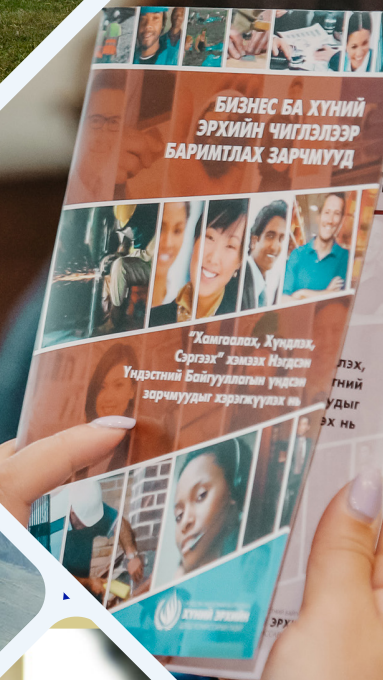




UNITED
NATIONS
MONGOLIA



COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS MONGOLIA



2023
UPDATE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The comprehensive Common Country Analysis (CCA) of Mongolia, prepared in 2021, provides an extensive macro-level analysis. Just like the 2022 CCA update, the current 2023 CCA update focuses on analysis of new development and progress in 2023 as well as those issued not covered in the CCA 2021 and 2022 CCA update. In this context, the 2023 CCA update stands as a complement to the comprehensive CCA 2021, whose analysis and substance still remain relevant.

Despite impact of global geopolitical development, Mongolian economy performed well in 2023, marking an impressive 7% growth. While all macroeconomic indicators turned positive, it has been driven by export of minerals and precious stones (91.6% of total export) to a single market (91.4%). Such an imbalanced export-led economic growth delineates an urgent need for Mongolia to diversify its economy. Cashmere, meat, and other wools are identified as the most relevant for economic diversification among non-mining sectors. In 2023, Mongolia continued its efforts on digitalization, including e-commerce and online public services (e-Mongolia 3.0), and agricultural sector development for food security. Mongolia, a landlocked developing country vulnerable to impact of geopolitical development, has been proactive in international commitments, including implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Human development index (HDI) fell back to 0.730 in 2021 close to 2013 levels in Mongolia (as well globally and in the region) due to COVID, reversing much of the progress towards the Sustainable Development. Mongolia HDI has been projected to recover in 2023-24 after reaching 0.741 in 2022, ranking Mongolia 96 out 193 countries. According to a study done by the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the World Bank, Mongolia's poverty rate is estimated to be 27.1 per cent in 2022. In terms of Multidimensional Poverty, 7.3 per cent of the population in Mongolia (243 thousand people in 2021) is multidimensionally poor while an additional 15.5 per cent is classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (519 thousand people

in 2021). On crimes, drug use and trafficking as well as cybercrimes are increasing, including through cyber spaces and transnational organized crimes.

In terms of biodiversity conservation, Mongolia faces challenges such as forest depletion including through increased forest fires, exacerbated by global warming and aridification. The national movement "Billion Trees" has been initiated to mitigate the impact of climate change, protect forests and water resources, and enhance ecological balance. Mongolia has made progress by designating UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, such as Onon-Balj National Park. Desertification affects a significant portion of the country, with livestock increases contributing to the issue. The country will host the 17th Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification in 2026.

Regarding climate change, Mongolia is heavily impacted despite contributing only 0.1 per cent to global greenhouse gas emissions. The country submitted a revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) with ambitious targets, aiming for a 27.2 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 (conditional) and 22.7 per cent (unconditional). Mongolia commits to spend 1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) annually to combat climate change and desertification, requiring an estimated \$11.5 billion.

The nation is highly vulnerable to climate change, evidenced by the increasing frequency of Dzud, adversely affecting herders' livelihoods and food security. In the winter of 2023/2024, 90 per cent of the country is expected to face high Dzud risk, affecting 190,000 herder household's livelihoods. Mongolia has joined global initiatives, such as the Global Methane Pledge, to reduce emissions. In the renewable energy sector, Mongolia has vast resources and aims to increase its share to 30 per cent by 2030. Despite these efforts, challenges like plastic pollution and air pollution persist, with Mongolia being among the top countries for per capita plastic waste production and facing winter air pollution issues linked to coal and wood combustion.

The main events and factors that have influenced the Mongolian political landscape in 2023 include the constitutional amendment, approval of new laws concerning elections, political parties, and the education system, the corruption scandals, and high-level state visits. Transformations in the electoral system, gender-specific quota for political candidates, and transparency of political party funding as well as corruption situation in Mongolia and the government's efforts to combat it are highlighted in the update. Furthermore, the update elaborates on the "Tavan-Sh Operations" as an assortment of anti-corruption initiatives, including asset recovery operations, transparency, sweeping, accountability, and whistleblowing. To sustain its values and diversify its economy, Mongolia's foreign policy seeks to strike a balance between its relations with its neighbors while strengthening ties with its third neighbors.

The principal events and government actors associated with the national sustainable development policies are outlined, including establishment, and transfer of responsibilities of various institutions, including the termination of National Council for Sustainable Development and the function of the council moved to the Ministry of Economy and Development (MED), and establishment of the Monitoring and Accountability Agency in the Government of Mongolia. In 2020, a resolution was passed by the Parliament of Mongolia, which assigned the government the responsibility of formulating seven thematic programs over a decade-long period. The New Recovery Policy was among those that were implemented in 2021. The remaining six are undergoing finalization and alignment with the SDGs indicators by the MED.

Rural-urban development disparities have constantly grown and persisted as one of key development bottlenecks in more than two decades since early 2000s in Mongolia. As a result of inconsistent and impractical policy decisions, Mongolia ended up having only one growth centre, the capital city Ulaanbaatar (UB). It attracted almost half of the total population (47 per cent) of Mongolia; more than 90 per cent of tertiary education institutes are located in UB, while more than 80 per cent of trade and services are concentrated in UB¹.

Policy prioritizations in infrastructure sector, especially road and transportation, were well defined to support the regional development agenda. However, for the Government to take perceptible, consistent and result-oriented fiscal, taxation and investment policy measures, a further analysis is needed in defining and mapping out growth-driven sectors and projects within the region; it can support regional development for creating enabling environment for job creations and quality social services in provincial cities. The Government of Mongolia (GOM) announced 2024 as the year to promote regional and rural development" and was preparing the renewed "regional development concept" aiming for approval by the Parliament during the spring session in 2024.

Middle-aged men with a low level of education, living in rural households with a low standard of living (bottom 40 per cent) were identified as the furthest behind group in terms of development. Persons with disabilities (PWD), the elderly, internal migrants, children and the homeless (people with low level of education, alcoholics, victims of domestic violence,



Mongolia is prone to climate induced natural disasters. © UNRCO Mongolia

¹ VNR 2023 Mongolia <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>

and adults who have been released from incarceration or orphanages) were identified as a group with high risk of being left behind. PWD are estimated at 115,115 people, remaining as the most marginalized and vulnerable group in Mongolia. Households with PWD are concentrated in the lower part of income distribution.

High prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) and low levels of women's political participation are identified as obstacles to achieving gender equality. Over half of Mongolian women have experienced at least one type of violence in their lifetime, and 31.2 per cent of ever-partnered women report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from their partners. A study conducted by the NSO and the UNFPA identified protective factors (strong family relationships) and risk factors (witnessing abuse or being abused in childhood) that might lead to GBV as well as effective strategies to address GBV's root causes and strengthen response mechanism.

A significant portion of Mongolia's youth, especially in rural areas, face a digital divide. Adolescents and youth, especially the most marginalized, are vulnerable to school dropout, unemployment, mental health issues and early union. Mongolia needs to equip

youth with skills and create sufficient opportunities for productive and decent work to harness the full potential of its demographic dividend. Mongolia's recent structural changes in its youth policy framework include the transformation of the former Agency for Children, Youth, and Family into the Agency for Children and Family, while specific youth development functions are now overseen by the newly established Youth Development Secretariat under the Ministry for Labour and Social Protection.

The GOM delivered its Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) and presented it in the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2023. Based on findings of the second VNR, the GOM defined three national commitments, including 12 SDGs accelerators. The three national commitments are adoption and implementation of 12 SDGs accelerators, reducing national poverty level to 15 per cent by 2030, and strengthening institutional arrangements to further intensify the SDGs accelerators. Analysis shows that outcomes of the UNSDCF Mongolia 2023-2027 are aligned with the 12 SDGs accelerators; programming and projects of the United Nations Mongolia should be aligned with these accelerators.



Youth has great potential to drive development in the country. © UNRCO Mongolia

1 SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION ANALYSIS





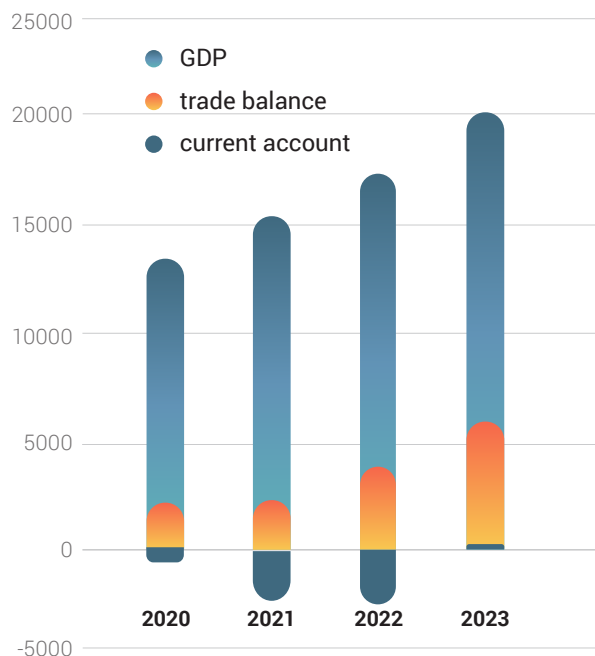
1.1 Macroeconomic conditions

In 2023, Mongolian economy performed well. Relevant macroeconomic indicators reveal good performance of Mongolian economy in 2023. The annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth marked 7% in 2023; current account of the balance of payment recorded a surplus of USD 244.5 million in 2023; the value of international trade reached USD 24.4 billion with a huge surplus in trade balance of USD 5.9 billion, as shown in Figure 1.

However, as this performance largely depends on increased export of coal, it should be viewed with caution as this trend may not continue in the long-run; the world is transitioning away from coal.

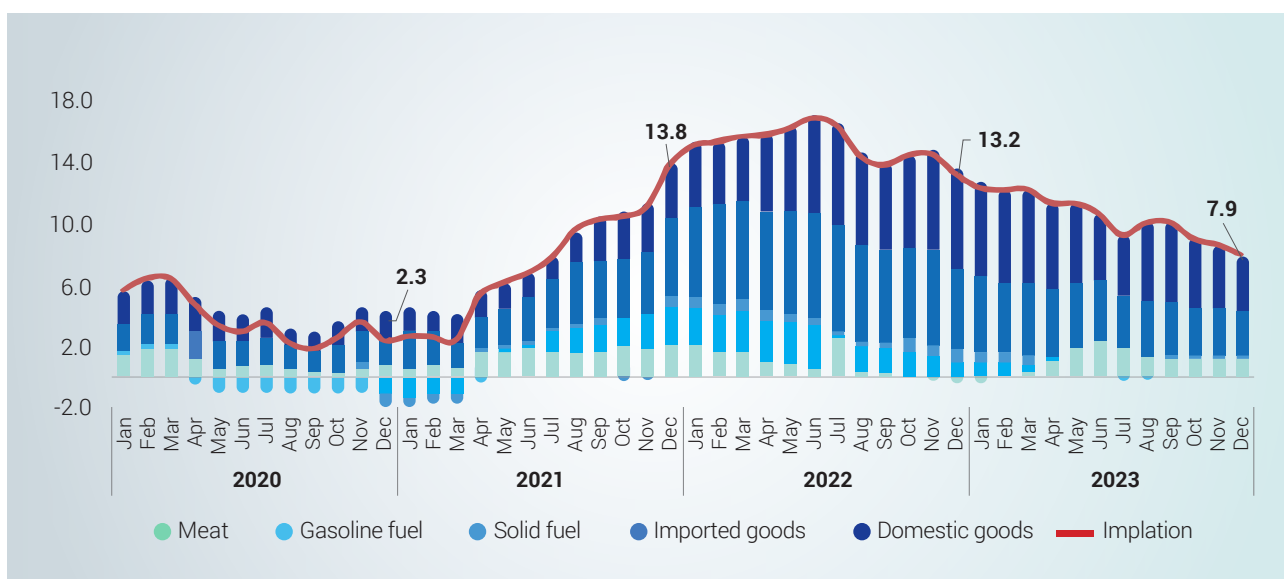
Inflation, while remaining persistently high in double digits for the most part of 2023, has lowered to a single digit of 7.9 % as of December 2023 (Figure 2). Foreign currency reserve increased significantly, standing at USD 4.918 billion as of December 2023 (Figure 3). The Mongolian Tugrik has continued its strengthening against USD in 2023, ending at around 3,410/dollar by the end of December 2023.

