a powerful influencing role on gender and women's issues have become publicly recognized movements and are actively contributing not only to national but also international initiatives¹²³. There is a growing need for these organizations to reach and carry out their activities in the rural areas, and pay attention to intensifying the activities of the local civil society organizations and building up their capacities. In order for these organizations to take an active part in the implementation of the gender-responsive sector and local development policies and action plans, they must focus on further strengthening their own capacities, and expanding the scale and scope of their partnership. Although the government had planned to monitor and evaluate the implementation status of the Law on promoting Gender Equality with the help of non-governmental organizations, to date no action has been taken in this regard neither at the national level nor at the local levels.

The support of key stakeholders, partners and donors: The support, assistance and activities of international organizations working in collaboration with the Government of Mongolia on gender-related issues can be divided into the following two categories.

1. Direct support to the national system of promoting gender equality.

Since 2005, the UN Population Fund, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the German Society for International Cooperation, UN Development Program, and the International Labor Organization have been the key partners in changing the public notion and stereotype around gender, combating domestic violence and human trafficking, creating the legal environment for promoting gender equality and strengthening the national capacity for implementing the gender policy.

2. Support to women's participation and empowerment within their organizations and through their projects.

Most of the donor organizations in Mongolia have been supporting and carrying out projects, within the organization's own activities, on increasing the participation of women. They, for instance, include among others the Swiss Development Agency, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Canada Fund, the Australian Agency for International Development, World Vision, JICA, specialized UN agencies and other international cooperation societies and NGOs.

However, in recent years the country has not been able to fully and effectively utilize the financial support from international organizations and donors in implementing the national and sub-national policies on promoting gender equality. Donor financing, compared to the budgetary financing for gender equality, was relatively higher, however, to date the country does not have concrete data and information regarding the contribution of the donors to promoting gender equality, and the size of their financial support.

This could perhaps be connected to the failure by the Government to inform the international organisation and donor countries and make them fully appreciate the policies and plans with regard to gender issues. Consequently, there have been duplication of gender-related projects and programmes being carried out by international organisations, and focusing on a handful of issues. In view of this, in future there is the possibility of developing and implementing a united strategy for raising additional financing designed at accomplishing the objectives and goals of the gender policy of the NCGE by way of coordinating the Mongolian government's gender-responsive policies and action plans with that of the activities and financing by international organisations and donor countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARDS FURTHER IMPROVING THE NATIONAL MECHANISM FOR PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Long-term:

1. The National Human Rights Commission creates a mechanism to file and resolve the complaints on gender based violence cases and carry out pertinent public advocacy actions;
2. The Civil Service Council develops a systematic training program for improving the civil servants' gender equality related knowledge, skills and leadership as well as carries out civil servants' gender parity studies for the human resources development of public institutions and gender-responsive policy planning processes.

Medium-term:

1. The SGKh obligates the pertinent entities and organizations to submit and present the implementation status of the LPGE, performance status of the Government, status on the promotion of the gender equality agenda in civil service institutions; the implementation of CEDAW once every two years; and provide support for improving the utilization of gender impact assessment methodology in drafting laws and regulations as well as monitoring the pertinent implementation processes;
2. Improve accountability mechanisms of the Gender Sub-councils and Gender Subcommittees towards implementing sector and local area-specific gender-responsive policies and actions as well as clearly defining the members' roles and responsibilities; First of all, appoint full-time gender focal point/s;
3. Capacitate the NCGE Secretariat team in conducting gender analysis, developing policy planning and gender-specific indicators as well as increase the number of staff members;
4. The NSO provides qualitative and quantitative statistical information to be used for assessing the implementation of the NPGE, gender-responsive sector and local development policies and takes a comprehensive measure to improve the usage of gender-specific statistical data and information;
5. International organizations and donors coordinate their actions and financing with the action plans of the NCGE Secretariat, the Gender Sub-councils and Gender Subcommittees in order to accelerate effectiveness and efficiency.

Short-term:

1. Make clear roles and responsibilities of the NCGE members to promote gender equality in support of the implementation of gender-responsive sector policies and local development sub-programs, improving inter-sectoral coordination as well as improving accountability mechanisms;
2. Encourage active participation of CSOs/NGOs in implementation of gender-responsive sector policies and local development policy planning processes, provide legal coordination support for carrying out monitoring activities, build capacities and encourage financial and professional methodological support provided by the Government and donors in expanding partnerships and cooperation modalities.

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ANNEX 1. ULAANBAATAR DECLARATION

At the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, United Nations member-states unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration on promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. Its adoption expedited gender mainstreaming in national policies and programs and subsequently catalyzed progress in enhancing women's leadership, increasing the school enrolment of girls and boys, reducing infant and maternal mortality rates, building momentum for elimination of violence against women, increasing appreciation for social and cultural diversity, as well as expanding the space to discuss and address critical areas of concern through common efforts.

Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls and all other goals in the "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015 is a manifestation of the continued implementation of the Beijing Declaration. Therefore, there is an urgent need in sharing knowledge, experience and cooperation among countries towards realization of the SDG-5 by acknowledging unassailable aspect of human rights and gender impacts of ever so evident climate change processes and economic inter-dependency ensuing from globalization as well as duly reflecting them in the development policies and actions.

