

## SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Mongolia	Project Title:	Improving School Dormitory Environment for Primary Students in Western Region Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project	Department/Division:	East Asia Department/Urban and Social Sectors Division/Mongolia Resident Mission

<b>I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY</b>
Poverty targeting: targeted intervention—MDGs
<b>A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy</b>
<p>The project will contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in particular, to achievement of universal primary education, which has been identified as one of six priorities in the MDGs-based Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia, 2008–2021. The project will support reform of the school dormitory system to ensure equal access to quality education for all students, particularly for herder families who live a nomadic life, in line with the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science (MECS)’s education sector reform policy framework, 2012–2016. The project is consistent with the Asian Development Bank’s Interim Country Partnership Strategy for Mongolia, 2014–2016, which renews its focus on basic education and emphasizes the need for investments in the western region of Mongolia, where the poverty headcount ratio is above the national average.</p>
<b>B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence</b>
<p>1. Key poverty and social issues. The western region is one of the poorer regions in Mongolia. The poverty headcount ratio in the region was 32.5% in 2012, above the national average (27.4%). Of the Mongolia’s five regions, the western region had the largest number of students staying in dormitories (11,691, or 14.3% of students enrolled in primary and secondary education in 2014); 86% came from herder families. Herders comprised more than 39% of the economically active population in the region and a similar share of the poor (41.9% in 2012). The primary completion rate in the region was the lowest in Mongolia (86.1% in 2012, versus 94.5% at the national level), and children in the region tend to start school later than the official school age of 6, as evidenced by the lowest net intake rate in grade 1 (85.4% in 2014, as opposed to the national average of 90.5%). A study conducted in 2008 reveals that students staying in dormitories and those who enter school at the age of 7 or 8 rather than 6 demonstrate lower academic performance. This may be explained by unfavorable school dormitory environment, lack of parental support for education, and children’s first impression of schools and dormitories. Early grade students staying in dormitories particularly require special care and support as they often encounter difficulties in making a smooth transition from home to school. The dropout rate (2.0% in school year 2012/13–2013/14) and the repetition rate (0.14% in school year 2012/13–2013/14) for first grade students are usually higher than those for students in other grades.</p> <p>2. Beneficiaries. The primary beneficiaries of the project will be primary students staying in dormitories in Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Zavkhan <i>aimags</i> (provinces) (about 3,900), including early grade (grades 1–3) students (about 2,000). The majority of the students come from herder families, many of which are poor. Students from herder families are typically first exposed to other groups at schools and dormitories, and their sense of disorientation could be more acute than for other students. Because dormitory environments are unfavorable, students sometimes end up not opting to stay in them, even if they need to because schools are located far from their homes. In 2014, about 9% of students who needed to stay in dormitories choose not to stay in them. Currently, students hardly engage in study, reading, and extracurricular activities in dormitories, probably because of high student–teacher ratios in dormitories, and the lack of qualifications and skills among dormitory teachers and staff. Other primary beneficiaries will be dormitory staff (teachers, guards, cooks), primary class teachers, school management, education department staff in the three <i>aimags</i> (about 1,800) who will have capacity development opportunities, and parents of primary students staying in dormitories in Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Zavkhan <i>aimags</i> who tend to disengage from children’s education. The indirect beneficiaries of the project will be secondary school students staying in dormitories (about 7,400), and students staying in dormitories nationwide and their families.</p> <p>3. Impact channels. Direct impact channels will be (i) physical school dormitory environments (a) renovated to adequately cope with winter temperatures, wind, and precipitation; (b) equipped with water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities meeting MECS’s minimum requirements, including those related to gender and early grade students; (c) furnished to accommodate larger numbers of students; and (d) refurbished to have common rooms for study, reading, and extracurricular activities; (ii) improved school dormitory services, including care and support for early grade students and dormitory meals, provided by trained school dormitory staff, school management, and <i>aimag</i> education department staff; (iii) student- and teacher-organized study, reading, and extracurricular activities at dormitories; and (iv) communication and outreach activities for parents of primary students staying in dormitories. Indirect impact channels will be (i) comprehensive standards for school dormitories covering physical environment and services; (ii) revised funding formula for dormitory meals, taking into account student ages and nutritional requirements; and (iii) national strategy and financing policy to improve school dormitory environments.</p>

4. Other social and poverty issues. The central and local governments and schools are providing assistance for students with disabilities, including non-formal education opportunities, to ensure 9 years of compulsory education. Additionally, the government is providing basic education free of charge, including textbooks, snacks, and school dormitory services to ensure access to educational opportunities for all primary students.

5. Design features. Key design features include (i) establishing and implementing models to improve the physical school dormitory environment and services in the three *aimags*; (ii) prioritizing dormitories in rural remote areas (*soums* [districts] and *bags* [small unit within the soum] that are not connected to water supply, wastewater, and heating systems; and (iii) developing and delivering training sessions and materials for dormitory staff, school management, and *aimag* education department staff that are designed to improve skills to facilitate study, reading, and extracurricular activities; enhance school preparedness; and take care of students staying in dormitories, especially in early grades. The social, ethnic, and gender action plan (SEGAP) specifies actions to mitigate adverse impacts, including child and sexual abuse at dormitories, and increase positive impacts for early grade and female students, and students from minority groups and herder families.

## II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR

1. Participatory approaches and project activities. The project design incorporates social and poverty issues identified through consultations with students staying in dormitories and their parents, herder families, dormitory teachers and guards, primary teachers, school doctors, social workers, school management, and other stakeholders involved in the delivery of school dormitory services in Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Zavkhan *aimags*. Student-organized activities in dormitories, and their participation in decision-making about dormitory affairs, will be supported by dormitory staff, primary class teachers, and social workers to be trained under the project. Communication and outreach activities will be increased for parents of students in dormitories who live far from school by strengthening the capacity of school management. Performance indicators related to these activities have been included in the design and monitoring framework (DMF) and project administration manual (PAM).