Figure 1. GDP, trade balance and current account (By million USD)



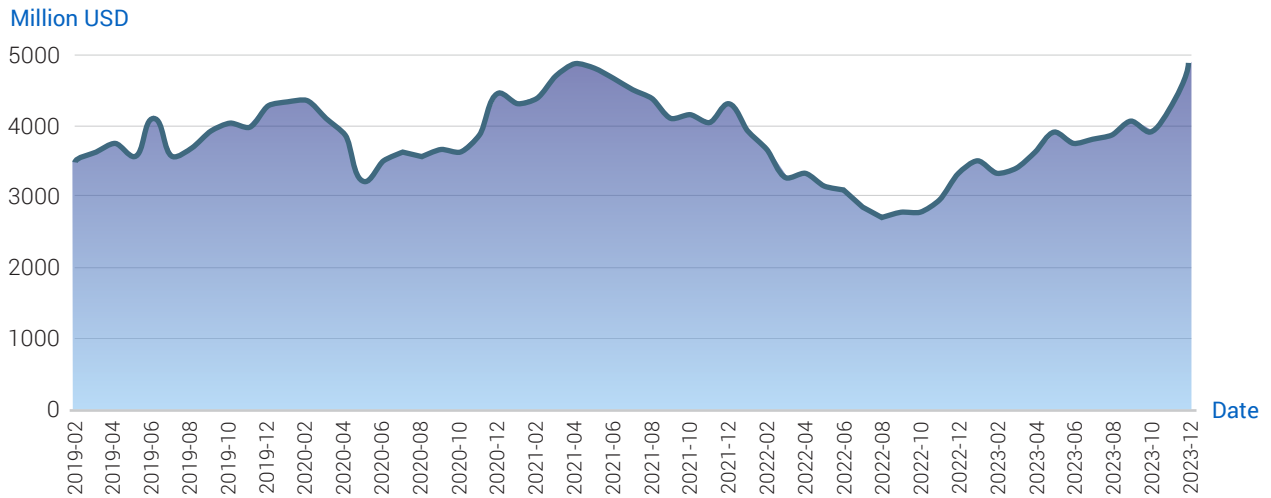
Data source: National Statistics Office at 1212.mn (GDP is at current price)

Figure 2. Inflation (by per cent)



(Source: NSO, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, January 2024)

Figure 3. Foreign currency reserve (million USD)

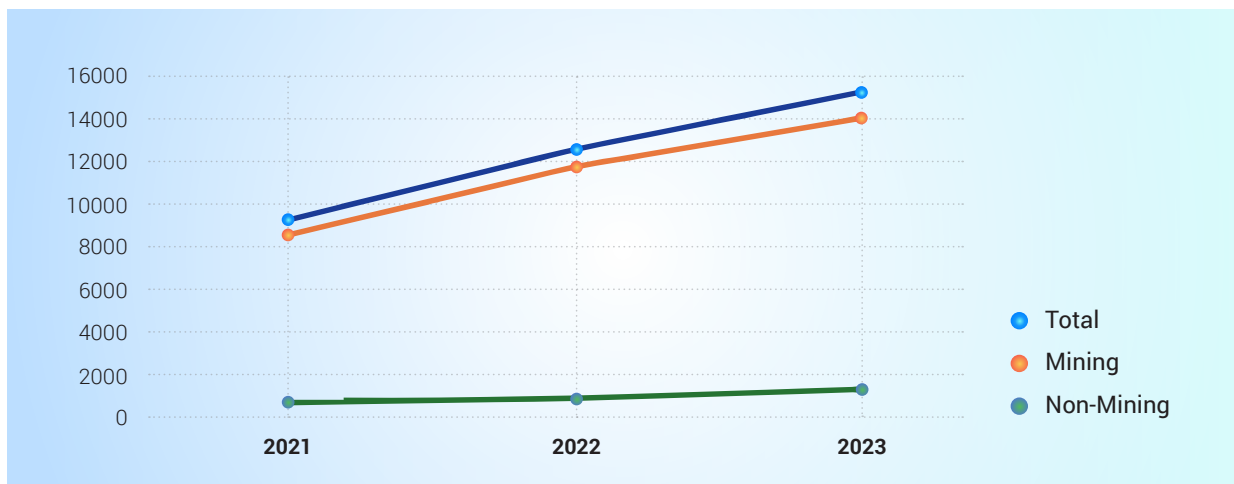


(Source: Bank of Mongolia website, accessed on 10 January 2024)

For the economic growth of 2023, mining and quarrying continued playing a significant role, which is a major sector for export. Among export items, minerals and coal comprised more than 91%. At the same time, more than 91% of total export was made to China only. While economic growth is a

welcome, a due note should be given that it has been driven by ever deepening dependence on the mining sector (Figure 4) and a single market, underlining over-reliance on coal exports to China; it calls for an economic diversification to increase resilience and sustainability of the economy in the longer run.

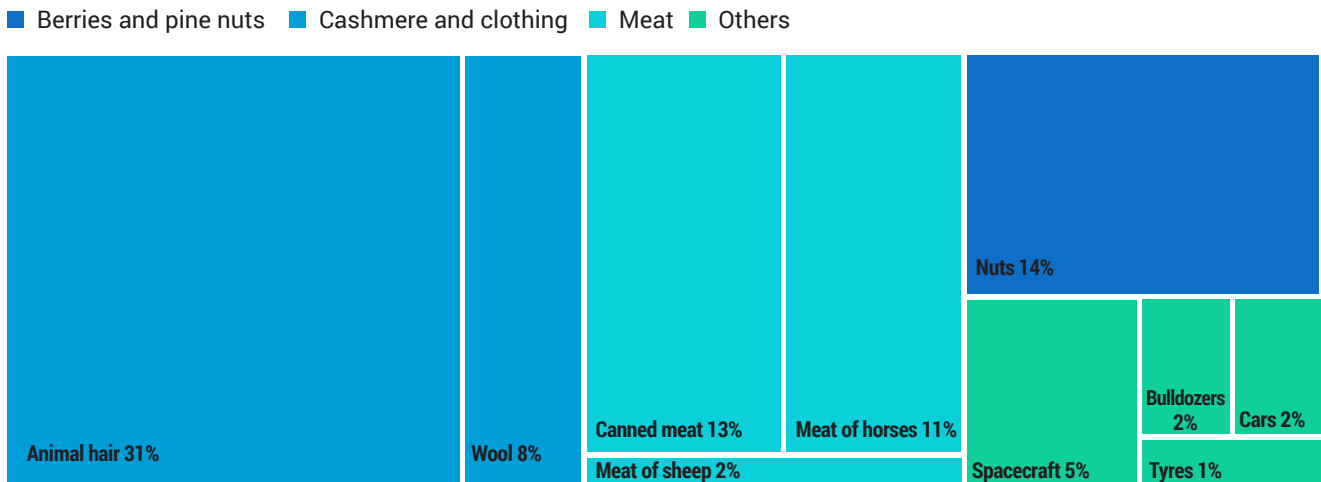
Figure 4. Export composition of Mongolia (Million USD, selected years)



Data Source: NSO, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, January 2024.

Cashmere, meat, and other wools are identified as the most relevant among non-mining sectors for export diversification (see Figure 5). The most recent International Trade Centre (ITC) National

Export Strategy for Prioritized Non-Mining (NES) in 2023 identified, within these sectors, the ones with the largest potential to drive export diversification; they are meat and meat products, cashmere

Figure 5. Top ten non-mining export sectors of Mongolia

Source: Data are from Mongolia Customs, covering January to September 2023

and clothing, berries and pine nuts, and leather product. For export services, the NES identified IT and adventure and cultural tourism as key sectors, which alone contributed to 4 per cent of Mongolian GDP in 2021. Mongolian government estimates Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to employ about 57 per cent of the nation's workforce, while contributing to 17 per cent of the country's GDP². Improving the export competitiveness as well as processing capability of small businesses can contribute to boosting export diversification and import substitution, in particular in agri-food sector.

Among other emerging economies of the region, Mongolia is performing relatively better as shown in its economic growth in 2023 and its economic outlook remains strong³. However, volatility in world commodity markets and the recent economic slowdown in China's property market may cast a shadow on Mongolia's exports of minerals such as coal, iron ore and copper⁴.

The country is making decent progress and is managing its debt diligently, which places the country in a favourable standing among emerging markets. While Mongolia's macro-debt pressures have moderated, the risks remain elevated.

The world is advancing towards net-zero climate adaptation hence exports of coal and related products will gradually decline overtime, which requires Mongolia to future proof its growth.

The UNCT Mongolia should pay more attention to economic diversification, including promoting agriculture processing e.g food processing and value chain, digitalization, employability especially for youth for designing its interventions, which was adopted as one of 12 SDG accelerators by the Government of Mongolia (GOM), in designing and implementing the JWP, including its sub-outputs.

² <https://www.asiamoney.com/article/b1jx9t46m5grck/mongolia-smes-take-centre-stage#:~:text=The%20SME%20sector%20has%20long,nation's%20annual%20gross%20domestic%20product>

³ IMF projects Mongolian economy to grow 4.5% in 2024 (<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2023/10/04/pr23335-mongolia-imf-executive-board-concludes-2023-article-iv-consultation-with-mongolia>)

⁴ ADB, Asian Development Outlook, September 2023

1.3 Drug and crime

In 2023, 35,574 crimes recorded, increased by 234 (0.7%) from the previous year.⁸ In 2023, the number of persons accused of a crime reached 24,134, increased by 469 (2.0%) from the previous year.⁹

Mongolia is a signatory of the 1961, 1971 and 1988 UN Drug Conventions. Mongolia's main legal framework on countering the drug problem is the 'Law on Drug, psychotropic substances control' adopted in 2002. Drug trafficking and use have become a growing concern for authorities in Mongolia, with severe consequences on citizens' health. While drug consumption was once limited to hashish and cannabis, the growing presence of methamphetamine, trafficked from neighbouring countries, in the Mongolian market has been a recent development. Mongolia is increasingly being used as a transit country for drugs to reach Northeast and East Asia, with Mongolian citizens becoming more involved in trafficking and use. A new trend that emerged since the COVID-19 pandemic has been the use of shipping companies and cargoes to traffic drugs into Mongolia, with the cyberspace becoming one of the main sources for illicit drug purchases. Mongolian buyers conduct transactions online, often using cryptocurrency, with dealers (in several instances located in Central Asia) shipping drugs by post.

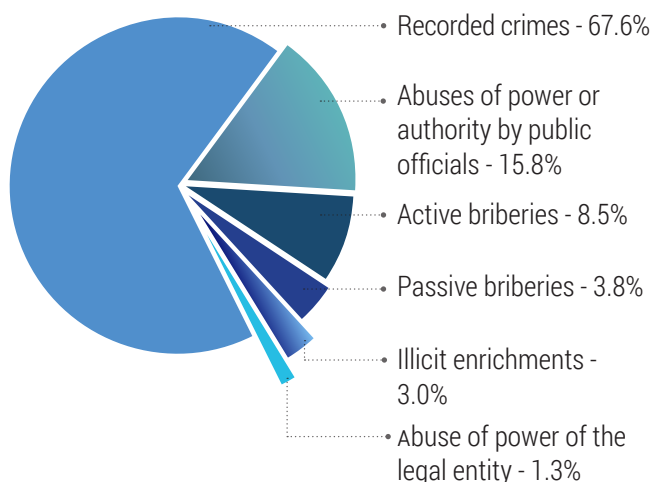
Mongolia acceded to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its three Protocols¹⁰ in 2008 and recently underwent the review mechanism for its implementation, which started in November 2021. The presence of organized crime in Mongolia is increasingly being recorded, with instances of drug trafficking, wildlife trafficking and smuggling of natural resources.

Transnational organized crime syndicates are increasingly involved in drug trafficking, drawn by high profitability of trafficking drugs in Mongolia,

where the street price of 1g of methamphetamine is valued at around USD 150-200.

