

MONGOLIA

EDUCATION

Sectoral and OR+ (Thematic) Report

January-December 2016



Seven-year old Tamir at the Learning and Recreational Centre, Rinchinlhumbe soum school, Khuvsgul province.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

ECD Early Childhood Development

ECE Early Childhood Education

EPR Emergency Preparedness and Response

HIV Human immunodeficiency virus

JICA Japanese International Cooperation Agency

MECSS Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport

MHM Menstrual Hygiene Management

NFE Non-formal education

NSO National Statistics Office

NGO Non-governmental organization

SDG Sustainable Development Goal

STI Sexually transmitted infection

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

WASH Water, sanitation, and hygiene



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an overview of education results achieved by UNICEF Mongolia from January to December 2016. The document also outlines future plans in education, with a focus on planned results for 2017 and beyond.

UNICEF Mongolia's education programme continued to focus on equity by implementing specific interventions for the most disadvantaged children in its two focus areas – Khuvsgul province and Nalaikh district – and undertaking policy advocacy with central and local authorities for better planning and budget allocation for the most vulnerable. These interventions were also extended to other areas including Khan-Uul and Bayanzurkh districts, which have the lowest pre-school enrolment rates in Ulaanbaatar, Bayan-Ulgii where ethnic and linguistic minorities reside, and six Buddhist temples where monastic boys reside.

UNICEF Mongolia's education programme, with generous support from donors to the Global Education Thematic Funds, contributed to a 4.5 per cent increase in enrolment in Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Khuvsgul province, and 0.8 and 1.2 per cent increases in primary education net enrolment rates in Khuvsgul province (96.6 per cent) and Nalaikh district (99.8 per cent) compared to the previous academic year¹.

With support from UNICEF Mongolia more than 15,000 children aged 2-5 years old have accessed ECE services through 80 kindergartens with integrated ECE components – good parenting, access to safe water, adequate sanitation facilities, and hygiene behaviour change. Continued advocacy and technical assistance has resulted in the National Strategy on Education, which became operational in January 2016. All 44 kindergartens in the UNICEF geographical focus areas have fully adopted the strategy, which ensures inclusive ECE services for children in remote and peri-urban areas, children in poor households, and children with disabilities.

UNICEF Mongolia supported mainstreaming about 150 children with disabilities into regular schools in its two geographic focus areas through partnerships with Government and non-governmental organizations and advocacy for an inclusive education policy. A UNICEF-initiated knowledge and practices exchange mechanism between the special schools for children with disabilities that are only existent in Ulaanbaatar and mainstream schools has been further expanded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Khuvsgul province and other districts of Ulaanbaatar.

In collaboration with the Institute of Education, UNICEF Mongolia developed and translated five primary education textbooks into the Tuvan language, which are now used by about 180 Tuvan students and 15 Tuvan teachers. A study of lower secondary students' learning achievement in their mother tongues (Kazakh and Tuva) and Mongolian in Bayan-Ulgii province (2015-2016) indicated that students and teachers from the Tuvan primary school in Tsengel *soum* (district), which has received steady support from UNICEF since 2013, showed the highest performance in both their mother tongue and Mongolian language acquisition.

As Education Cluster co-lead, UNICEF Mongolia led the coordination of several organizations to improve Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in education. This resulted in a number of concrete outputs laying the foundation for further strengthening emergency preparedness in the education sector. The efforts also resulted the in inclusion of safe schools related provisions and activities in the amended Education Law and the Ministry's annual work plan.

UNICEF Mongolia's education programme will continue its equity-focused advocacy, technical assistance, and capacity building interventions to influence and support policy development

¹ Provincial and district statistics, 2016





to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 – Quality Education – and will document and replicate equity based good practices in 2017 and beyond.

II. STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF 2016

At the conclusion of the Country Programme 2012-2016, UNICEF Mongolia focused on accelerating efforts to achieve and sustain results for children while preparing to begin the new Country Programme approved by the UNICEF Executive Board in September. The year was challenging for Mongolia as the country was plunged into a severe economic and financial downturn with high debt and close to zero economic growth, resulting in substantial budget cuts and the erosion of some human development gains. Living conditions for the most vulnerable also deteriorated as a result of the effects of two consecutive harsh winters that turned into natural disasters.

Adverse economic and environmental conditions were coupled with political volatility. While general elections in June 2016 provided new national leadership, this also resulted in a substantial turnover in Government positions and a slowdown in cooperation programmes, contributing to a complex operating environment for UNICEF Mongolia's programme implementation.

In the academic year 2015-2016, a total of 742,500 students were enrolled in 768 general education schools² nationwide. The number of kindergartens increased by 117 to a total of 1,288 with 225,388 children in attendance. Estimates from National Statistics Office (NSO) data show that 14.1 per cent of the state budget was spent on education in 2015 (academic year 2015-2016), a decrease from both 15.2 per cent in 2013 and 16.7 per cent in 2014. Hence, the education sector remains a priority area for the Government's Sustainable Development Vision-2030 and the new Government Action Plan 2016-2020.

National primary and secondary education net enrolment rates reached 96.3 per cent and 94.1 per cent respectively in the 2015-2016 academic year, 1.7 per cent and 4 per cent higher than were reported at the beginning of the previous UNICEF Country Programme in 2012.³ However, these enrolment rates are 2.8 per cent and 2.0 per cent lower than in the previous academic year, which might be largely due to recent measures to increase flexible school entrance ages for children from herder families and changes in data quality.

Despite significant progress in expanding access to primary and secondary education, the quality of education remains a major challenge. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport (MECSS) conducted annual national learning achievement studies for sample populations in grades 5, 9, and 11 in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Although the results of these studies have not been made public, unofficial sources do not report substantial improvements in learning achievements, but large disparities were noted between urban and rural areas, as well as between provinces. MECSS plans to take several actions to improve quality of education and UNICEF Mongolia will collaborate with the Ministry to develop education quality assessment policy guidelines and a review of education standards and core curricula in 2017-2018.