The Government of Mongolia, National Committee on Gender Equality of Mongolia have hosted, with assistance from the Government of Japan and Asian Development Bank, a conference on "Sustainable Development Goals: Gender and Development" as a venue for the international exchange of experiences pertinent to the gender and development paradigm. This event held on 27-28 June 2018, promoting international cooperation towards achieving gender equality, was attended by over 350 participants from Mongolia, Australia, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea and the USA.

WE, PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE, recognize gender equality as essential to building a world of justice, equality, and inclusiveness by leaving no one behind as well as a core component of sustainable development processes. By pursuing a gender-inclusive approach in the development policy planning, implementation and budgeting processes, we are determined to continue creating opportunities for women, men, girls, boys and various social groups to equally participate in and benefit from the gains.

Building on the best results and practices achieved towards promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, we undertake the following commitments to exercise more inclusive and effective cooperation regionally and globally [through 2030](#):

Within the framework of promoting partnership and cooperation towards gender-responsive and decent employment and inclusive economic growth, especially women's economic empowerment.

1. Promote decent employment opportunities, especially for female heads of households, persons with disabilities, migrant workers, and other marginalized people, through gender-responsive policy planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation processes; through inter-sectoral coordination at the national, regional and international levels; as well as by means of sharing experiences on effective methods to advance inclusive economic growth.
2. Develop joint analysis and research to holistically identify and address gender inequalities in the economy and in all productive spheres.
3. Promote flexible work options that recognize the needs of female and male employees with family responsibilities and support gender equality in decent employment.
4. Recognize the right to equal pay for women and men for work of equal value.
5. Establish policies and put in place mechanisms to ensure safety and security in the workplace for female and male employees, with a focus on zero tolerance for gender discrimination and sexual harassment.
6. Cooperate on addressing adverse gender impacts of national and international labour migration, while ensuring and respecting the human rights of migrant workers.
7. Provide support to rural women in their efforts to combat economic disempowerment and generate equitable participation in global value chains. This should be introduced by means of promoting gender-sensitive international trade policies and by fostering cooperation through results-based monitoring.
8. Recognize gender-inclusive financial opportunities as an imperative global sustainable financing principle and increase women's access to financial resources.
9. Expand opportunities for women's micro businesses and improve financial credit schemes that meet the specific needs of women.
10. Promote corporate social responsibility initiatives and financing, especially among construction, infrastructure and extractives industries, which respond to poverty and promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Within the framework of promoting opportunities to introduce and use gender indicators for the improvement of quality of life at national and international levels:

1. Develop and introduce gender-sensitive indicators to measure and monitor changes in the quality of life of individuals and households.
2. Promote cooperation amongst governments and statistical offices in data sharing, including sharing data on how to measure and assess progress on gender inclusion and other SDGs indicators. Further, share best practices in developing and utilizing quantitative and qualitative gender indicators to measure progress at national, sectoral and local levels.
3. Update gender-sensitive indicators and statistical data currently in use at international, regional and national levels to align them with the SDGs.
4. Develop cooperation mechanisms and partnerships to promote gender equality amongst sectors that play a determinant role in ensuring quality of life, including the construction and urban development, transport, energy, mining, industrial and agricultural sectors.
5. Improve legal and policy environment for protecting and advancing women's sexual and reproductive health rights to ensure that they are optimized for the achievement of the SDGs.

Within the framework of encouraging international cooperation and partnership towards climate change adaptation and mitigations as well as improving the livelihoods of rural women and girls:

1. Encourage partnership in implementing the UN Resolution on the improvement of livelihoods of rural women and girls, by enhancing cooperation among local and national governments, civil society and rural residents.
2. Cooperate to promote green and decent jobs in the informal and agricultural sectors that are inclusive of women.
3. Undertake collaborative efforts towards increasing diversity of green jobs and facilitate transference of technology for improving the working conditions and productivity.
4. Enhance cooperation and exchange experiences towards addressing pressing gender issues in rural development processes, including by means of promoting gender balance and the ability of the next generation of herders and farmers to equitably realize their ambitions.
5. The world is confronted with substantial challenges in equalizing opportunities to attain economic freedom, food security, access to energy, environmental sustainability, human security, that of property and the realization of rights. We are calling for the implementation of the pro-poor and socially inclusive development agenda that helps women, men, youths, the elderly and all other segments of population in urban and rural areas regardless of health and education status achieve the means to engage, on an equitable basis, as agents of change and drivers of development.

6. Urgent and immediate strategies to combat the threat of climate change to traditional herding ways of life, work and the preservation of the environment of the steppes should be developed and implemented. These strategies must be underpinned by the gender specific knowledges of the herding population, within which women's role is pivotal, that have preserved and defended the environment for centuries.

Recognizing that effective and productive partnerships among nations can be impeded by gender stereotypes, we shall cooperate in undertaking public education and awareness building efforts aimed at preventing from and eliminating discrimination and violence.

WE, THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, confirm our intention to devote all our heart and effort to making this Declaration a reality.

**Participants in the "Sustainable Development Goals: Gender and Development"
International Conference
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**

28 June 2018