Cyber security-related crimes in Mongolia amounted to 259 incidents in 2022.¹¹ The high level of internet and social media use in Mongolia, among the highest in Asia, coupled with a low digital literacy rate, is resulting in Mongolian citizens falling victim to online scams and fraud, and more broadly, to cybercrime. Fraud and personal data breaches are often carried out on social media platforms and cryptocurrency-related crimes have been also increasing in Mongolia. Crimes against the environment amounted to 558 in 2022.¹² Illegal mining and illegal logging are serious concerns in Mongolia, but there have been decreases in these crimes since the creation of the Ecological Police Department in 2020.

In 2023, among 569 recorded corruption cases under Article of Chapter 22 of the Criminal Code of Mongolia, 423 recorded crimes (67.6%) were abuses of power or authority by public officials, 99 (15.8%) were active briberies, 53 (8.5%) were passive briberies, 24 (3.8%) were illicit enrichments, 19 (3.0%) were abuse of power of the legal entity, and 8 (1.3%) were improper spending of state owned non-budgetary funds.¹³ The new Law on Public Information



⁸ National Statistics Office of Mongolia

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html>

¹¹ National Statistics Office of Mongolia

¹² National Statistics Office of Mongolia

¹³ National Statistics Office of Mongolia



UNODC delegation visit to the General Prosecutor's Office, 2023

Transparency entered into force in 2022 in Mongolia. Mongolia ratified the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)¹⁴ on 11 January 2006. Mongolia developed a new National Anti-Corruption Strategy to be implemented from 2023 until 2030. Corruption presents a significant challenge for institutions in Mongolia, as it is widely acknowledged and condemned by the public.

There has been notable progress taken by the Government of Mongolia in strengthening its anti-corruption regime and increasing transparency, including in its implementation of UNCAC. The “National Anti-Corruption Program - National Anti-Corruption Strategy (2023-2030)” was developed to implement ten goals, 45 objectives and 225 measures based on the Law on Development Policy, Planning and Its Management and the Anti-Corruption Law, in accordance with the implementation period of the medium-term development target programs of Mongolia, as well as the opinions of governmental and non-governmental organizations, citizens, and the public. In 2020, the e-Mongolia platform¹⁵ was introduced to digitalize public services, rendering

them more accessible to the public and more transparent. Mongolia also recently launched an e-platform for auditing, “open.audit.mn”, which allows the public, including citizens and the media, to access audit documents of public entities, strengthening transparency.

Mongolia’s criminal justice system lacks a comprehensive legal framework for international cooperation and asset recovery. Specifically, there is no comprehensive legal framework or case management system in place for international cooperation and asset recovery requests. This gap results in delays, unsuccessful advancement of international cooperation requests, and a lack of statistics. In June 2023, Mongolia, with its Prosecutor General Office acting as contact point, joined the Southeast Asia Justice Network (SEAJust).¹⁶ SEAJust is a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) supported judicial cooperation network that serves as an informal platform facilitating direct contact and communication between central authorities for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

¹⁴ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CAC/>

¹⁵ <https://e-mongolia.mn/home>

¹⁶ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/SEAJust/index.html>

1.4 Global developments and their impact on Mongolia

The global economic slowdown triggered by concomitant crises of pandemic, geopolitical disruptions, energy prices, and inflationary pressures has continued to affect Mongolia. The adjustments in the property market in China is indicative of weakening sales, investment, decrease in domestic demand, and price adjustments in Mongolia's largest trading partner, which is expected to impact the demand for Mongolia's exports.¹⁷ According to Asian Development Bank (ADB) economic outlook for the region¹⁸, spillovers from China's property market will have modest impact on global and regional partners. However, the impact on Mongolia could be significant as Mongolia's growth heavily depends on trade with China, which was a driving force for significant growth of Mongolian economy in 2023.

The Government of Mongolia has made successive statements at international forums such as Conference of Parties (COP) 27 and 28 this year about net-zero without making any significant progress on actions and including it in its development programming. Mongolia in fact does not have net-zero plan of action. The UNCT needs to include a higher push towards net-zero in its programming and interaction with the Government. Net-zero transition and investments in climate change adaptation and mitigation can increase economic opportunities and growth at domestic level.

Mongolia is one of landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), facing geographical challenges in their economic activities. In the World Bank Logistics Performance Index 2023¹⁹, Mongolia ranked 97th with the score of 2.5 out of 5.0 scale; Mongolia's performance was lower in the area of infrastructure, and logistics competence and quality. The United Nations adopted a ten-year plan in 2014, called Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA)²⁰, and has implemented it to address the unique challenges faced by LLDCs. Member States of the United Nations are expected to adopt a new ten-year plan for LLDCs in the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries²¹ in 2024.

Mongolia has made efforts to alleviate its geographical disadvantages and also showed a leadership by hosting the secretariat of the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries (ITT-LLDCs),²² which was established to improve the capacity of landlocked developing countries using top-quality research and advocacy. The UN Mongolia should take into account the programme of action for the LLDCs, including the new one to be adopted in 2024, in its Joint Work Plans (JWPs) and also extend its support to Mongolia for its leadership in the third conference and role of the ITT-LLDCs.

¹⁷ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/908126/asian-development-outlook-september-2023.pdf>

¹⁸ ADB, Asian Development Outlook, September 2023c

¹⁹ <https://lpi.worldbank.org/international/global>

²⁰ https://www.un.org/ohrrls/sites/www.un.org.ohrrls/files/vienna_programme_of_action.pdf

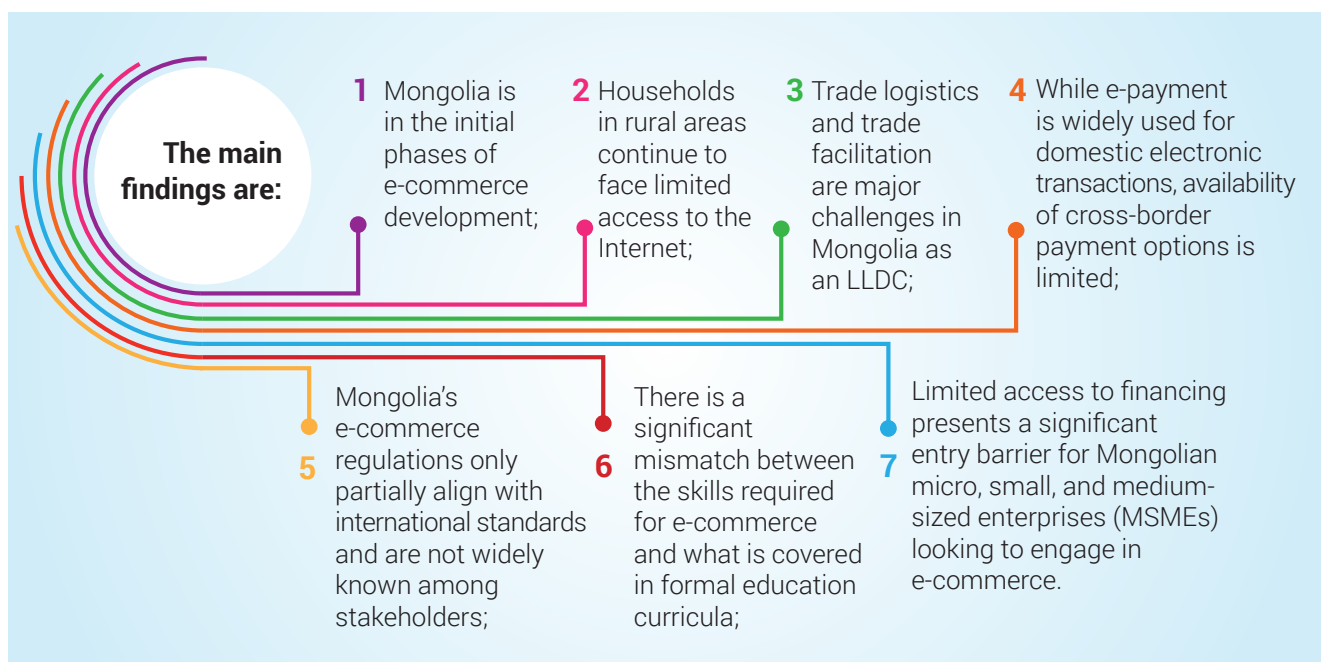
²¹ <https://www.un.org/en/landlocked/about-third-un-conference-lldc>

²² <https://land-locked.org/>

1.5 Digitalization, agriculture and other progress

The GOM continued advancing its digital government services in 2023. It launched the E-Mongolia 3.0²³, a digital platform for government services to citizens, with enhanced features, including accessibility to people with disabilities, streamlining of service processes and adding more services. The GOM also launched the e-business²⁴, which is a digital platform for government services to companies, such as business registration and licenses application.

With the support of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the GOM successfully delivered and launched the eTrade Readiness Assessment²⁵ in May 2023. It identifies the main barriers and opportunities for e-commerce development, including by providing a detailed diagnostic of the digital ecosystem and identifying key policy reforms to accelerate the transition to an inclusive and sustainable digital economy.



According to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MoFALI), Mongolia saw the highest amount of wheat, potatoes, vegetable and animal forage harvest in 2023 for the past 10 years. Wheat harvest has increased by 32,000 tons (8%), vegetable production by 32,000 tons (23%), animal forage plantation by 82,000 tons (45%). With such harvest increase, Mongolia was able to provide 100 per cent wheat and potatoes consumption from domestic production and 85 per cent of vegetable consumption respectively. Domestic production of vegetable has increased by almost 40 per cent

compared to 2022. This is mainly due to favorable financial environment created for crop and vegetable farmers in the framework of the National Food Security Program. The Government has subsidized 50 per cent of fertilizer price and machinery and equipment and provided support to lower the interest rate of bank loans for working capital.

In order to promote domestic milk production, the Government has introduced a new subsidy scheme for milk from farmers and herders. For every liter of milk supplied to processing plants, herders and farmers are to receive 500 MNT.

²³ <https://e-mongolia.mn/Home>

²⁴ <https://e-business.mn/home>

²⁵ <https://unctad.org/publication/mongolia-etradereadinessassessment>



UNICEF Mongolia in partnership with Mobicom brings digital education to the rural communities. © UNICEF Mongolia

This new scheme is also expected to increase usage of installed capacity of milk processing plants, which is currently below 50 per cent.

Mongolia will be implementing a new technical regulation on cashmere export. The Parliament of Mongolia has finally endorsed the Government's request to ban export of raw cashmere and only to export de haired cashmere. The new regulation had been repeatedly submitted jointly by the MoFALI and the Mongolian Association of Cashmere and Wool processing plants, which was kept on hold for several years due to the arguments on shortage of de hairing capacity and risks of lowering price of raw cashmere for herders. According to a joint assessment made by MoFALI and the Parliament appointed committee of members of parliament (MPs), domestic processing plants have installed de hairing capacity of 17,000 tons, which was over the national production capacity of cashmere. Promoting full usage of installed capacity of domestic processing plants is one of the priority actions identified in the New Recovery Policy of the Government.

The Parliament of Mongolia has approved amendments to law on cadaster mapping and cadaster, the law on land payments, law on land mapping and registration and law on land right issuance. These amendments aim to ensure the integrity of land management policy of Mongolia, reduce overlapping mandates of government agencies and improve services. In order to effectively implement the new amendments, the Agency for Land Administration and Management, Geodesy and Cartography, which is currently under the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Transportation, is shifted to the Prime Minister's Office to have a proper authority to monitor performance and coordination of line ministries and Aimag Governments on land management issues.

The MoFALI has developed, with technical assistance from the FAO, the Strategy for Green, Competitive and Export Oriented Food, Agriculture and Light Industry 2023-2030, which entails Human Resource Capacity Development Plan of Actions 2023-2030.

2 BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT



2.1 Biodiversity conservation: forest, protected area and desertification



Mongolia is expanding its national protected areas for its habitat and biodiversity conservation. © UNDP Mongolia

In Mongolia, 7.7 per cent of the total area is covered by forests. The frequency of forest fires and the proliferation of harmful insects have increased recently due to global warming and aridification. Consequently, it has become main factor of forest depletion in Mongolia²⁶. In 2021, at the initiative of the President of Mongolia, the national movement “Billion Trees” was launched to protect and increase the ecological balance of forests and water resources and to reduce the impact of global climate change. In 2021-2022, 12 tons of seeds of 39 species of trees and shrubs were stocked in the country, which is 4.5 times more compared to the same period of previous year. At the same time, more than 10 million trees were planted, nurtured, and protected throughout the country. In addition, 306 nurseries stocked 46 million seeds and saplings, a fourfold increase over the same period of previous year²⁷.