As certain groups of children – including children with disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, monastic children (mainly boys), and children from poor families residing in poor peri-urban districts and remote rural areas – still face challenges in gaining full access to quality education, the UNICEF Mongolia inclusive basic education interventions continue to focus on mainstreaming children with disabilities, providing second learning opportunities for

³ Statistics from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport (MECSS).



² National Statistics Office (NSO), 2015.

out-of-school children, including monastic boys, and improving learning outcomes for ethnic and linguistic minorities.

The national pre-school gross enrolment rate increased from 78.4 per cent in 2012 to 79.2 per cent in 2016, according to MECSS statistics. UNICEF supported interventions for disadvantaged children in two target areas, contributing to a 7.5 per cent increase in pre-school enrolment in Khuvsgul (88.6 per cent) and a 17.4 per cent increase in Nalaikh (70.7 per cent)⁴ between the 2012-2013 and 2015-2016 academic years.

UNICEF Mongolia played an active role in drafting amendments to the Law on Pre-school Education by providing technical assistance and continued policy advocacy. As a result, the law was successfully amended to include fundamental provisions ensuring the enrolment of marginalized children (children from poor households, children with disabilities, and orphan and boarding children) in public kindergartens free of charge, including free meals.

Reduced Government budgets at the sub-national level have presented a challenge to sustaining and replicating ECE models in remote areas. UNICEF has continued its evidence-based advocacy efforts to ensure the sustainability of the ECE models in Khuvsgul province and Nalaikh district.

Scale and Scope of the UNICEF Mongolia Education Programme

UNICEF Mongolia effectively implemented the Child Friendly Schools initiative with improved partnerships. The Country Office supported inclusive education and integrating DRR issues in education policies; improved water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in schools, kindergartens and dormitories; enhanced students' participation; and inclusion of child protection in school settings in the newly approved child protection legislation. The education programme continued to be driven by a strong equity focus to expand access and improve the quality and management of early childhood, primary, and secondary education for the most disadvantaged groups in Nalaikh district of Ulaanbaatar and Khuvsgul province, which were selected based on multiple deprivation criteria. Specific interventions were also implemented in other areas including Bayan-Ulgii (the province of Kazakh and Tuvan ethnic minorities), several Buddhist temples in Ulaanbaatar and provinces with a large number of monastic boys, and Bayanzukrh and Khan-Uul, districts with the lowest pre-school enrolment rates in Ulaanbaatar.

In 2016 UNICEF Mongolia's inclusive basic education interventions benefited more disadvantaged children with disabilities, ethnic minority children, monastic boys, and other out-of-school children in remote rural *soums* and Buddhist temples and generated good practices that can be replicated in other areas and can inform national and local education policies.

UNICEF Mongolia strengthened the policy environment to promote adolescent development with the Government's approval of the first policy document on organizing extracurricular activities in schools, including implementation guidelines, a draft national programme on child development and protection, and an action plan on adolescent mental health.

Technical support and advocacy led to a successful amendment to the Law on Pre-school Education. The amendment includes norms for equal opportunity for all children and free-of-charge ECE for the most disadvantaged children. The amended Law will benefit 300,000 children once it is implemented in January 2017.



⁴ Provincial and district statistics, 2013 and 2016

New developments

Referencing the SDGs, the Government of Mongolia approved Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision-2030 in February 2016, which will be incorporated into medium term development policies, Government action plans, annual socio-economic development guidelines, and state budgets. The Vision outlines general objectives for pre-school and general education sectors to be achieved in three phases (2016-2020, 2021-2025, and 2026-2030):

- (i) To enrol every young child in pre-school education services that meet the standard requirements and provide the basics for acquisition of the Mongolian language and traditions; and
- (ii) To improve the quality of general education system to the international benchmark levels in order to prepare educated future Mongolian citizens.

Following the parliamentary election in June, the Government Action Plan 2016-2020 was approved in September. The Plan includes education related provisions to improve equal access, relevance, and quality of education services in all sub-sectors of education with a specific focus on improving access to pre-school education – which currently stands at 79.2 per cent nationwide – and improving the quality of education by establishing a standards based system.

Several important legal acts pertaining to children including the Law on Child Rights, the Law on Child Protection, and the Law on Rights of People with Disabilities were approved in February.

The new UNICEF Country Programme 2017-2021 is an important contribution to support the Government of Mongolia in the implementation of its Sustainable Development Vision-2030 and Action Plan 2016-2020 through the following Programme Outcomes:

Outcome 1. By 2021, the most disadvantaged children in Mongolia benefit from increased access and utilization of services that promote health and nutrition, including water, sanitation, hygiene and interventions that mitigate the impact of air pollution on child survival.

Outcome 2. By 2021, the most disadvantaged children benefit from increased access and utilization of educational services in a healthy, inclusive and quality learning environment.

Outcome 3. By 2021, child related national policies, budgets and systems, including the child protection system, are inclusive and equity-focused.

The Country Programme also contributes to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Mongolia in 2017-2021, especially in Outcome area 2, Enhancing social protection and utilization of quality and equitable social services, and Outcome area 3, Fostering voice and strengthening accountability.

The new UNICEF Country Programme increases national resources and efforts toward child-centred policy reform, as well as to accelerating targeted programmes to address inequalities where gaps persist. The programme component on *Inclusive*, *healthy*, *and quality learning environments* will ensure that the most disadvantaged children in Mongolia benefit from increased access to and utilization of educational services in a healthy, inclusive, and quality learning environment. This includes increased access to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and pre-school services, and improved teaching quality, complemented by work to enhance parents' knowledge, attitudes and practices. Children and adolescents in schools and in out-



of-schools settings will benefit from improved life-skills, health, nutrition, and sanitation. The programme will also support Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) and DRR throughout the education sector.