2. Civil society organizations. The project steering subcommittees to be established in Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Zavkhan *aimags* will include nongovernment organization (NGO) representatives. NGOs (e.g., professional cook's associations, international NGOs) will be involved in the development and delivery of training sessions and materials.

3. The following forms of civil society organization participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):

Information gathering and sharing (M)  Consultation (M)  Collaboration (M)  Partnership

4. Participation plan.

Yes.  No. Civil society organizations have already been involved in the development and delivery of training sessions and materials for dormitory and primary teachers. The project will build on and strengthen the existing mechanisms.

## III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: effective gender mainstreaming

**A. Key issues.** The gender parity index at the primary level in Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Zavkhan *aimags* averaged 0.96 in 2014, whereas that for primary students staying in dormitories was 0.79, suggesting that dormitory environment is potentially less favorable for female than male students. Many dormitories in rural remote areas are not connected to water supply, sewerage, and heating systems and have only rudimentary pit latrines outside dormitory buildings, raising safety issues, particularly for female students. Pit latrines are usually located 30–40 meters away from dormitory buildings and paths towards latrines and latrines themselves are not lit at night. Due in part to the unfavorable dormitory environment, mothers are often required to move closer to school to live with their children separately from fathers, which has frequently caused family problems.

**B. Key actions.** The SEGAP ensures (i) gender-responsive water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities in selected school dormitories; (ii) collection of disaggregated data by gender for planning, monitoring, and evaluation; (ii) inclusion of issues related to gender into training sessions and materials; (iii) participation of female dormitory teachers (70%), dormitory guards (55%), school management, accountants, and *aimag* education department staff (55%) in capacity development activities; (iv) regular participation of female students in educational activities at dormitories (45%); and (v) inclusion of mothers and female caregivers in communication and outreach activities for parents (50%). These are reflected in the performance indicators and targets in the DMF. A social development specialist to be engaged under the project will assist the implementing agencies in implementing and monitoring these actions.

Gender action plan  Other actions or measures  No action or measure

<b>IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES</b>	
<p><b>A. Involuntary Resettlement</b></p> <p>1. Key impacts. None has been identified.</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. Involuntary resettlement impacts will be monitored during project implementation.</p> <p>3. Plan or other Actions.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resettlement plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resettlement framework</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No action</p>	<p><b>Safeguard Category:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix</p>
<p><b>B. Indigenous Peoples</b></p> <p>1. Key impacts. One of the project sites, Uvs <i>aimag</i>, is the home of the Bayad, Dorvord, Eljigen, Khalkh, and Khoton ethnic groups, who live a seminomadic life. The project will support only the existing school dormitory facilities, which will not affect the territories or natural and cultural resources of these groups. Interviews conducted with families and school staff revealed that students from these ethnic groups in dormitories are not distinguished from other Mongolians in appearance and language. The main differences are their traditional lifestyles and some dialects.</p> <p>Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. Identification and inclusion of enhancement measures related to students from ethnic groups and herder families into training sessions and materials for dormitory staff, school management and <i>aimag</i> education department staff, and monitoring of students' participation in activities organized at dormitories with data disaggregated by ethnicity, have been specified in the SEGAP.</p> <p>3. Plan or other actions.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan (SEGAP)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples planning framework</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental and social management system arrangement</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social impact matrix</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No action</p>	<p><b>Safeguard Category:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement framework and indigenous peoples planning framework</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous peoples plan elements integrated in project with a summary</p>
<b>V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS</b>	
<p><b>A. Risks in the Labor Market</b></p> <p>1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market, indicated as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> underemployment <input type="checkbox"/> retrenchment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> core labor standards (L)</p> <p>2. Labor market impact. Local labor standards would be applied and monitored during implementation.</p>	
<p><b>B. Affordability</b></p> <p>School dormitories are generally affordable when fully funded by the government, but affordability is reduced when parents are asked for monetary contributions for repair and maintenance works, or to come frequently to dormitories.</p>	
<p><b>C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks</b></p> <p>1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Communicable diseases <input type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify) Not applicable.</p> <p>2. Risks to people in project area. Not applicable.</p>	
<b>VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b>	
<p>1. Targets and indicators. The DMF includes targets and indicators related to gender- and age-responsive water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities; training of dormitory teachers and guards on child abuse issues; primary students in dormitories disaggregated by grade, gender, and family background (ethnicity, herder); and their parents. There are also gender targets for training of dormitory teachers (70%) and guards (55%), as well as school management and <i>aimag</i> education department staff (55%). These will be monitored through school reports, rehabilitation completion inspection reports, quarterly reports of <i>aimag</i> education departments, and quarterly and annual reports of the project.</p>	
<p>2. Required human resources. A social development specialist (7 person-months) with experience in gender issues will be engaged to help implement and monitor the SEGAP.</p>	
<p>3. Information in the project administration manual. The PAM includes a brief description of the social, gender, and poverty dimensions of the project and monitoring and evaluation arrangements. The implementing agencies and project implementation unit, assisted by consultants and schools, will monitor and report quarterly on actions and indicators.</p>	
<p>4. Monitoring tools. The project performance management system will include actions and indicators specified in the SEGAP and DMF. Grant assurances include (i) compliance with the SEGAP, (ii) an undertaking to implement the SEGAP, (iii) compliance with local labor laws, and (iv) monitoring and reporting requirements. The PAM stipulates the detailed monitoring and reporting requirements, and responsibilities.</p>	

Source: Asian Development Bank.