As of October 2023, a total of 109 protected areas are registered at the Protected Planet, and there are 0 other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). Terrestrial and inland water protected area coverage is 19.8 per cent (310,016 km²). 32 protected areas have management effectiveness evaluations reported in the global database on protected area management effectiveness (GD-PAME). 13.31 per cent (208,433 km²) of the terrestrial area of the country is covered by protected areas with completed management effectiveness evaluations²⁸.

Mongolia is expanding its national protected area network supplemented by local protected areas established by aimag (province) and soum (district) governments. Habitat loss, overgrazing by livestock, mining, timber collection, fire, infrastructure development, hunting, and climate change are some

²⁶ Mongolia's Voluntary National Review 2023: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>

²⁷ Mongolia's Voluntary National Review 2023: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>

²⁸ UNEP-WCMC (2023). Protected Area Profile for Mongolia from the World Database on Protected Areas, October 2023 Available at: www.protectedplanet.net

of the challenges to biodiversity conservation within and outside protected areas. As tourism is prioritized as a key pillar to diversify the economy, the GOM plans to focus on supporting culture-based tourism²⁹.

There has been progress in the designation of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves since the 2022 Common Country Analysis. Onon-Balj National Park, which is situated at the southern edge of the Siberian and boreal coniferous forest and encompasses the Daurian steppe and the Onon and Balj River Basin (RB), was designated as UNESCO Biosphere Reserve on 14 June 2023. Onon-Balj RB is a hotspot for wetlands and water birds and culturally important areas including historical sites related to Chinggis Khan. It attracts cultural tourism as well as environmentally friendly and community-based ecotourism³⁰.

According to the desertification assessment of Mongolia, 76.9 per cent of the total territory or 120.3 million hectares was degraded as of 2020, of which 4.7 per cent was affected by extreme degradation and 18.6 per cent was affected by severe degradation. 50 to 70 per cent of the total area of Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Omnogovi, Govi-Sumber, Govi-Altai, Bayankhongor, Ovorkhangai and Tov provinces are affected by desertification and land degradation³¹. Significant efforts will be required to achieve the targets for reducing land degradation and combating desertification. The natural factors leading to desertification are drought and aridification, which are exacerbated by climate change. Main causes of human factors are the excessive increase in the livestock numbers and inappropriate use of pastures³².

Mongolia will host the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 2026, in accordance with the decision 34/COP15 of the UNCCD³³.

On 28 July 2022, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution³⁴ on recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as a human right and calling for greater global efforts to ensure that principle is upheld³⁵. Mongolia also joined in adopting the historical resolution, which provides an entry point for environmental rights action at the national level. Nature for Health (N4H) is a global initiative to mainstream One Health approaches working nationally. The N4H works to reduce the risk of pandemics by strengthening environmental aspects of One Health, a multidisciplinary inclusive approach focused on the interdependencies of human, animal and ecosystem health³⁶. Mongolia joined the N4H Initiative since December 2022³⁷.

The post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in December 2022 at the conclusion of its fifteenth meeting (COP15). The new GBF makes biodiversity a high priority for the global community setting it on a path to place it on a par with climate change as the two key global environmental priorities. Mongolia will update National Biodiversity strategic action plan (NBSAP) aligned with new GBF and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) as well as development priorities in early 2024.

²⁹ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/400816/mongolia-environment-sector-fact-sheet.pdf>

³⁰ <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-designates-11-new-biosphere-reserves-0>

³¹ Mongolia's Voluntary National Review 2023: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>

³² Mongolia's Voluntary National Review 2023: Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>

³³ https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-10/34_cop15.pdf

³⁴ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3983329?ln=en>

³⁵ <https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12437.doc.htm>

³⁶ <https://nature4health.org/>

³⁷ <https://montsame.mn/en/read/309972>

2.2 Pollution

Mongolia is one of top 10 countries that produces the most plastic waste per capita. Each person on average generates 137.58 kg of plastic waste per year according to new market research on recycled plastic products in Mongolia³⁸. Mongolia is also struggling to implement clear binding policies and targets on plastic reduction and single-use plastics bans. Although the GOM banned the use, sale, import and production of single-use plastic bags thinner than 0.035 mm in 2018, they are still widely used in the country³⁹.

The level of air pollution in Mongolia usually worsens during the Winter and Spring season, in particular in Ulaanbaatar and aimag centres. During Winter, there is an increase in the use of energy for heating, in addition to cooking, which results in an increase

in the levels of air pollution. The Gers and houses burn over 200,000 cubic meters of fuelwood every year. Suspended particulate matters (SPM) peak in winter⁴⁰.

The primary source of air pollution in Mongolia is the combustion of coal and wood for cooking and heating in the Gers. Emissions of air pollutants from other sources, such as road traffic, open burning of agriculture residues and biomass, and brick industries, also impact the air quality of Mongolia. In the capital city, about 80 per cent of air pollution, in particular, particulate matters (PM), is contributed by Gers, 10 per cent by road traffic, 6 per cent by power and heating plants, and 4 per cent by open burning of solid waste, soil and other sources⁴¹.



Air pollution in Ulaanbaatar becomes a severe public health threat. © UNDP Mongolia

³⁸ <https://mongolia.charita.cz/media/press-releases/mongolia-is-in-top-ten-countries-that-produces-the-most-plastic-waste-per-person-says-market-researcher/>

³⁹ <http://www.mongolianbusinessdatabase.com/base/newsdetials?id=29628>

⁴⁰ https://www.eanet.asia/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/7-Mongolia_Factsheet_compressed.pdf

⁴¹ https://www.eanet.asia/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/7-Mongolia_Factsheet_compressed.pdf

2.3 Climate change

Mongolia is one of the countries most affected by climate change. Although it emits only 0.1 per cent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions, its per capita and per GDP unit emissions are relatively higher than the world average⁴².

Mongolia submitted its revised NDC in October 2020. Mongolia enhanced its mitigation ambition with a conditional emissions reduction target of 27.2 per cent by 2030 compared to business as usual. The country also set an unconditional emission reduction target of 22.7 per cent by 2030 compared to business as usual. In addition, an optional component on forestry was included that would push total greenhouse gas emissions reduction to 44.9 per cent by 2030. The revised NDC also increased sectoral coverage in agriculture, waste and some industrial sectors⁴³. It is estimated that \$11.5 billion is needed for Mongolia to successfully reach targets in its NDC. To mobilize this funding, Mongolia has decided to annually spend up to 1 per cent of GDP to combat climate change and desertification⁴⁴.

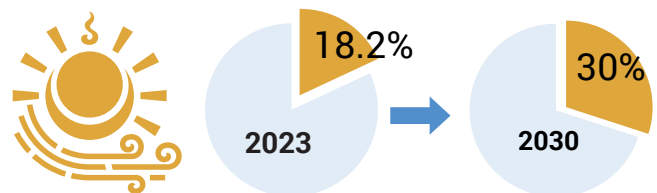
Mongolia scored 54.2 with the ranking of 60 in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) country index in 2021. The ND-GAIN Country Index summarizes a country's vulnerability to climate change and other global challenges in combination with its readiness to improve resilience. It aims to help governments, businesses and communities better prioritize investments for a more efficient response to the immediate global challenges ahead⁴⁵.

Mongolia's carbon intensity is almost 15 times the world average, and its per capita GHG emissions

of 21 tons is among the highest in the world⁴⁶. The biggest contributor to Mongolia's carbon footprint is land use change, at 44 per cent of emissions. This comes mainly from forests, which are under threat from creeping desertification, and from an increase in pests that have damaged trees⁴⁷.

Mongolia has very significant renewable energy resources estimated at 2,600 gigawatts⁴⁸ due to its geographical location and climatic conditions.

This indicates that Mongolia has the potential to increase its renewable energy production further contributing to the energy supply of the region.



The portion of renewable energy reached 18.2 per cent of Mongolia's total available installed energy capacity, and this is planned to increase to 30 per cent by 2030. 75 per cent of herder households in Mongolia use renewable energy.

Mongolia is highly vulnerable to climate change, experiencing warm temperatures, at almost three times the rate of the global average in the last 70 years. Climate change is a significant driver of the increasing frequency and severity of Dzud in Mongolia, which has had a detrimental impact on the livelihoods and food security of herders, causing forced migration and exacerbating the vulnerabilities of households (see Section 2.4).

⁴² <https://montsame.mn/en/read/307646>

⁴³ <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/mongolia>

⁴⁴ <https://montsame.mn/en/read/321190>

⁴⁵ <https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/ranking>

⁴⁶ <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/mongolia#:~:text=Mongolia%20enhanced%20its%20mitigation%20ambition,compared%20to%20business%20as%20usual.>

⁴⁷ <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/mongolia#:~:text=Mongolia%20enhanced%20its%20mitigation%20ambition,compared%20to%20business%20as%20usual.>

⁴⁸ <https://montsame.mn/en/read/307646#:~:text=Mongolia%20has%20huge%20renewable%20energy,energy%20supply%20of%20the%20region.>

Mongolia has joined the Global Methane Pledge, which aims to catalyze global action and strengthen support for existing international methane emission reduction initiatives. Rapidly reducing methane emissions from energy, agriculture, and waste can contribute to keeping the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C while yielding co-benefits including improving public health and agricultural productivity⁴⁹.

Youth plays a pivotal role in climate action and environmental advocacy. Incorporating environmental education into school programmes and involving young people in environmental policy-making can harness their energy and innovation for sustainable solutions to climate challenges in Mongolia.

In terms of climate finance, Mongolia (and all UN member states) are encouraged to move forward

in implementing COP 28 decisions including:

- Strengthening policy guidance, incentives, regulations and enabling conditions to reach the scale of investments required to achieve low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development;
- The need for governments, central banks, commercial banks, institutional investors and other financial actors to improve the assessment and management of climate-related financial risks;
- The need to accelerate the ongoing establishment of new and innovative sources of finance, including taxation, for implementing climate action and thus enabling the scaling down of harmful incentives; and
- Supporting country-driven strategies to mobilize climate finance, taking into account needs and priorities of developing country.



Youth plays a pivotal role in climate action and environmental advocacy. © UNDP Mongolia

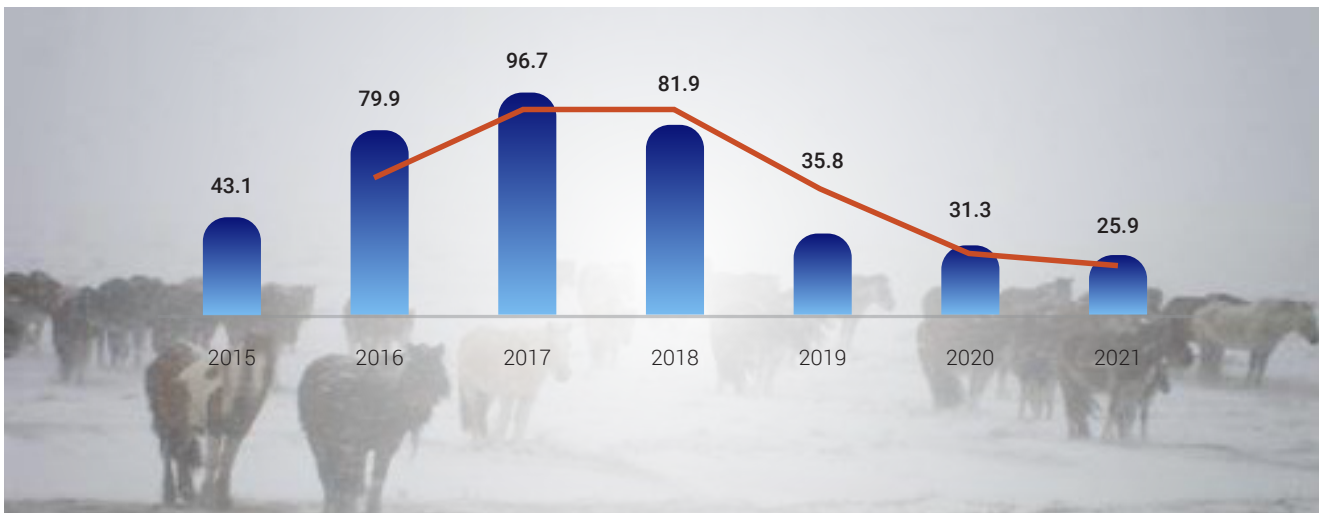
⁴⁹ <https://www.globalmethanepledge.org/#about>

2.4 Disaster risks

Though the number of hazardous events and incidents in Mongolia have decreased (Figure 6), climate-related phenomena have increased 2.9 times. A total of 3,501 people lost their lives due to

disasters, hazardous events and incidents (excluding the COVID-19 pandemic) in Mongolia during the period of 2015-2021.