Partnerships

UNICEF Mongolia's worked with partners to achieve results for education in 2016, including:

- Sectoral institutions and bodies: MECSS, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Population Development and Social Protection, the National Authority for Children, the National Human Rights Commission, the National Emergency Management Authority, the National Centre for Life-long Education, the Institute of Education, the In-service Teacher Training Institute, Mongolian State University of Education, the Education Department of Khuvsgul province, the Metropolitan Education Department, and the Metropolitan Health Department and Education Division of Nalaikh district of Ulaanbaatar. These partners collaborated on programme design, implementation, monitoring, advocacy and awareness raising activities.
- United Nations agencies (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Beijing Office, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Development Programme), guided by the UN Development Assistance Framework, for the coordination of programme development and implementation.
- Bilateral and multilateral development partners (the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency) for advocacy, technical coordination, and leveraging resources within the framework of the National Development Strategy.
- International and national non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations (Save the Children Japan and World Vision International Mongolia for EPR/DRR; Mongolian Education Alliance, Mongolian National Association for Wheelchair Users, Mongolian Association of Sign Language Interpreters, Education for All National Coalition, and Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities for promotion of equity in education, especially for children with disabilities and children from ethnic and linguistic minorities) for implementation, monitoring, advocacy, capacity building, social mobilization, and behaviour change.

Preparation and Involvement in the Agenda 2030

The global education community, having recently concluded the Education for All goals and the education related Millennium Development Goals, has agreed on the next education goals to be achieved by 2030. UNICEF advocated for Mongolia to place equity and inclusion at the centre of national and local education policy in line with SDG 4, Quality Education: *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.*

Three senior officials from MECSS, a national coordinator for the All for Education Coalition, and a UNICEF Mongolia Education Specialist shared Mongolia's experiences at the 2nd Asian and Pacific Meeting on Education 2030 in November 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. The UNICEF Education Specialist co-facilitated a session on placing equity and inclusion at the heart of implementation with a UNESCO colleague. The session outlined strategies to address key priorities and milestones for achieving SDG 4 targets and actions needed at the national, subregional, and regional levels. The group provided feedback on the proposed monitoring indicators and planned actions. The group's results contributed to the development of a regional framework to guide the implementation of SDG 4 in the Asia and Pacific region.

Following the regional meeting, UNICEF Mongolia supported the translation of *Education 2030 Framework for Action* into the Mongolian language, and printed 1000 copies that were distributed to education policy makers and district and provincial education departments.



UNICEF worked with MECSS and NGO partners to advocate for the Framework through events including the annual gathering of directors of local education departments and the 7th National Forum on Education organized by NGO partners. Providing a keynote address at the 7th National Forum on Education, UNICEF Mongolia's Education Specialist discussed equality, equity, and quality of education both internationally and in Mongolia, and called for joint action by Government, NGO partners, and education donors to accelerate progress toward implementing the Education 2030 agenda.

UNICEF Mongolia, in collaboration with its partners, including the UNESCO Beijing Office, will continue to advocate for policies that will improve education quality and equity within the Education 2030 agenda, including localizing SDG 4 and related targets and indicators.

II. RESULTS IN THE OUTCOME AREA

Outcome 400: Child Friendly Schools

Equitable access to child-friendly schools that are inclusive, academically effective, gender-sensitive, healthy, safe, protective and involve families and communities

In the 2015-2016 academic year, primary and secondary education net enrolment rates reached 96.3 per cent and 94.1 per cent respectively nationwide, which are 1.7 per cent and 4 per cent higher than reported in 2012, according to MECSS statistics. However, these enrolment rates are 2.8 per cent and 2.0 per cent lower than the previous academic year. This might be largely due to recent measures increasing flexible school entrance ages for children from herder families and changes in data quality. UNICEF supported interventions for disadvantaged children in the two geographic focus areas contributed to a 0.8 percent increase in primary education net enrolment rates in Khuvsgul (96.6 per cent) and a 1.2 per cent increase in Nalaikh (99.8 per cent) according to district and provincial statistics. In collaboration with MECSS, UNICEF began to advocate for policies that support SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) to place equity and inclusion at the centre of national and local education policies.

The UNICEF partnership approach to technical consultations, joint training, and exchange visits between the special schools for children with special needs in Ulaanbaatar and selected regular schools in Khuvsgul and Nalaikh was replicated by JICA in Khuvsgul and other districts. UNICEF Mongolia, in partnership with the Institute of Education, worked to generate evidence to support the learning achievement of ethnic minority students. A study was undertaken on students' learning achievement in their mother tongues [Kazakh and Tuva] and in the Mongolian language in lower secondary grades. The study covered 724 students and 558 teachers from 9 *soums* and provincial centre schools in Bayan-Ulgii province. The study identified generally poor professional knowledge, skills, and teaching methodology among teachers, especially in teaching the Mongolian language, and a shortage of textbooks and learning materials designed for ethnic minorities as the main factors contributing to students' poor learning achievement. Study recommendations will inform UNICEF Mongolia and the Government's capacity building plans and interventions for 2017 and 2018 to ensure sound teaching practices, pre- and in-service training, and child-friendly learning environments.

As Education Cluster co-lead, UNICEF Mongolia led the coordination of several organizations to improve EPR and DRR in education. Systematic and well-planned collaboration within the cluster enabled UNICEF to contribute to several results. This included training on Education in Emergencies and DRR basics for 30 participants that strengthened their capacity to provide education services during emergencies and to integrate Education in Emergencies/DRR issues into education policies. A handbook on disaster and emergency preparedness



guidance for Mongolian schools was developed in collaboration with cluster members. At the national level, the National Strategy Forum on Safe Schools and Kindergartens was organised in collaboration with MECSS, the National Emergency Management Authority, World Vision, and Save the Children, which generated recommendations on integrating DRR issues into education policies and programming.

