

## SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Mongolia	Project Title:	Sustaining Access to and Quality of Education During Economic Difficulties Project
Lending/Financing Modality:	Project	Department/Division:	East Asia Department/ Urban and Social Sectors Division

<b>I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY</b>
Targeting classification: Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targeting (non-income SDG -4 [Quality Education])
<b>A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy</b>
<p>The project will sustain access to and quality of pre-primary, primary, junior, and senior secondary education during economic difficulties in Mongolia by narrowing the gap in the enrollment capacity of schools and kindergartens in Ulaanbaatar and some <i>aimag</i> (provincial) centers; supporting the completion of unfinished curriculum reform and associated assessment system reforms; ensuring the provision of teaching and learning materials (TLM) that accompany the new curriculum; upgrading teachers and managers' knowledge and skills for the new curriculum and assessments; and strengthening systems for planning and managing education services.</p> <p>The project will support key priorities set out in the Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030 and Action Program for 2016–2020<sup>a</sup> for the education sector, including (i) providing equal, inclusive, and practical educational services; (ii) allowing every child in urban areas to enroll in a kindergarten; (iii) alleviating over-enrollment and eliminating three shifts in schools; (iv) introducing a system of evaluation of education quality and results at all levels of education; and (v) building an education system based on standards. The project is in line with the Asian Development Bank's education sector operations plan, which emphasizes the importance of improving student learning outcomes, and the country partnership strategy for Mongolia, 2017–2020, which promotes economic and social stability in a period of economic difficulties.<sup>b</sup></p>
<b>B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence</b>
<p><b>1. Key poverty and social issues.</b> Supported by strong economic growth during 2011–2014, the poverty headcount ratio (the percentage of households living below the national poverty line) in Mongolia declined by 11%. In 2014, 21.6% of Mongolia's population lived below the national poverty line, with more poor households residing in rural areas (27%) than in urban areas (18%). Disparities in basic infrastructure, services, and employment opportunities between rural and urban areas have caused constant rural–urban migration in quest of better living conditions and jobs, especially among rural herder families who lost their livestock. Consequently, it took longer to reduce the number of poor households in urban areas, especially in Ulaanbaatar (16%) where poverty decreased by only 3% during 2012–2014 compared with 9% in rural remote areas. Rural–urban migration, particularly to Ulaanbaatar, causes rapid growth in population and expansion of low-income, poorly serviced <i>ger</i> (traditional tent) areas (the main destinations of rural migrants) in the city. The poverty headcount ratio among households living in <i>ger</i> was higher (33%) than those who resided in other types of dwellings (11%) in 2014. Of the population in Ulaanbaatar, 56% are in <i>ger</i> areas, particularly in Bayanzurkh and Songinokhairkhan, two of Ulaanbaatar's nine districts. With the rapid population growth, the kindergartner and school-age population rose much faster than the increase in the number of schools and kindergartens. Consequently, available seats have become more scarce and existing schools and kindergartens have become overcrowded. The average class size in Ulaanbaatar is higher than the national average, at more than 30 and sometimes 40–50 students. Of the 33 three-shift schools, 30 are in Ulaanbaatar, of which nearly two-thirds are in Bayanzurkh and Songinokhairkhan districts. As seats are unavailable at schools and kindergartens close to home, students often commute long distances between home and school and/or kindergarten, exposing themselves to a higher risk of accidents and assaults. The dropout rate at free public kindergartens is high, as students cannot receive sufficient care and attention in large classes. Because of the shortage of available seats, students are selected into public kindergartens by lottery. Those who are not selected end up going to private kindergartens for a fee (which puts extra burden on poor families) or staying at home.</p> <p><b>2. Beneficiaries.</b> Direct beneficiaries of the project are about 11,000 primary and secondary students and 4,500 pre-primary students in the newly constructed or expanded schools and kindergartens. Out of the 11 schools and 24 kindergartens that will be built or expanded, nine schools and 22 kindergartens will be in Ulaanbaatar. Low-income, poorly serviced Bayanzurkh and Songinokhairkhan districts will have five schools and 12 kindergartens constructed or expanded by the end of the project. In addition to the direct beneficiaries, the project will benefit their parents who otherwise have to drop off children and pick them up at schools and kindergartens located far from home. Students in other schools and kindergartens will also benefit indirectly from the project as they will study in smaller classes. The newly constructed or expanded schools and kindergartens will have disabled access, sanitation, signage, and handrails, so that children with disabilities are not denied access to regular schools and kindergartens. Poorly resourced kindergartens in rural areas will be supplied with a standard set of TLM.</p>