Figure 6. Hazardous events and incidents in Mongolia (by years)



Source: Mongolia’s National Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction Report

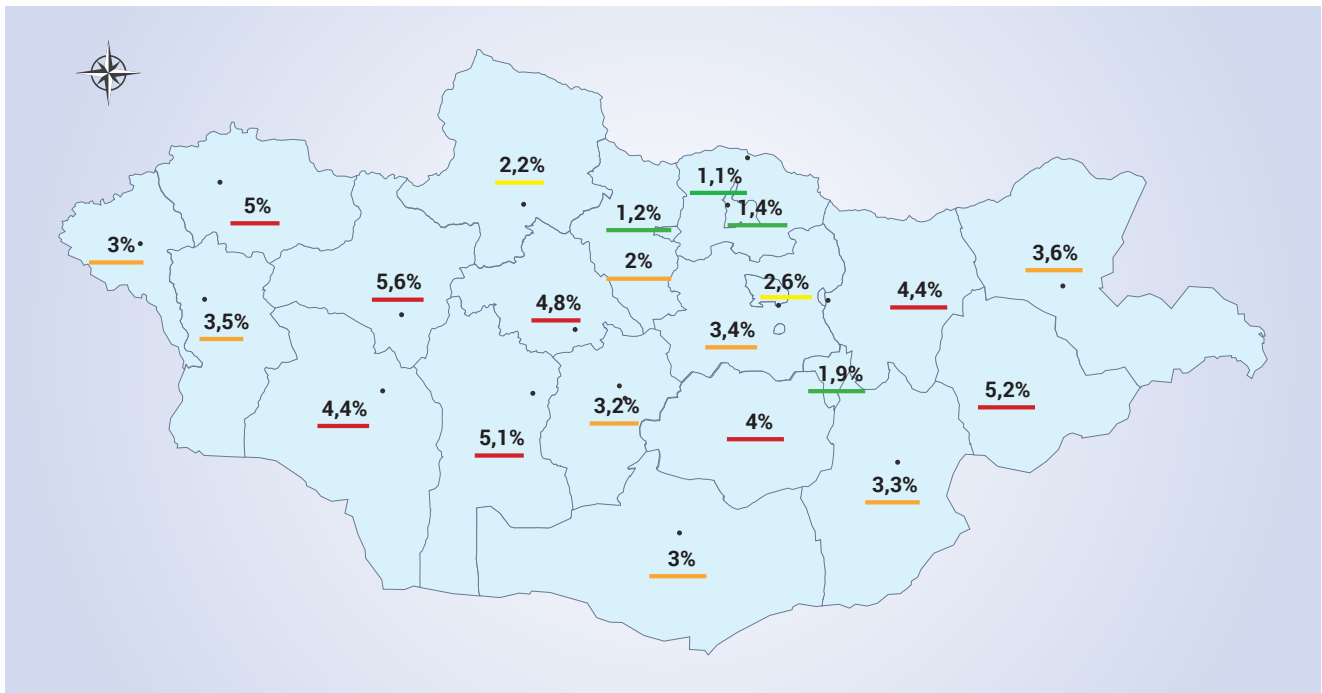
One of the main disasters occurring frequently in Mongolia is known as Dzud. Duzd is a multiple natural disaster consisting of a summer drought resulting in inadequate pasture and production of hay, followed by heavy winter snow, winds, and lower than normal temperatures. In last 10 years, the dzud occurred in Mongolia 6 times. In the winter of 2023/2024, 90 per cent of the country is facing high Dzud risk, which is affecting 190,000 herder household’s livelihoods. 70 per cent of the country already met with dzud and near dzud condition; 50 per cent is at duzd condition, while 20 per cent is at near duzd condition. The impact of duzd for herder households is tremendous.

The livelihoods of herder households are under threat due to potential livestock mortality rate, which is the root cause for many development issues such as internal migration from rural to urban, deterioration of quality of life, etc. The GOM predicted significant mortality rate of herds, as shown in Figure 7, without any anticipatory action.

The climate change inflicted natural hazardous incidents demand disaster risk reduction and climate change adaption assessment in whole sector of Mongolia. At the request of the GOM, UN and World Vision Mongolia conducted the Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) diagnosis in 2023. The diagnosis contains following preliminary findings relating to disaster risk reduction:

- The Government of Mongolia has well-established disaster prevention law with mechanisms of disaster risk reduction council at central and local levels. The Disaster strategy and disaster protection plan are also in place at national and at each local administrative unit. Government officials across the board are aware of key disaster prevention legal and institutional framework, policy directives and guidelines. However, there is a certain level of confusion or lack of clarity in the responsibilities of sector ministries and departments in their role in risk reduction. In addition, the current

Figure 7. Prediction on mortality rate of herds without anticipatory action.

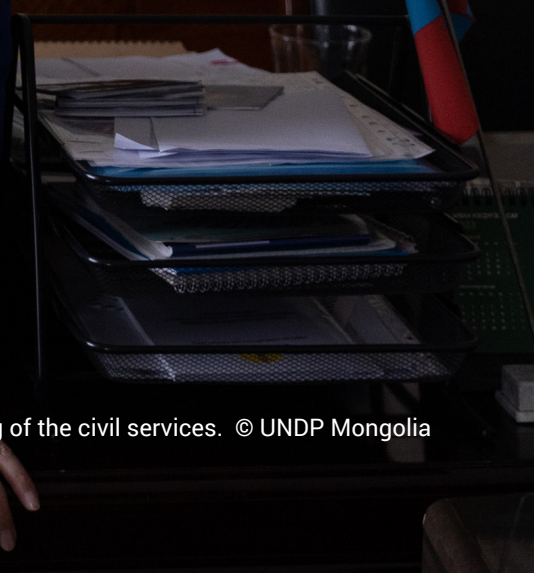


Source: Dzud Loss and Damage prediction 2023/2024 by National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia dated 20 Dec 2023

legal and policy framework has a limited scope of caring for population that are socially and economically disadvantaged. The current risk assessment has a limitation on inclusion of people with disability, children, and vulnerable groups.

- The GOM has multiple fiscal tools available for disaster risk reduction activities such as 1 per cent state budget allocation for disaster risk reduction, 30 per cent of province/aimag reserve which can be used for disaster protection and recovery stage, etc. However, the sector ministries and departments struggle to secure enough budget for their respective functions-related disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Province/aimag tend to utilize 1 per cent of the state budget on disaster response, not on the disaster risk reduction activities.
- Mongolia has available system and technology for monitoring, observation, and assessment of meteorological hazard (Dzud, drought, severe weather/storm), geological hazard (earthquake), and hydrological hazard (flood); hazard analysis and maps are also available. However, the country needs a stronger hazard monitoring, assessment, and modeling capability required for better risk profiling. The country also needs to invest more on research and development of risk reduction solutions and technologies.
- While the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia regularly organize trainings and awareness campaigns for government officials, the country needs to shift mindset of government officials and population towards an ex-ante risk reduction.

3 | POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT



3.1 Policy, governance and institutional changes

The political landscape of Mongolia in 2023 has been shaped by several factors, including the Constitutional Amendment, approval of new laws on election and political parties, the Development Bank and coal-related corruption scandals, and influence of high-level state visits.

The Parliament passed amendments to the Constitution of Mongolia on 31 May 2023. According to the amendments, the number of MPs will increase from 76 to 126. In addition, MPs will be elected based on a mixed electoral system, in which 78 members will be elected by majority representation and 48 by proportional representation (political party lists). In accordance with the constitutional amendments, the Law on Parliamentary Elections and the Law on Political Parties were passed in 2023. The new election law addresses long-standing issues of representation, transparency, and fairness. The key provision of this law is a mixed system of elections, which was previously used in 2012 but was abandoned in 2016. The reintroduction of the mixed system aims to shift the parliament's focus from the narrow interests of small constituencies to national policies. The new law also aims to increase representation of women in Parliament by requiring that 30 per cent of candidates be women. The law also seeks to improve transparency in election financing by requiring all political donations and sponsors to be made public. This move aims to reduce the potential for conflicts of interest or undue influence, which have contributed to a high perception of corruption among citizens and low trust in political institutions.

The new law on political parties addresses numerous issues, such as state financial support for the party, its criteria and distribution, membership tax, donations, funding transparency, and reporting to relevant state authorities. Political analysts conclude that the law on political parties has resolved numerous contentious issues, including making parties become more policy-oriented institutions. These changes are expected to have significant

implications for the upcoming parliamentary elections in 2024, as they could alter the balance of power and representation among different parties and factions. However, some critics have argued that the laws are insufficient or flawed that they could create new loopholes or challenges to the democratic process.

According to the Transparency International, Mongolia's most serious problem is the openness and transparency of political party financing. Public dissatisfaction and frustration with the lack of democracy and accountability in the major political parties remain high. Public opinion surveys have continuously confirmed that the majority of Mongolians do not trust political parties, even when the official conceptions are ostensibly committed to democracy.

The ruling Mongolian People's Party (MPP), which holds a supermajority in the parliament, has faced public criticism and challenges from the opposition parties, especially the Democratic Party (DP) and the Khun Party. The MPP had a majority in parliament since 2016, but its popularity declined due to its handling of state budget and fiscal policies, price crisis, and corruption scandals. The DP and the Khun Party accused the MPP of sustaining corruption schemes, abusing its power, and undermining democracy.

The DP has tried to capitalize on the discontent but has also struggled in presenting a coherent and viable alternative. In addition, the DP's internal conflicts, a lack of generational turnover, and institutional weakness have adversely affected its role as the principal opposition party. Unless significant party reforms and leadership occur in the DP, Mongolia's two-party system may shift toward a dominant-party system. Alternately, the sole representation of the Khun party in Parliament could signify the emergence of a new political force that could displace the DP as the party of choice among urban residents. The current election system

still presents challenges for smaller and new parties because they lack substantial networks of support and broad mobilization of supporters and resources on the ground.

Allegations of bribery, embezzlement, and tax evasion involving high-ranking officials and businessmen have plagued the coal industry, which makes up a sizable portion of Mongolia's exports and GDP. These accusations sparked massive protests in Ulaanbaatar in December 2022, demanding accountability and transparency from the government. The demonstrations also reflected the frustration of many Mongolians with the lack of opportunities, inequality, and environmental degradation in their country. In 2023, some MPs have been probed for coal theft and Development Bank cases, and 14 of the 76 members of this legislature have been under criminal investigations. The parliament has voted to dismiss and suspend three MPs' immunity.

According to the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by the Transparency International, which indicates a perceived level of public sector corruption, Mongolia was ranked 121st out of 180 countries with a score of 33 out of 100. Mongolia's position in 2022 was 116, while in 2021 it was 110. Mongolia's position in the rankings declined consistently throughout 2022 and 2023, falling eleven positions from 2021. Transparency International's report identified Mongolia as one of ten nations where public office corruption is spreading. Noting Mongolia's falling rank in the CPI, the government proclaimed 2023 as the "Year of Anti-Corruption" and announced "Tavan-Sh Operations," including 1) whistleblowing operations of corrupt officials, 2) transparency operations of public offices, 3) sweeping operations of illegal appointees from public offices, 4) bird operations on bringing back corruption criminals who fled to foreign countries, and 5) asset recovery operations.

In June 2023, the parliament adopted a new National Anti-Corruption Strategy, which aimed to improve the legal framework, institutional capacity,

public awareness, and international cooperation to fight corruption in Mongolia. The strategy was based on a comprehensive analysis of the causes and consequences of corruption, as well as the recommendations of various stakeholders, including civil society, media, academia, and foreign partners. In addition, according to the revision of the Constitution of Mongolia in 2019, a draft law on national wealth fund was prepared, which provides a legal basis for access to natural resource benefits by Mongolian citizens.

The long-debated Education Package Law was adopted on 7 July 2023. According to the new education law, education has been transformed into an all-encompassing system of learning in formal, informal, and living environments, not just academic classrooms. The new law emphasizes development of a flexible education curriculum that caters for diverse learning needs, which allows tailored education based on students' preferred learning styles and aspirations. The law stipulates establishment of a new school management system and a merit-based selection procedure for school principals. Teachers' social security will be enhanced, receiving additional benefits based on their total duration of public service.

Starting in 2024, most investment projects will be carried out in the energy and road transport infrastructure sectors, according to state budget approval. Regarding social sector, most investments will be carried out in the education sector. To encourage "rural revitalization," the government has decided to raise the salaries of long-tenured local civil officials.