Concrete progress in WASH was accomplished through the implementation of the national Norms and Requirements for WASH in Kindergartens, Schools and Dormitories. This improved access to safe water and adequate sanitation facilities for approximately 16,200 boys and girls (53 per cent), together with 100 per cent access coverage in 19 schools, 30 dormitories, and four kindergartens in two focus areas. In these areas 19 target schools updated their policies and management plans to ensure that they are gender-sensitive, including WASH related targets, such as water safety, clean sanitation facilities, and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM). The MHM research recommendations informed the development of a basic package of MHM education materials, including a website on MHM (www.namuu.mn), a video and leaflets for girls, teachers, headmasters, and dormitory caretakers, as well as for the general public.

UNICEF provided technical support to develop the first draft of the National Programme on Child Development and Protection, set for Government approval in the first quarter of 2017. To strengthen the legal environment for adolescent development, additional technical and financial support was provided for the development of two new regulations in the Child Rights Law, approved in 2016. As a result of UNICEF's advocacy and technical support, the first policy document on organizing extracurricular activities (debate clubs, student publication clubs, health peer education clubs) in schools was approved by MECSS in May 2016. These nationally distributed guidelines for school administrators and teachers provide more detailed guidance on making extracurricular activities more effective and beneficial for children. This will contribute to the sustainability of Child Development Centres, already established in all of the schools and dormitories in Khuvsgul and Nalaikh.

UNICEF played a leading role in developing the new Law on Child Protection that was approved by the Parliament in February 2016. UNICEF worked with child rights groups from international and national NGO coalitions to advocate for the inclusion of a stand-alone Article on Child Protection in Education Sector. The law requires the education sector to implement child protection policies and programmes and all employees have a mandatory reporting responsibility if they suspect, become aware of, or identify children at risk of abuse or being abused. The law also obliges the sector to take measures to protect children from corporal punishment, mental abuse, bullying, neglect, crimes, offences, and harmful habits, and to train employees on positive discipline methods.

Output 410: Inclusive basic education

By the end of 2016, increased national and sub-national capacity to legislate, plan and budget for inclusive quality basic education is strengthened.

UNICEF Mongolia collaborated with Government and NGOs to support inclusive education interventions at several schools and non-formal education (NFE) centres in Khuvsgul and Nalaikh. These interventions benefitted more than 150 children with disabilities. In particular, Murun, Bayanzurkh, Ulaan-Uul, and Rinchinlhumbe *soums* of Khuvsgul province, with a larger number of out-of-school children compared to other *soums*, now possess increased capacity and more effective practices in inclusive education for vulnerable children, including those with disabilities. A series of capacity building training and advocacy discussions were held for more than 400 local authorities, teachers, students, community members, and parents. Topics covered included equity in education, inclusive education approaches in the classroom and



for individual teaching for children with special needs, and community engagement to support inclusive education. Twenty-five Khuvsgul education counterparts took part in sharing visits to three special education schools in Ulaanbaatar, two mainstream schools, and an NFE centre in Nalaikh that have effective inclusive education practices. A learning and recreation centre that includes sports facilities for children with disabilities was established at four schools. Five special education experts from the Teacher Training Institute and three special schools in Ulaanbaatar provided on-the-job methodology support for classroom and individual development training for children with special needs. A sign language guidebook, sign language charts, and three booklets ("My special friend", "Summer camp adventure", and "Friends of my dream") that promote positive attitude towards inclusive education for children with disabilities were developed to support mainstreaming children with hearing and other disabilities into regular schools.

Working with the Institute of Education's Ethnic Minority Children's Unit and local teachers from Bayan-Ulgii province, UNICEF developed the "Tuvan language 3" textbook and teacher's guide and translated four first grade primary education textbooks (Mathematics I, Human beings and environment I, Arts I, and Civic education I) from Mongolian into Tuvan. These books are now used by about 180 Tuvan students. Tuvan language children's books and teacher's guides were procured for the newly established library at the Tuvan primary school in Bayan-Ulgii province. With tremendous voluntary technical support from the Teacher's University in the Republic of Tuva, this work started in 2013 and has resulted in increased capacity of 15 Tuvan teachers to promote and teach in their mother tongue.

UNICEF Mongolia continued to support an initiative to reach about 800 out-of-school children in the UNICEF focus areas, including 248 young monks in six Buddhist temples in Ulaanbaatar and five provinces through an NFE equivalency programme using classroom training and mobile *ger* schools. A workshop on "Education rights of monastic children and roles of local governments" was held in April 2016. A standard national equivalency curriculum was approved for all temples and an officially registered transition from temples to formal or nonformal schools was adopted for children who leave temples.

Output 412: Adolescent development and HIV and AIDS

By the end of 2016, national and sub-national capacity is strengthened to plan and budget interventions that promote adolescents health, development and their engagement in decision making processes.

UNICEF provided technical support to develop the first draft national programme on child development and protection for Government approval in the first quarter of 2017. Additional support was provided to the Ministry of Population Development and Social Protection to strengthen the legal environment for adolescent development by developing two new regulations related to the implementation of the Child Rights Law that was approved in 2016.

UNICEF advocacy and technical support resulted in the first policy document on the organization of student extracurricular activities, which was approved by the Ministry of Education in May. The guidelines for school administrators and teachers providing detailed guidance on making extracurricular activities more effective and beneficial for children was developed and distributed to schools nationwide. This contributes to the sustainability of the Child Development Centres, already established in all schools and dormitories in Khuvsgul province and Nalaikh district. The life skills programme "My World" was implemented in focus areas and reached 80 per cent of older adolescents, equipping them with life skills in communication, decision-making, conflict resolution, and sexual health.