<p><b>B. Indigenous Peoples</b>      <b>Safeguard Category:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> A   <input type="checkbox"/> B   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C   <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p><b>1. Key impacts.</b> Mongolia is ethnically diverse, with more than 30 ethnic groups living in the country. The project, except output 1, will be nationwide in scope and seeks to sustain access to and quality of education for all of the kindergartner and school-age population, regardless of ethnicity. The PSA confirmed that ethnic groups will not be negatively impacted. Measures to enhance inclusiveness and sensitivity, and maximize project benefits for all vulnerable groups, including ethnic groups, have been incorporated into the SGAP. These include the improvement of textbook and other TLM in Kazakh language as well as introducing culturally responsive teaching approaches. Is broad community support triggered?   <input type="checkbox"/> Yes                      <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><b>2. Strategy to address the impacts.</b> Not applicable.</p> <p><b>3. Plan or other actions.</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SGAP</p>
<p><b>V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS</b></p>
<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).  <input type="checkbox"/> unemployment   <input type="checkbox"/> underemployment   <input type="checkbox"/> retrenchment   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> core labor standards (L)  Local labor standards or International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) requirements will be applied and monitored during implementation.</p> <p><b>2. Labor market impact.</b> The project will provide both long- and short-term employment. The schools and kindergartens constructed or expanded under the project will provide employment opportunities for women as teachers, managers, and support workers. About 2,260 skilled and 2,260 unskilled jobs are expected to be generated during the construction phase, while 825 skilled jobs and 714 unskilled jobs are expected to be created during the operation phase.</p>
<p><b>B. Affordability.</b> Public schools and kindergartens are affordable as they are fully funded by the government. None of the project outputs have direct cost implications for the beneficiaries as no service or other fees will be charged.</p>
<p><b>C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks</b></p> <p>1. Indicate the respective risks, if any, and rate the impact as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communicable diseases (L)   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human trafficking (L)   <input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify)</p> <p><b>2. Risks to people in project area.</b> Slight risk of communicable disease transmission from construction workers.</p>
<p><b>VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION</b></p>
<p><b>1. Targets and indicators.</b> The design and monitoring framework (DMF) includes targets and indicators related to gender-responsive TLM for all grades and pre-primary education. In addition, there are gender targets for students (boys), teachers (85%), and management (55%) training. These will be monitored through education statistics; the education sector information system of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports; and quarterly and annual reports of the project.</p> <p><b>2. Required human resources.</b> International (3 person-months) and national (4 person-months) social development and gender specialists will be engaged to assist the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science and Sports, the project implementation unit (PIU), and consultants in implementing gender-sensitive, socially inclusive, and culturally responsive measures as set out in the DMF, project administration manual (PAM), and SGAP. In addition, the PIU will have a full-time monitoring and evaluation specialist to monitor and report on the social and gender actions.</p> <p><b>3. Information in project administration manual.</b> The PAM includes a brief description of the social, gender, and poverty dimensions of the project and monitoring and evaluation arrangements. The PIU, assisted by consultants, education departments, schools, and kindergartens, will monitor and report quarterly on the actions and indicators.</p> <p><b>4. Monitoring tools.</b> The project performance management system to be developed by the PIU will include actions and indicators specified in the SGAP and DMF. Loan assurances include (i) compliance with the SGAP, (ii) an undertaking to implement the SGAP, (iii) compliance with local labor laws, and (iv) monitoring and reporting requirements. The PAM stipulates detailed monitoring and reporting requirements, and responsibilities.</p>

<sup>a</sup> State Great Khural. 2016. *Mongolia Sustainable Development Vision 2030*. Ulaanbaatar; Government of Mongolia. 2016. *Action Program for 2016–2020*. Ulaanbaatar.

<sup>b</sup> ADB. 2010. *Education by 2020: A Sector Operations Plan*. Manila; ADB. 2017. *Country Partnership Strategy: Mongolia, 2017–2020—Sustaining Inclusive Growth in a Period of Economic Difficulty*. Manila.

Source: Asian Development Bank.