Domestic energy production and decreasing dependence on Russian oil imports became major topics of discussion in the Mongolian media. In the cabinet meeting on 13 September 2023, the ministries of the relevant sectors were given the task of intensifying the construction of the national oil refinery, which has been built with the loan funds of the Export and Import Bank of India, and putting it into full operation in 2027.

Mongolia's foreign policy in 2023 faced multiple challenges and opportunities in a changing regional and global context. On the one hand, Mongolia has to balance its relations with its two neighbors, Russian Federation and China, especially in the context of the war in Ukraine and the developments over the trans-Mongolian gas pipeline and hydropower projects. On the other hand, Mongolia is intending to keep its ties with its third neighbors, such as the United States, Canada, France, Japan, and Republic of Korea, to diversify its trade and investment sources and to uphold its democratic values and nuclear weapons-free status.

Mongolia is developing its third-neighbor policy with a great intent. The Prime Minister emphasized that maintaining a proper balance in foreign relations is the nation's top priority at this time. It is expected that Mongolia's foreign policy would continue to support diplomatic dialogue, peaceful solutions, and regional cooperation while pursuing its national interests and sovereignty. Mongolia also actively participated in international organizations and forums, such as the UN, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the COP28, to enhance its position and influence in Asia, especially in the Northeast Asia.



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3.2 Development policies and programmes

Mongolia has been adopting more than 550 sectoral, intersectoral policies, strategies and programmes since early 1990, which were approved either by the Parliament or the Cabinet. The timeframe of these policy documents varies. The National Development Agency (NDA) did an initial assessment of these policies in 2019 in terms of implementation status, coherence and overlaps and identified incoherence and inconsistency as well as overlaps in these policies.

Until 2015, development of policies in Mongolia was regulated by their respective sectoral legislations, and the country did not have any comprehensive legal basis to regulate process for development of policies. The Parliament of Mongolia adopted the Development Policy and Planning Law (DPPL) in 2015 and it was the first attempt to regulate the development policy and planning process in the country since 1990.

However, the DPPL was not able to regulate policy coherence, consistency and policy integration properly. Line Ministries still continued developing sectoral policies and programmes in siloed manner. The Ministry of Finance (MOF) and the NDA were not able to review, consolidate and prepare integrated and coherent policies. The MOF and NDA had limited capacity and legal status and function to support the Cabinet for integrated and coherent policy actions.

In order to address the above-mentioned challenges, the Parliament of Mongolia adopted the amendments of the Development Policy, Planning and Management Law (DPPML) in May 2020⁵⁰ which made changes in the legislation for development policy and planning system in the country. The changes were mainly in two aspects.

Firstly, legal grounds were created to ensure that integrated, coherent, consistent and coordinated long, medium-and short-term as well as horizontal

and vertical policies were formulated for adoption and implementation. Secondly, it regulates the institutional framework for managing development policy and planning process and defines roles and responsibilities within and across the institutions.

According to this new amendment, the Parliament of Mongolia adopted Mongolia's new long-term strategic policy – "Vision 2050" in May 2020⁵¹.



The Vision 2050 serves as an overarching umbrella long-term policy direction of the country. According to the DPPML, the following integrated national policies were to be adopted as shown in Figure 8.

The 45th resolution by the Parliament was issued in 2020⁵² for the Cabinet to develop the seven medium-term targeted thematic programs (10 years), as shown in Figure 8, for review and approval by the Parliament by June 2022. The "New Recovery Policy" was adopted by Parliament in 2021⁵³ as one of the targeted thematic programs (Economic and Infrastructure Program). The remaining six targeted programs were drafted by an intersectoral working group established within the government during 2022-23; currently, the Ministry of Economy and Development (MED) is finalizing the draft programs for submission.

During the preparation of the Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2023 of Mongolia, the MED and the National Statistics Office (NSO) have updated the SDGs nationalized indicators framework for SDGs progress analysis with the support of the UNESCAP. Consequently, with the support of the UN Mongolia, the MED was able to reflect almost 46 per cent⁵⁴ of the SDGs nationalized indicators and targets into these six targeted programs.

⁵⁰ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail/15403>

⁵¹ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=15406>

⁵² <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=15404>

⁵³ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=16390082551211&showType=1>

⁵⁴ PPT by MED

Figure 8: Vision 2050 Long-Term Development Policy of Mongolia

Source: VNR 2023 Mongolia

Upon approval of these six targeted programs by Parliament, the existing valid sectoral and intersectoral policies and strategies are expected to be abolished. The MED is currently working on sorting out the lists of such policies; upon submission of their draft targeted programs to the Parliament, lists of these policies are to be attached for abolishment. The Parliament of Mongolia adopted 2024-Annual Development Plan in May 2023.⁵⁵

The plan reflects annual priorities from the medium-term development objectives in the targeted programs until 2030. Starting from 2023, the MED has taken responsibility of preparing a Medium-term Fiscal Framework (MFF)⁵⁶ that allows the Cabinet to be able to align the development priorities with fiscal and budgeting framework. The MOF prepares the annual budget proposals, which build on the MFF.

⁵⁵ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=16759684400981>

⁵⁶ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail?lawId=16759636332741>

According to the DPPML, the Government will develop a new 5-years development guideline for 2026-2030 along with the Public Investment Program (PIP) in 2024; this medium-term integrated policy will be the key policy instrument to guide national medium-term priorities and policy actions for advancing sustainable development by 2030. Hence, the UN Mongolia needs to closely engage with the Government for this milestone.

The SDGs accelerators identified in Mongolia⁵⁷ are extracted from the analysis of the 2023 VNR of Mongolia and development priorities reflected in the medium and annual development plans. Therefore, prioritizing UN's programmes and projects towards SDGs accelerators would enable the UNCT members to join forces in their efforts and have greater sustainable development impacts in the country (see 6.1 for more details on the SDGs accelerators).

The VNR 2023 of Mongolia states that "significant progress has been made in the national development policy and planning system"⁵⁸. The changes in DPPML created legal grounds for establishing the MED in 2022 as a state administrative body in charge of integrated national development policy and planning process. With these new functions, the MED provides comprehensive methodological guidance to line ministries and state organizations for development policy formulations and coordinates implementation of integrated national long, medium and short-term policies and programmes. The MED is the focal ministry in managing and coordinating the SDGs mainstreaming into the national policies and its implementation and results monitoring.

The NSO continues to provide methodological support and expert advice for determining and ensuring availability of data for SDGs indicators and remains as a penholder of the national SDGs Dashboard,⁵⁹ which includes the SDGs nationalized indicator framework. The Dashboard has been

operational since 2019. The Government established the Monitoring and Accountability Government Agency on 21 December 2022 by Resolution No.474 of the Government; the Agency has been operational from the beginning of 2023. Monitoring and reporting of development policies are performed by the agency.

The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) chaired by the Prime Minister was established in January 2021 with involvement of United Nations in the composition of members. After establishment of the MED in 2022, the NCSD was abolished, and functions and roles and responsibilities were moved to the MED. The former NCSD included the representatives from CSOs, private sector and academia, the United Nations and the Government.

Considering its given functions, roles and responsibilities, the MED needs to have an innovative platform to involve stakeholders, listening to their voices and leveraging their contribution to the SDGs.

The Multi-stakeholder Council for Sustainable Development (MCSD) was established in 2022 at the Parliament to support the work of the Subcommittee for Sustainable Development, which has not been active during 2022-2023.

The DPPML created a legal basis for establishing a "think tank" to serve the MED and for conducting comprehensive, systematic and consistent policy analysis by the Government⁶⁰. A think tank is expected to act as a broker of policy knowledge, centers of research, and incubators of new ideas. As a broker, it channels knowledge between scholars, policymakers, and civil society. The Government has not established this think tank yet; absence of such institution hinders capacity of the MED and the Government to carry out evidence-based, comprehensive, systematic policy analysis for coherent, integrated and holistic policy decisions.

⁵⁷ <https://sdgs.un.org/national-commitments-sdg-transformation/22033>

⁵⁸ <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf> Page 24

⁵⁹ <http://sdg.gov.mn/>

⁶⁰ <https://legalinfo.mn/mn/detail/15403>, Chapter 3, 7.3

Sustainable development goals are interlinked and requires system thinking and comprehensive “whole of government” and “whole of society” approaches; hence the Government needs to enhance its capacity by establishing a think tank, attracting potential experts to work and leverage their knowledge and

skills towards the policy decisions. The UN Mongolia could continue supporting the Government in this capacity building efforts. Table 1 shows a list of new committees established by the Government in 2023. Table 2 shows a list of institutions established and/or restructured by the Government in 2023.

Table 1. New committees and agencies established by the Government in 2023

Resolution number	Date	Committee name	Committee Chair
155	26 April 2023	National Committee on Climate (Revised)	H.E. Amarsaikhan S., Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia
305	23 August 2023	National Committee on Education (Revised)	Prime Minister of Mongolia
241	21 June 2023	National Committee on Urban and Rural revitalization, land management and Urban Planning	Prime Minister of Mongolia
215	07 June 2023	Organizing Committee of XII International Congress of Mongolian Scientists	Education Minister

Table 2. Institutions established and/or restructured by the Government in 2023

Resolution number	Date	Organization	Director of the organization
37	01 Feb 2023	Government Implementing Agency – Investment and Trade Department	V. Enkhbaatar Affiliated to the MED
96	15 March 2023	Water Services Regulatory Commission of Mongolia (Restructured)	G.Tsogtsaikhan - Government Entity
10	5 Jan 2023	Government Implementing Agency – National Forensic Agency of Mongolia (Replaced National Forensic Institute)	J. Buyanbat Affiliated to Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs

4 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT





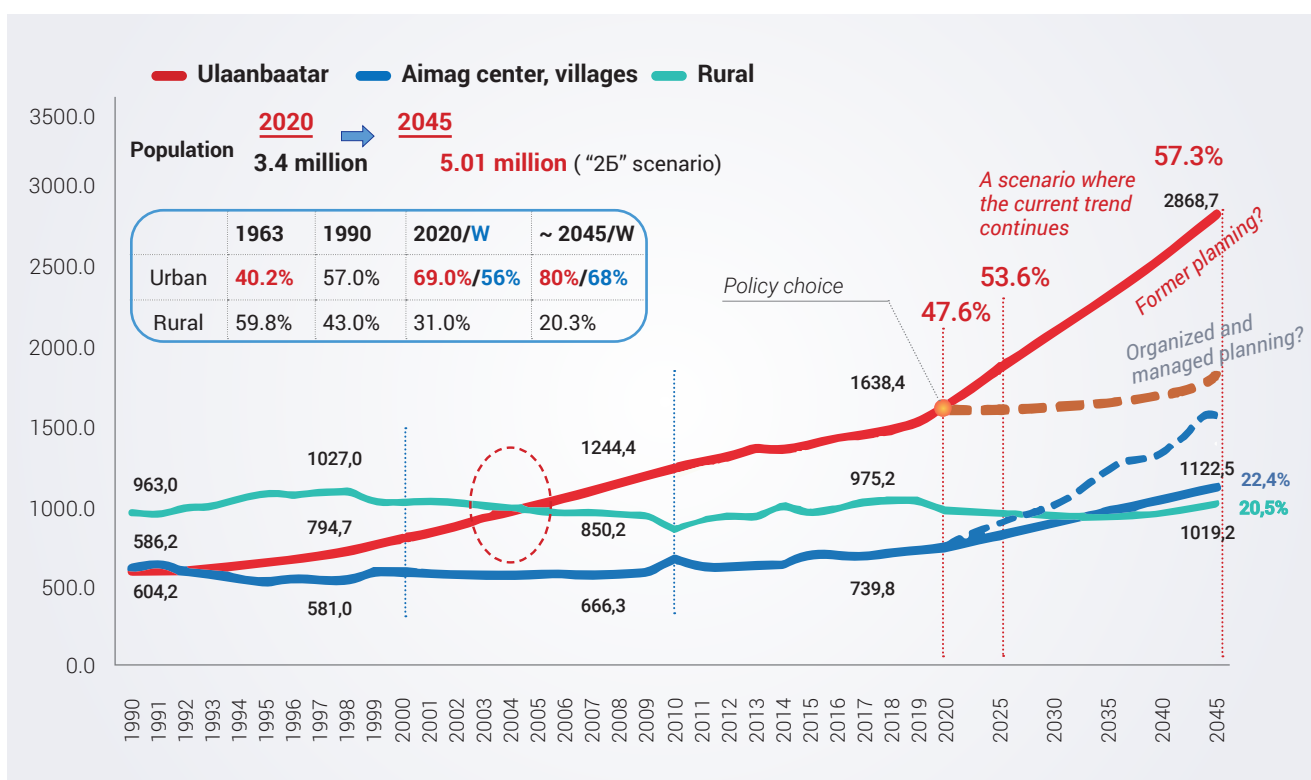
4.1 Policy, governance and institutional changes

The second VNR of Mongolia dedicated one chapter to analyze issues and challenges of regional and local development as a limiting factor for implementation of SDGs.