UNICEF Mongolia continued to develop the capacity of peer educators using the "NewGen" training module on sexually transmitted infections (STI) and HIV prevention, adapted from the



regional Youth Lead network. Training was provided for 236 (65 per cent female) adolescent peer educators in 2016. Peer educators reported that their skills in communication, facilitation, leadership, and team work were significantly increased by the training, boosting their self-esteem and increasing their empathy. They were able to directly reach more than 4,000 students⁵ with STI and HIV prevention messages by organizing discussions and events. The peer education programme resulted in continued improvement in key indicators. The percentage of adolescents among all new STI cases dropped to 4.4 per cent in 2015 from 11.8 per cent in 2012.⁶ The adolescent birth rate has also declined from 7.8 in 2012 to 3.9 in 2015.⁷ The experience of Khuvsgul peer educators was presented at the regional children's forum, organized by UNICEF and Family, Child and Youth Development Agency, where it was decided that the programme would be replicated in six provinces in the Khangai region with support from local governments.

UNICEF helped put adolescent mental health on the policy agenda, supporting the first national conference on the topic in May. The conference brought together stakeholders from different sectors, NGOs, academia, and partners, as well as adolescents themselves. The conference recommendations were shared with all relevant national and sub-national Government organizations, NGOs, and partners. The Ministry of Health approved a follow-up plan to support the implementation of key recommendations from the conference. A UNICEF supported module on psychological counselling in schools was embedded into the routine module of the in-service Teacher Training Institute in 2016 and benefited 61 first year social workers. The module was also modified for interactive training and will be used for on-the-job training of school social workers, which will improve the capacity of social workers to provide primary level mental health services to adolescents.

A Situation Analysis of Adolescents in Mongolia was conducted in the first half of 2016. The results further contributed to policy advocacy efforts at the national and sub-national levels.

Output 307: Early childhood development

By end of 2016, national and sub-national capacity to provide access to quality early childhood education services is increased.

UNICEF Mongolia played an active role in drafting amendments to the Law on Pre-school Education by providing technical assistance and continued policy advocacy. As a result, the law was successfully amended and two fundamental provisions for quality pre-school education were incorporated:

- (i) "all children from 2 years of age to enter pre-school education", and
- (ii) "every child in Mongolia shall be involved in the pre-school education services such as mainstream, part-time, seasonal, shift classes, mobile teachers, or mobile kindergarten".

From the start of implementation in January 2017, marginalized children (children from poor households, children with disabilities, and orphan and boarding children) will be enrolled in public kindergartens free of charge, including free meals.

In partnership with the In-Service Teacher Training Institute, UNICEF Mongolia supported the implementation of a national pre-school core curriculum at national and sub-national levels by conducting in-service training sessions for teachers and on-site visits. The improved curricula



⁵ Project implementation report, 2016

⁶ Provincial statistics, 2015

⁷ Provincial statistics, 2015

will benefit over 250,000 children aged 2 to 5 years and 2,119 targeted ECE practitioners, local managers, and parents. Also, with UNICEF Mongolia's technical assistance to the Mongolian State University of Education, a training module on child protection and ECD was developed and tested for nationwide implementation. This training module aims to improve kindergarten teachers' understanding of children's rights, special developmental and learning needs, and violence free communications in the classroom.

UNICEF Mongolia and the Ulaanbaatar City Education Department designed and introduced an innovative home-based ECD distance learning kit containing workbooks, guidebooks, and broadcast video lessons for improved parent-child interaction, accompanied by support visits from university students. This was attended by 2,150 of the most disadvantaged children aged 3 to 5 years with active involvement of 1,400 parents in the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar and in Khuvsgul province. Ten mobile *ger* kindergartens, designed and introduced by UNICEF Mongolia, enabled 300 children living in remote rural areas to access ECE services. These interventions led to an increase in children, especially the most disadvantaged, accessing ECE by 4.5 in Khuvsgul province (84.1 per cent in 2015 to 88.6 per cent in 2016).⁸ Nalaikh district maintained the 2015 pre-school enrolment rate of 70.7 per cent but with an additional 211 new entrants this year. Given the positive impact of equity-focused approaches, local authorities have applied guidelines for child-friendly kindergartens in 88 per cent of the kindergartens in Khuvsgul and 80 per cent in Nalaikh.

Results Assessment Framework

The table below shows the status of education outcome indicators.

Outcome 4: Equitable access to child-friendly schools that are inclusive, academically effective, gender-sensitive, healthy, safe, protective, and involve families and communities.

Indicators	Baseline (2012)	Target (2016)	Progress (2014)
	(% and/or #)	(% and/or #)	(% and/or #)
Education net attendance rate disaggregated by sex, province, ethnicity	94		Primary education net enrolment rate: 96.3% National 96.6% Khuvsgul 99.8% Nalaikh 93.1% Boys 96.8% Girls 86.4% Bayan-Ulgii with Kazakh and Tuva minorities

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⁸ Provincial statistics, 2016

Proportion of schools	0%	50%	100% in target areas
identified as child-			
friendly			

The table below shows the status of inclusive basic education output indicators.

Output 410: Increased national and sub-national capacity to legislate, plan, budget for and monitor equitable access to inclusive quality basic education.

Indicators	Baseline (2012)	Target (2016)	Progress (2016)
	(% and/or #)	(% and/or #)	(% and/or #)
A functional learning assessment system (especially for early grades) established		available	Yes. National learning achievement studies for samples of grades 5, 9 and 11 conducted in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
Innovative pilot to improve access to education and learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged and excluded children	1		3 (mobile <i>ger</i> schools, learning and recreational centres for children with disabilities at regular schools, e-learning centres).

The table below shows the status of adolescent development and HIV and AIDS output indicators.

Output 412: By the end of 2016, national and sub-national capacity is strengthened to plan and budget for interventions that promote adolescents' health, development and engagement in decision-making processes.