Mongolia has experienced rapid urbanization in the last a few decades, causing a severe imbalance in development between cities and rural areas. In 1970, 44 per cent lived in cities, and 57 per cent in 1990,

but as of 2020, 69 per cent of the total population lived in urban areas, of which 46 per cent lived in Ulaanbaatar. If uncertainty of spatial development policy and planning related to regional development and population settlement continues, about 80 per cent of the total population is expected to settle only in urban areas by 2045, and population growth will not take place in other areas (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Population forecast for Ulaanbaatar, central cities of provinces and rural areas, 1990-2045



(Source: Second voluntary national review of Mongolia, 2023)

Key findings from the analysis on issues for regional and local development are summarized as follows:

- 1) Disparities in social development among territories have increased dramatically, also causing a lack of opportunity in provinces and rural areas.
- 2) Rural areas are dominated by “push factors” such as drought and dzud, whereas “pull factors” such as education, culture, and jobs are concentrated in Ulaanbaatar, resulting in rural to urban internal migration to the capital city over the past 20 years.
- 3) There are cities that have no legal capacity for economic and social planning with their legal status being soums. Uncertainty in the role of cities in regional and local social and economic development has tended to further increase centralization in Ulaanbaatar (See Box 1 for citizens’ view on support for regional development).
- 4) There is a lack of clarity on policy and planning to spatially develop Mongolia’s industrial sector, such as food and processing, at the regional and local levels.

- 5) The vertical and horizontal axes of the transport infrastructure and its integrated network of roads, transport networks, border ports, free zones and logistics have not been established.
- 6) The mechanisms and means of increasing population migration and private sector investment in regions and provinces are unclear.
- 7) The policy, planning and legal framework for regional economic development and distribution of rights and responsibilities at the regional level are unclear; and an institutional framework is not formed.

BOX 1.
Citizens' view on support to regional development from the National Consultative Poll

The National Consultative Poll, called "Let's Decide by Consultation" organized by the Parliament, was participated by 1,750 randomly selected citizens on 22 questions in four groups. There were three questions related to regional and local development and decentralization. The question "Do you support the creation of a fund from the revenues of the export of mining products to support small and medium-sized enterprises in the local area?" was supported with 0.885 points. The question "Do you support administrative reforms related to decentralization and regional development?" was supported with 0.869 points. The question "Do you support the expansion of special support policies for local residents and migrants to reduce the centralization of Ulaanbaatar?" was supported with 0.896 points.

The consultative council submitted the following recommendations to the Parliament:

- A legal environment should be created for the creation of a fund from the revenues of the export of mining products to support small and medium-sized industries in local area.
- The government should prepare a proposal for administrative reforms and submit it to the Parliament for a vote.
- The legal framework for providing special support to local residents and migrants should be improved in order to reduce the centralization of Ulaanbaatar.

Based on findings from the analysis, the second VNR proposes several solutions and recommendations for regional and local development as follows:

- 1) Amend the Law on Regional Development Management and Coordination and harmonise it with other laws;
- 2) Strengthen cluster cooperation between citizens and entrepreneurs at the regional and local levels by determining suitable locations for developing food production, processing and light industry;
- 3) Clarify and announce policies and mapping for spatial development planning;
- 4) Assign state rank and status to cities and clarify their role in social and economic development;
- 5) Create an axis-based, integrated transport and logistics network supporting regional social and economic development, production and export;
- 6) Identify city-centred cluster regions and support them through investment;
- 7) Create a connected economy with regional and local hubs. Regional attraction forces can be created through economic-infrastructure geographical cluster connections, in which factors responsible for regional development are interconnected and mutually supportive at the regional and local levels; and
- 8) Announce legal, economic and investment-promoting instruments based on the basic concept of spatial development planning.

4.2 Gaps in findings from the second VNR and way forward

The analysis carried out for regional and rural development in VNR was built on the previous research studies done by various institutions. Therefore, the analysis and recommendations in the VNR reflected lessons learnt from past policies and decisions on this subject.

Mongolia is facing multiple development challenges which was constantly and persistently growing over the last two decades; insufficient regional development was one of the hindrances. The Government should work on prioritized and comprehensive policy measures for addressing

rural-urban disparities, including reversing migration and resolving numerous issues faced in UB city.

The VNR had limitations in defining economic value chain analysis based on comparative economic advantages of and within the regions as well as connectivity with border ports. Such further analysis would be useful for the Government in making coherent policy decisions.

Below are quick snapshots for necessary way forward for achieving regional and rural development agenda through integrated regional development policies by the Government:

1 Conduct value-chain analysis based on the resources and comparative economic advantage of each province and its connectivity with growth centres as well as border ports;

2 Identify targeted policy measures in terms of infrastructure, roads and transportation, energy, fiscal and tax policies to attract private investments;

3 Prioritize public investments on accessibility and quality of public services in provinces, especially in growth centres, in order to create enabling environment for decent living; and,

4 Develop a comprehensive employment/work force policy to support regional economic development.

The GOM announced 2024 as the year to promote regional and rural development and is currently preparing the renewed “regional development concept” aiming for approval by the Parliament during the spring session in 2024. The Mongolia Economic Forum focused on the regional

development, organized on 1 and 2 February 2024, identified key priority sectors for each of 6 regions (western, khangai, north, central, southern and east) to reflect them in the new regional development concept.

5 LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND AND GENDER EQUALITY





The ger district residents in Ulaanbaatar lack of access to quality public services such as decent transportation.
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In preparation for the Second VNR Report on Implementation of the SDGs, qualitative and quantitative assessments have identified the groups furthest behind in terms of access to basic social services. The VNR identifies the “middle-aged men with a low level of education, living in rural households with a low standard of living (bottom 40 per cent) as the furthest behind group in terms of development. In addition, persons with disabilities, the elderly, internal migrants, children and the homeless (people with low level of education, alcoholics, victims of domestic violence, and adults who have been released from incarceration or orphanages) are identified to be in this risk group. According to the CSO’s assessment on SDG implementation in 2022, children, youth, girls, women and persons with disabilities, the elderly, suburban and rural citizens, persons with mental illness and Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) are at greater risk of being left behind in development.⁶¹

Persons with disabilities (PWD) are estimated at 115,115 people (2023)⁶², remaining as the most marginalized and vulnerable group in Mongolia. Households with PWD are concentrated in the lower part of income distribution; more than 40 per cent are in the poorest quintile. For PWDs, access to adequate housing is limited. The Government’s housing policy is not adequate, and the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups are not taken into account. The current housing policy in Mongolia is approved with a specific allocation of public housing stock targeted to PWD (5 per cent). Access to the private sector’s housing projects is often limited, costly, and not affordable for PWDs. Many PWDs are accommodated in ger areas (traditional houses), which are not connected to central heating, water supply, and sewage systems.

In July 2023, the GOM adopted a new programme to support the housing of PWDs. This programme aims to improve the quality of life and living

⁶¹ SDG and CSOs Network (2022). Scoring assessment report on the progress of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

⁶² National Statistical Office of Mongolia .2023 population data.

conditions of as many individuals with disabilities and their families as possible through participation in housing projects funded by the Mongolian government. The programme aims to augment the existing quota of 5 per cent to 15 per cent for people with disabilities. Commencing in 2024, the programme will be executed for a duration of two years, during which time its results will be assessed and deliberated upon at the governmental level.

Mongolia was one of eight state parties whose reports were considered during the 29th session of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which took place from 14 August to 8 September 2023. The GOM and two alliances of Mongolian PWD-focused CSOs submitted their national report and independent submissions to the CRPD. The CRPD reviewed the national reports of Mongolia and issued its concluding observations in September 2023. The CRPD's concluding observations furnished the UNCT and civil society organizations with a crucial impetus to extend their efforts in tackling the systemic factors that contribute to prejudice against PWDs.

CSOs, government officials, and development partners met on three occasions in November and December 2023 to discuss the CRPD recommendations and their national implementation. The consultations collected inputs and feedback on the draft national follow-up plan, which specifies the actions, indicators, timelines, and responsibilities. The CRPD recommendations' national follow-up plan is being prepared by the General Department of Development of People with Disabilities (GADPWD). The plan will be ready by March 2024 and will be executed by the next CRPD review cycle. The OHCHR's Surge project endeavored to support the Mongolian government's advocacy and establish tangible strategies and time-bound plans to implement a comprehensive policy and strategic actions that will function as a framework for national coordination and planning to address all CRPD recommendations.

Gender equality has seen some progress in Mongolia. Mongolia scored 0.297 with the rank of 72 out of 166 in 2022 (slight improvement from 0.303 in 2021)⁶³. However, high prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV) and low levels of women's political participation are identified as obstacles to achieving gender equality. In Mongolia, men and women experience different obstacles due to cultural norms and gender stereotypes, influencing division of labor, roles and responsibilities among them. While female labor force participation and educational attainment is higher than that of male from global perspectives, gender bias exists in the labor between men and women. Labor market is highly occupationally segmented by gender. Women are dominated in the informal sector and more in service and health sectors and more responsible for domestic, childcare activities. Women are underrepresented in higher leadership positions and less represented in decision-making in the political and economic spheres largely due to gender-based stereotypes, cultural norms and behavior. Unequal distribution of wealth, entrenched poverty, and marginalization and exclusion of certain groups remain major challenges, especially for women, single-headed women, and PWDs.

Mongolia is still far from achieving gender equality in all decision-making levels, particularly, in the Parliament. With 20% gender quota for electoral lists, Mongolia has only achieved 17% women in parliament. Mongolia ranks 134th out of 186 countries in terms of women in national Parliaments as per Inter Parliamentary Union, regrettably far from gender equality. UNDP Mongolia has provided essential support to GOM in securing revisions to Parliamentary Election and Political Party laws. This included groundbreaking gender quotas of 30 per cent and 40 per cent for 2024 and 2028 elections and other impactful measures such as zipper lists and fee waivers, and crucial provisions to foster gender equality in political parties.

⁶³ <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/MNG>



Over half of Mongolian women have experienced at least one type of violence in their lifetime, and 31.2 per cent of ever-partnered women report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence from their partners. Inadequate funding and lack of specialized technical capacity have hindered full implementation of gender-based violence laws and policies. While significant investments have been made in strengthening multisectoral gender-based violence response services, several of them, including those offered at the one-stop service centres, are not tailored for survivors with disabilities. Prevailing discriminatory social norms and attitudes derail efforts to achieve gender equality and deter women and girls, especially the most disadvantaged, from using services and exercising their rights.

In 2023, the NSO together with UNFPA Mongolia Country Office (CO) and with the technical support

from UNFPA Asia Pacific Regional Office conducted secondary data analysis of 2017 GBV prevalence study in Mongolia. In this in-depth analysis, the researchers have looked at the protective and risk factors that may lead to GBV. Strong family relationships came out as one of the protective factors, while witnessing abuse or being abused in childhood serve as a risk factor for GBV in adulthood. The secondary analysis provides more evidence for effective strategies to address GBV's root causes and strengthen response mechanism. The results of the analysis were validated by key stakeholders and resulted in the national priorities endorsed by the decision-makers on 7th December 2023 at the Parliament house.

Box 2 shows the outcome of the UNCT Mongolia SWAP Gender scorecard assessment carried out in 2023.

BOX 2.

Outcome of UNCT Mongolia SWAP Gender scorecard assessment

In 2023, the UNCT-SWAP Gender Equality Scorecard assessment was conducted by the Inter-agency assessment team, comprised seventeen members from nine UN agencies (UNFPA, FAO, ILO, UNDP, WHO, IOM, UNICEF, and UN Women) and coordinated by UNDP, with representation across different fields and functions to ensure a sound knowledge base on joint UN actions. The UNCT-SWAP is an accountability framework promoting improved planning, coordination, programming, and results for gender equality and women's empowerment at country level, assessing performance of the UNCT against all 15 standardized indicators within 7 dimension areas based on evidence and information gathered. It is conducted once per UNSDCF cycle and designed to cover the entire UNSDCF cycle.