Indicators	Baseline (% and/or #)	·	Progress (2016) (% and/or #)
Percentage of schools with fully functioning child development centres (allocated space, trained teachers, supportive school administration and active childled groups) (from programme monitoring report)		80%	100%



The strength of the empowerment asset category as reported by youth aged 12-18 (mean score indicator from DAP survey)		Mean increase by 1 point by 2016	N/A
Young people aged 15-24 with a comprehensive knowledge of HIV transmission (from local MICS)	female 25.9% male 15.5%	35%	N/A (Results of 2016 local MICS are not yet available)
	female 27.5%	40% 30%	

The table below shows the status of ECD output indicators.

Output 307: By end of 2016, national and sub-national capacity to provide access to quality early childhood education services is increased.

Indicators	Baseline (201 (% and/or #)	2)			Progress (2016) (% and/or #)	
Percentage of children aged 3-5 accessing	National	78.4%	National	82%	National	79.2%
, .	Khuvsgul	74.5%	Khuvsgul	78%	Khuvsgul	88.6%
	Nalaikh	56.5%	Nalaikh	60%	Nalaikh	70.7%
1	Khuvsgul	40%	Khuvsgul	80%	Khuvsgul	88%
kindergartens implementing child- friendly ECE	Nalaikh	30%	Nalaikh	70%	Nalaikh	80%
ECD index	National	76.1%	National	78%	National	76.1%
	Khuvsgul	76.6%	Khuvsgul	78%	Khuvsgul	76.6%
	Nalaikh	76.2%	Nalaikh	78%	Nalaikh	76.2%



III. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Table 1 Planned budget by Outcome Area 5 and available funding⁹

Outcome Area 5: Education

MONGOLIA

Planned and Funded for the Country Programme 2016 (in US dollars)

Intermediate results	Funding type ¹⁰	Planned budget ¹¹
05-01 Early learning	RR	-
03-01 Early learning	ORR	140,000
05-02 Equity # focus on girls # and inclusive	RR	-
education	ORR	383,000
OF OO Learning and shild friendly asked	RR	-
05-03 Learning and child-friendly schools	ORR	85,000
OF 04 Education in amazganaias	RR	-
05-04 Education in emergencies	ORR	20,000
OF OF Education # ganeral	RR	-
05-05 Education # general	ORR	40,000
Total Budget		668,000

¹¹ Planned budget for ORR *(and ORE, if applicable)* does not include estimated recovery costs. ORR-funded amount excludes cost recovery (only programmable amounts).



⁹ Table 1 is prepared based on MYWP 2015-2016 estimations.

¹⁰ RR: regular resources; ORR: other resources – regular (add ORE: other resources – emergency, if applicable)

Table 2: Country-level thematic contributions to outcome area received in 2016 MONGOLIA

Outcome Area 5: Education

Table Thematic contributions received for Outcome Area 5 by UNICEF Mongolia in 2016 (in US dollars)

Donors	Grant Number*	Contribution amount	Programmable amount
Global – Education	SC149905	361,702	340,000
Swedish Committee for UNICEF	SC150676	246,237	229,000
Japan Committee for UNICEF	SC160262	108,000	100,000
Total		715,939	669,000

Table 3: Expenditures in the Outcome Area

Outcome Area 5: Education

Expenditures by key results areas in 2016 (in US dollars)

		Expenditure amount*				
Organizational targets		Other resources – emergency	Other resources - regular	Regular resources	All programme accounts	
05-01	Early learning	-	343,453	18,468	361,922	
05-02	Equity # focus on girls # and inclusive education	-	234,392	13,131	247,524	
05-03	Learning and child-friendly schools	-	153,783	8,565	162,348	
05-04	Education in emergencies	-	25,744	1,216	26,959	



Total		-	793,637	43,227	836,864
05-05	Education # general	-	36,264	1,847	38,111

Table 4: Thematic expenses by programme area

Programme Area	Expenditure Amount*			
Programme Area	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
05-01 Early learning	-	69,280		69,280
05-02 Equity # focus on girls# and inclusive education	-	75,619		75,619
05-03 Learning and child- friendly schools	-	78,776		78,776
05-04 Education in emergencies	-	25,744		25,744
05-05 Education # General	-	28,605		28,605
Total	-	278,025		278,025

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes

Outcome Area 5: Education

Mongolia

Major interventions using thematic funds based on Specific Intervention Codes in 2016

		Expense
Specific I	Total utilized (US\$)	
05-01-01	National policies on early learning and school readiness	310
05-01-02	Development and use of standards and measurements for early learning and school readiness	54,595
05-01-04	Community-based child development and early learning	186,327
05-01-05	Parenting education and school readiness	19,508



05-02-01	Out-of-School-Children Initiative (OOSCI)	61,909
05-02-06	Education for children with disabilities	123,479
05-03-02	Child-friendly schools # Education	82,303
05-03-03	Multilingual education and mother tongue language	38,618
05-04-01	Risk assessments and risk-informed programming (DRR and CCA)	17,161
05-05-01	Education – systems	7,924
05-05-02	Teacher development and deployment	18,049
05-05-03	School health, nutrition, food and other non-education interventions	107
08-02-03	MICS # general	28,794
08-02-08	Monitoring # general	45,006
08-04-01	Parenting programmes/parenting education and support	11,503
08-09-06	Other # non-classifiable cross-sectoral activities	124,156
08-09-07 Public Advocacy		19
7921 Ope	17,096	
Total		836,864

 $^{^{\}star}$ Total utilized figures exclude recovery costs and are indicative figures obtained from UNICEF Performance Management System.