The overall performance of UNCT Mongolia was positive. Out of 15 performance indicators, 3 indicators were missing the minimum requirements; 5 indicators were approaching the minimum requirements; 5 indicators were meeting the minimum indicators; and, 2 indicators were exceeding the minimum requirements. The 3 indicators missing the minimum requirements were: Gender Parity in Staffing, UNCT Capacities for Gender Mainstreaming, and Resources for Gender mainstreaming. The analysis concluded that UNCT Mongolia was missing 4 indicators (UNCT joint program on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE), gender parity at staffing, gender architecture and capacities, and resource allocation), which require the UNCT to put more efforts in the current UNSDCF implementation period.



Youth need to be provided with skills and opportunities for decent and productive work.

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A significant portion of Mongolia's youth, especially in rural areas, face a digital divide. Initiatives to enhance digital infrastructure and integrate digital literacy into educational curricula are crucial. This approach will ensure equitable access to digital tools and resources, preparing young people for the evolving digital landscape. To address the skills gap among Mongolian youth, especially in sectors beyond mining and agriculture, initiatives in digital literacy and entrepreneurship education are essential. Tailored vocational training programmes focusing on emerging digital technologies can empower youth, fostering innovation and diversifying Mongolia's economic reliance.

In the context of regional development, specific challenges faced by youth in urban and rural areas should be addressed, particularly regarding access to education, job opportunities, and social services. Legal and policy frameworks that focus on reducing regional disparities and improving youth opportunities in all regions should be designed.

Mongolia needs to equip youth with skills and create sufficient opportunities for productive, decent work to harness the full potential of its demographic dividend while promoting rights-based access to contraceptives to reduce unplanned pregnancies. Adolescents and youth, especially

the most marginalized, are vulnerable to school dropout, unemployment, mental health issues and early union. They lack comprehensive and accurate information and services on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and continue to have limited participation in decision-making processes on issues that affect them. Among teenage girls, 55 per cent experienced controlling behaviour by their partners.

Mongolia's recent structural changes in its youth policy framework include the transformation of the former Agency for Children, Youth, and Family into the Agency for Children and Family, under the Ministry for Labour and Social Protection. This reorganization signifies a strategic shift, focusing more broadly on family and child welfare, while the specific youth development functions are now overseen by the newly established Youth Development Secretariat under Minister for Labour and Social Protection. These changes reflect a dynamic approach to policy adaptation, but it's crucial to continually assess their impact on youth empowerment. Emphasizing areas such as skill development, particularly in digital literacy and entrepreneurship, aligning with global economic trends, and reinforcing youth participation in environmental policy-making are vital.

6 | PROGRESS IN SDGs



6.1 Second voluntary national review, national commitments and SDGs accelerators

With the support of the United Nations Mongolia, the GOM delivered its Second VNR⁶⁴ to take stock and assess progress and challenges in the implementation of SDGs and presented it in the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2023. The GOM, based on findings of the second VNR and with the support of the UN Mongolia, also identified three national commitments, including 12 SDGs accelerators. The three national commitments are: 1) adoption and implementation of 12 SDGs accelerators, 2) reducing national poverty level to 15 per cent by 2030, and

3) strengthening institutional arrangements to further intensify the SDGs accelerators. Figure 10 shows 12 accelerators mapped to the priorities and outcomes of the UNSDCF 2023-2027, revealing that outcomes of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 are aligned with the 12 SDGs accelerators. The mapping confirms that change in the course of actions for implementing the UNSDCF at the level of priorities and outcomes is not needed. However, effective support to the GOM in implementing those SDGs accelerators may require the UNCT to prioritize or reinforce related sub-outputs of the Joint Work Plans (JWPs).

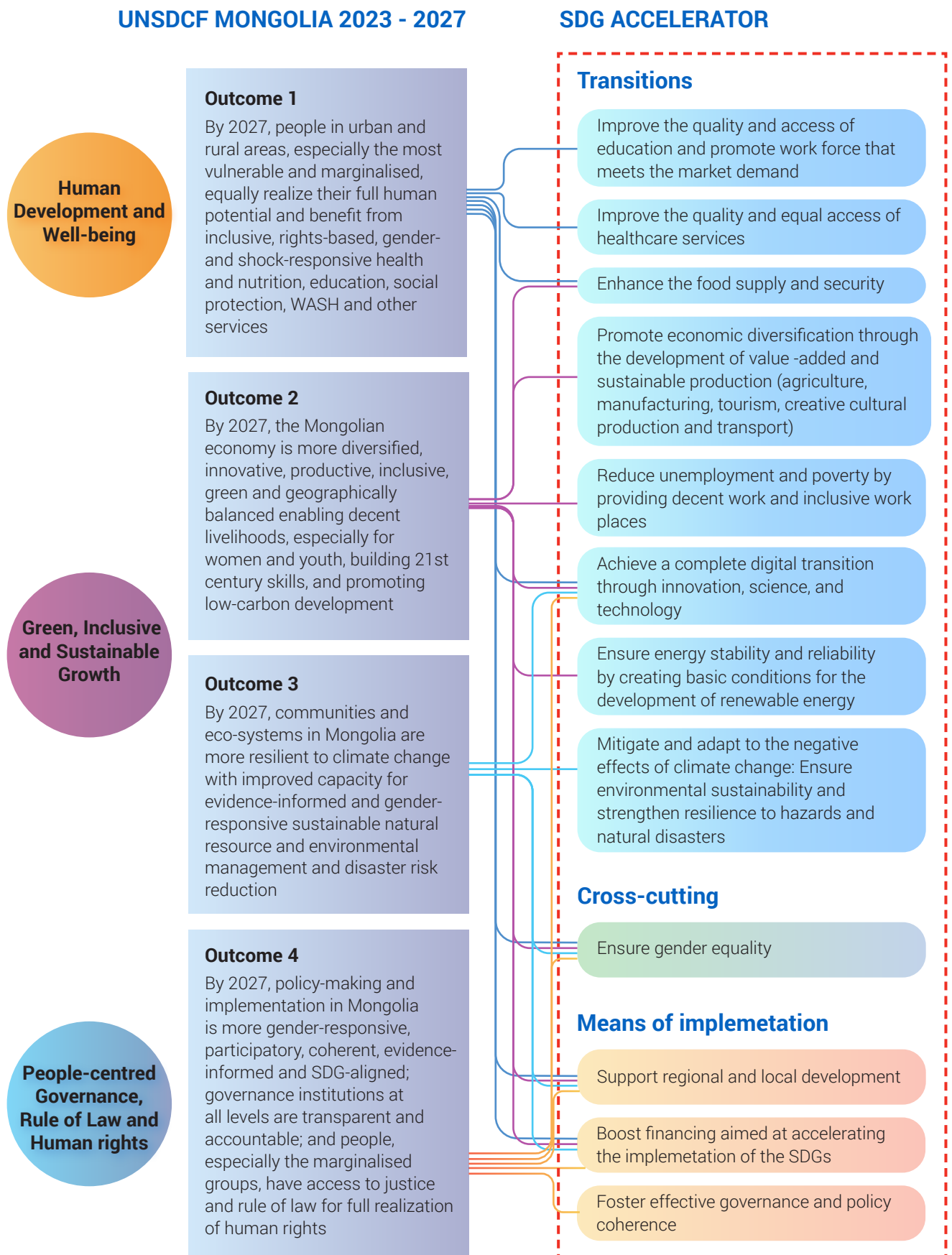


Mongolia presented its Second Voluntary National Review at the UN Summit in 2023. © Ministry of Economy and Development

⁶⁴ <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Mongolia%20Report.pdf>



Figure 10. Mapping of UNSDCF priorities and outcomes to the SDGs accelerators



6.2 Other SDGs-related development

In November 2023, the Mongolian delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister attended the 7th Asian and Pacific Population Conference. During the Conference, the Mongolian government reaffirmed their commitment to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agenda⁶⁵.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Margaret Satterthwaite conducted the official visit to Mongolia in November 2023. Since 2004, twelve separate special procedures mandates have visited Mongolia. The special rapporteur welcomed Mongolia's evidence-based approach to reform and called for further action to solidify an independent justice system with human rights at its core. The special rapporteur highlighted that the most important safeguard for impartiality and separation of powers is provision of adequate budgetary independence to the judiciary. In 2019, the legal reform was enacted to permit the Judicial General Council (JGC) to submit its proposed budget for the judiciary to the Parliament following review only by the Legal Standing Committee.

However, this provision has not yet been fully implemented. The special rapporteur urged the government to take steps to ensure full implementation of this law. The JGC has already proposed to the parliament to set this benchmark at 2 per cent of the national budget.

To bolster judicial independence, further legal changes are necessary in safeguarding prosecution service from undue interference, through internal lines of supervision and/or external influences. The special rapporteur considered that there was room for improvement in Mongolia in balancing the rights of the prosecution and the defense in criminal trials, to strengthen debate and achieve an equality of arms. Surveys⁶⁶ have demonstrated a widespread lack of trust in the judiciary. The special rapporteur was concerned that surveys highlighted a lack of trust in the judiciary and heard that social media is being used to disparage judges, including by holders of public office. The special rapporteur called for the government to take measures to rebuild public trust.

⁶⁵ [https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/MN_7APPC_Item2\(2\).pdf](https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/MN_7APPC_Item2(2).pdf)

⁶⁶ Open Society Forum NGO; Intellectual Innovation NGO: Mongolia: "Court Index 2021" Survey report, 2022 <http://judindex.forum.mn/>

CONCLUSION

2023 marked the first year for the United Nations Mongolia to implement its UNSDCF 2023 – 2027. At the same time, Mongolia took stock and assessed progress and challenges in the implementation of SDGs through its second VNR and identified three national commitments, including 12 SDGs accelerators. Mapping analysis of 12 accelerators with the priorities and outcomes of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 reveals that outcomes of the UNSDCF 2023-2027 are aligned with the 12 SDGs accelerators. The mapping analysis confirms that

change in the course of actions for implementing the UNSDCF at the level of priorities and outcomes is not needed. However, effective support to the GOM in implementing those SDGs accelerators may require the UNCT to prioritize or reinforce related sub-outputs of the JWPs.

Based on analysis of new developments in 2023 as presented in the 2023 CCA update, the United Nations Mongolia may put priority on sub-outputs of the JWPs related to the following areas for 2024 and onward:

- Economic diversification, including through digitalization and agricultural sector development, which would help Mongolia transition to digital society and economy, enhance food security and develop non-mining sectors:
- Transition to renewable energy, which can reduce air pollution-inflicted health risks, climate changed related disaster risks and ecological imbalance through conservation of biodiversity:
- Enhancement of Governance to improve accountability, transparency and stability of government operation and services:
- Support the GOM in regional and rural development to narrow rural-urban development disparities and improve livelihood of rural areas: and
- Reducing poverty and leaving no one behind, in particular through developing private sectors to create more decent jobs, empowering youth by creating more opportunities for them, and preventing GBV including through women's empowerment.

Under strategic guidance of the UNCT, the CCA taskforce should continue its regular monitoring of new development and inform the UNCT of any

issues having implications for implementation of the UNSDCF for its strategic action.


LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CADRI	Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CO	Country Office
COP	Conference of Parties
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CRPD	UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DP	Democratic Party
DPPL	Development Policy and Planning Law
DPPML	Development Policy, Planning and Management Law
GADPWD	General Department of Development of People with Disabilities
GBF	global biodiversity framework
GBV	gender-based violence
GDP	gross domestic product
GD-PAME	global database on protected area management effectiveness
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GOM	Government of Mongolia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	foreign direct investment
HDI	Human Development Index
HLPF	High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITT-LLDCs	International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries
JGC	Judicial General Council
JWPs	Joint Work Plans
LGBTQI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex
LLDCs	landlocked developing countries
MCSD	Multi-stakeholder Council for Sustainable Development
MED	Ministry of Economy and Development

MFF	Medium-term Fiscal Framework
MNT	Mongolian Tugrik
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MoFALI	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPP	Mongolian People's Party
MPs	members of parliament
MSMEs	micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises
NBSAP	National Biodiversity strategic action plan
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NDA	National Development Agency
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
NES	National Export Strategy
NSO	National Statistics Office
N4H	Nature for Health
OECMs	other effective area-based conservation measures
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PIP	Public Investment Program
PM	particulate matters
PWD	Persons with disabilities
RB	river basin
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAJust	Southeast Asia Justice Network
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SPM	Suspended particulate matters
UB	Ulaanbaatar
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNTOC	United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime
USD	United States Dollar
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VPoA	Vienna Programme of Action
WHO	World Health Organization


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