IV. FUTURE WORKPLAN

An inclusive, healthy, and quality learning environment is one of the three main programme components of UNICEF Mongolia's new Country Programme 2017-2021. This Programme component aims to ensure that the most disadvantaged children in Mongolia benefit from increased access to and utilization of educational services in a healthy, inclusive, and quality learning environment. This includes increased access to ECD and pre-school services and improved teaching quality, complemented by work to enhance parents' knowledge, attitudes and practices. Children and adolescents in schools and in out-of-school settings will benefit from improved life skills, health, nutrition, and sanitation. The Programme will also provide support for EPR and DRR through the education sector. Under this Outcome are the following four Outputs, including Output 2.4 on WASH:

- **2.1** The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sport's capacity to develop, budget, design and implement equity-focused, gender-sensitive policies, strategies, norms, requirements for early childhood development, primary and adolescent learning is enhanced.
- **2.2** Decentralized education authorities in target areas have improved capacity to increase access and utilization of quality, inclusive ECD and primary education services.
- **2.3** Education authorities in target areas have improved capacity to design and implement innovative programmes that can enhance life skills, participation and increase utilisation of STI prevention services.
- **2.4** Education authorities in targeted areas have increased capacity to implement national norms and requirements for water, sanitation and hygiene in kindergartens, schools and dormitories.

Output 2.1 Enabling environment for learning

Education interventions will focus on supporting education system reform to address inequality gaps through policy-level analysis, research and advocacy, which will help to improve planning, budgeting and monitoring of the sector. Technical assistance will be provided to develop national tools to assess the quality of education and improve the Education Management Information System, improve equity lens in the teacher training curriculum and strengthen DRR integration in education policies and programming.

Output 2.2 ECD and primary education

In parallel with the policy level interventions to be implemented under Output 2.1, capacity development at the local level will help to implement decentralized and cross-sectoral ECD services and subsequently influence national standards. Local partnerships will foster awareness among parents and caregivers about this critical period in children's lives, and enhance parents' participation in school management. Locally tested inclusive education models will be replicated to increase primary school attendance among the most disadvantaged children (e.g., children with disabilities and from minority groups).

Output 2.3 Adolescent learning and participation

This component will promote innovation in implementing life skills programmes in schools and in out-of-school settings, targeting adolescents. Knowledge, attitudes and practices around STI/HIV prevention among adolescents will be prioritized. School social workers will have



enhanced capacity to address psychosocial issues among students (including violence, bullying, and abuse).

Table 6: Planned budget and Available Resources for 2017

Outcome Area 5: Education

Mongolia

Planned budget and available resources for 2017

Intermediate result	Funding type	Planned budget ¹	Funded budget ¹	Shortfall ¹²²
05-01 Early learning	ORR	362,430	154,417	208,013
oo o'r Early loairiinig	RR	-	-	-
05-02 Equity focus on girls	ORR	232,500	232,500	-
and inclusive education	RR	-	-	-
05-03 Learning and child-	ORR	30,000	30,000	-
friendly schools	RR	-	-	-
05-04 Education in	ORR	52,968	52,968	-
emergencies	RR	-	-	-
05-05 Education – general	ORR	117,500	117,500	-
oo oo Eddcation general	RR	-	-	-
Sub-total regular resources		-	-	-
Sub-total other resources – regular		795,398	587,385	208,013
Total for 2017		795,398	587,385	208,013

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 $^{^{\}rm 12}$ Other resources shortfall represents OR-R funding required to achieve results in 2015.



IV. EXPRESSION OF THANKS

UNICEF Mongolia is grateful to the Swedish, Japanese, and Korean National Committees for UNICEF and the Government of Monaco for their generous contributions to help implement the Basic Education and Gender Equality programme, improving the lives of children in Mongolia.

UNICEF Mongolia would like to thank our counterparts at MECSS, its agencies and education institutions, local education departments, schools, and kindergartens, who contributed to the success of the Programme. We would also like to thank our development partners and local and international NGOs working in the education sector in Mongolia for their effective collaboration.



V. ANNEXES: HUMAN INTEREST STORIES AND DONOR FEEDBACK FORM

Annex 1. Human interest story on mainstreaming inclusive education for children with disabilities

Unfolding individual potentials: A learning and recreational centre gives children room to grow in Khuvsgul, Mongolia

Rinchinlhumbe soum, Khuvsgul province: "Look, look! I've finished this", says 7 year-old Tamir proudly, after completing a coloured puzzle game in a newly established learning and recreational centre at a local school. He is an outgoing, bright kid who lives in Rinchilhumbe soum, one of the coldest places in Mongolia, where the temperature stays around -40°C most of the time during winter.

When dawn breaks and fog settles over the school yard, signalling another bone-chilling day coming ahead, wood-burning stoves are lit to heat classrooms. Tamir is dubbed the



Tamir after completing his puzzle game ©UNICEFMongolia/2017/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

"friendliest" in his class, but his teacher Ms. Otgonbayar stressed the importance of his need for individual, close attention, which she cannot provide by herself. As Tamir suffers from epilepsy, a chronic neurological disorder marked by episodes of sensory disturbance and loss of consciousness, he is not able to keep up with the other pupils in an ordinary classroom



Tamir's classmates and his teacher Ms. Otgonbayar ©UNICEFMongolia/2017/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

environment. During exams and some classes, he would start to shake his head uncontrollably. "When that happens, I often get worried because I don't know what to do", explains Ms. Otgonbayar. This small community in the northernmost province along the border of Mongolia and Russia is located some 1,000 kilometres from the capital, Ulaanbaatar. Thus, it is harder for basic social services, and special education teachers and professionals to reach those in need.

Committed to including all children

Fortunately for hundreds of children like Tamir, UNICEF Mongolia, in cooperation with Mongolian Government and non-governmental partners, has established a learning and recreational centre where children with disabilities living in the furthest regions of Mongolia have meaningful access to education and can unfold their individual potential. This initiative, ifunded by the Swedish National Committee for UNICEF, benefits more than 300 children with disabilities and disadvantages. Far-flung areas such as Rinchinlhumbe, Ulaan-uul, Bayanzurkh, and Murun *soums* of Khuvsgul province were selected on the basis of having the highest number of out-of-school children in the region.



Tamir lives with his grandparents in a small *ger*, a traditional Mongolian home in the *soum* centre during the school sessions, while his parents and older brother live in the countryside



Tamir in front his ger, a traditional Mongolian housing ©UNICEFMongolia/2017/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

to herd their animals. His grandparents explained that Tamir seemed to have more frequent episodes of seizures at night, when he is pressured to do more at school, or is panicked. "We observed that when he visits the centre, he always comes home happy", adds Mrs. Ser-Od, Tamir's grandmother. When asked about his favourite daily routine, Tamir cheerfully answered "Studying and playing at the centre with my friends."

Mrs. Tsetsegmaa, the teacher in charge of the learning and recreational centre established with UNICEF Mongolia's support

at the local school, explains, "Our Tamir would have been one of the drop-outs if not for his grandparents' commitment for their grandchild's education and the opening of this new facility."

"While Mongolia has near universal primary education enrolment, there are around 30,000 children who are out-of-school. UNICEF is supporting the creation of an inclusive education system in Mongolia, where all children, including children with disabilities and other disadvantaged out-of-school children, receive meaningful learning opportunities, where everyone is included, differences are celebrated, learning is supported and that responds to individual needs like Tamir's", said UNICEF Mongolia's Education Specialist Bolorchimeg.

Children with disabilities can thrive and fully unfold their potential in an inclusive classroom setting with interventions such as learning and recreational centres. It takes all relevant stakeholders – from Government to NGOs to communities to families – to work together to build a more inclusive society for every child.



Annex 2. Human interest story on alternative early childhood education for children with disabilities

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

"I want to be a doctor when I grow up so that I can heal others," says 5-year-old Urnaa. She lives with her family in Nalaikh, on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's capital. Her bright, intelligent smile belies the pain and worry that marked her earliest years. Born with a cleft lip (bilateral orofacial clefts), her parents wondered whether their little daughter would ever be able to lead a normal life.

At 2, Urnaa had still not learned to speak like other children of her age. Extremely concerned that she was becoming more and more cut off from her family, friends and local community,



Urnaa and her favourite teddy bear ©UNICEF/Mongolia/2016/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

her parents enrolled Urnaa at a kindergarten. Because there is an acute shortage of kindergartens in Nalaikh, this was an alternative kindergarten programme for children with disabilities, set up by the Education Department with the support of NGO Sujetashand. UNICEF provided technical and financial support.

There she enjoyed the company of other children and professional care twice a week. When a place became available, she started going regularly to the public kindergarten. As luck would have it, this is where Urnaa met Ms. Dorjkhand, a kindergarten teacher trained to work with children with special needs.

Alternative education meets inclusive kindergarten

Settling into a new environment and trying to make friends was no easy task, especially for Urnaa who was still struggling to communicate. As Ms. Dorjkhand incorporated orofacial muscle exercises and special techniques into her regular curriculum, Urnaa gradually learned

Urnaa and Ms. Dorjkhand in their classroom ©UNICEF/Mongolia/2016/Mungunkhishiq Batbaatar

to speak. Even more importantly, she was becoming more sociable in the classroom, and even at home.

"There are no children with disabilities, if you ask me. All children are able to reach their full potential if we can provide the environment, care, and love they need," explains Ms. Dorjkhand.

She is one of 120 early childhood education professionals and kindergarten teachers who have been trained to work with children with disabilities and to implement the

national core curriculum for preschool education.



Ms. Dorjkhand's care for Urnaa reaches beyond the classroom – she makes sure that her students and their parents make good use of their time at home. "During the summer, my mother and I did our special exercises every day," explains Urnaa. "So that she can maintain and add onto what we've achieved together so far," adds her mother, Sarantugs, highlighting the importance of continuous speech therapy.

Investing in the future

"She is the only reason why I laugh and smile every day," says Sarantugs. Now that Urnaa is going to kindergarten regularly, her mother has time to work as a nurse at the local hospital. "Knowing that my Urnaa is in reliable, professional care with teachers like Ms. Dorjkhand, I work without any worries, which is such a big help for me and my family," adds Sarantugs.

Urnaa and Sarantugs' family is one of thousands that have benefited from alternative early childhood education services for children with disabilities, to which UNICEF has provided technical and financial support, backed by the Government of Monaco.

The number of the most disadvantaged children who benefit from these services has increased by 2,150 in the UNICEF target areas. Some 1,450 parents like Urnaa's mother, Sarantugs, now have both the motivation and the skills to foster their



Urnaa and her mother, Sarantugs, in their yard ©UNICEF/Mongolia/2016/Mungunkhishig Batbaatar

children's development at home and prepare them for school. They are supported by a combination of regular parents' meetings where they can share experiences, as well as training and information on child development. "That's why I feel grateful for the work done in Nalaikh by UNICEF Mongolia and the Government of Monaco," says Sarantugs.

UNICEF has supported ECD at the national and sub-national levels since 2012, ensuring that all children reach their full potential. This has required interventions in child survival and development programmes, as well as education, child protection, and social policy and partnerships. In particular, UNICEF supports community and family care practices that impact young children, especially the most disadvantaged. Practical tools are invaluable, and UNICEF has helped develop a handbook for parents and teachers on caring for and nurturing children with disabilities in families and institutions.

However, the work here is not yet done. There are more than 30,000 children with disabilities in Mongolia and they have the same rights as other children – to an education, health care, protection, and survival. The early years of life are crucial, not only for physical development, but also cognitive and social-emotional development. Simply put, early childhood development for every child is the key to a full and productive life.

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Report Feedback Form

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Name: Judith Bruno, UNICEF Mongolia Deputy Representative

Email: jbruno@unicef.org

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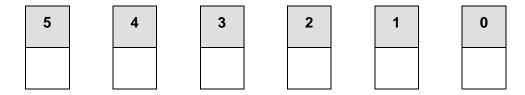
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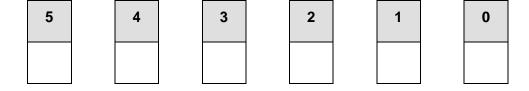


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5.	5. Are there any other comments that you would like to share with us?	

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