



# MONGOLIA

## EDUCATION SECTOR FACT SHEET

### PREPRIMARY EDUCATION

ADB has been engaged in the preprimary education development in Mongolia from its first investment in the sector, with the first stand-alone project being funded by the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) implemented in 2009–2013. Mongolia is a sparsely populated country with more than one-quarter of its population engaged in seminomadic herding. Attending kindergarten remains a challenge for herder family children who move from one place to the other throughout the year. The grant has established 135 mobile ger<sup>1</sup> kindergartens offering regular preprimary education for 4,912 children near their temporary residence. Most were attending kindergarten for the first time, which helped them prepare for school. This is important because children from herder families tend to start school

later than the official school entry age, often to their disadvantage. The project has also supported the Ministry of Education and Science to develop teacher training modules, curricula, and tools for kindergarten teachers; introduce preprimary education policies; and change attitudes and behaviors of parents and the public toward the importance of early childhood education. Another grant project, Education for the Poor During the Financial Crisis,<sup>2</sup> supported a free meals program during the 2009–2010 financial crisis, benefitting 148,000 children who might have never enrolled in or dropped out of kindergarten. The project won an award for its positive impact.

<sup>2</sup> ADB. 2009. *Grant Assistance to Mongolia for Education for the Poor - Financial Crisis Response Project*. Manila

<sup>1</sup> Mongolian traditional tent.

While Mongolia has made significant achievements in expanding access to education, ensuring its quality and relevance remains a major challenge. Since 1991, when student enrollments started to fall sharply with the withdrawal of assistance from the former Soviet Union, Asian Development Bank (ADB) has been steadily supporting Mongolia's education development at all levels from preprimary to higher education, as well as technical and vocational education and training (TVET). ADB's assistance during the transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy helped restore the enrollment level to that of the pretransition period and address new skills required for the market economy. To date, ADB's support to education in Mongolia's has amounted to \$126.4 million, comprising six loans (\$84.4 million), six grants (\$34.5 million), and 14 technical assistance operations (\$7.4 million).

### PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

From 1997 to 2010, ADB's loan and grant projects addressed basic education infrastructure, such as refurbishing school buildings and dormitories that had deteriorated during and after the transition period. A total of 294 schools—close to 40% of all Mongolian schools—benefited from the projects. From 2004 to 2015, the Mongolian education system shifted from a 10-year system (4+4+2) to an 11-year system (5+4+2), and then to a 12-year system (5+4+3) in line with international standards. This fundamental shift required revising and updating teachers' knowledge and skills. Under ADB's loan and

grant projects, curricula, textbooks, and instructional materials have been renewed, and the majority of teachers and school principals have received training to make the change possible. Preservice and in-service teacher training programs have also been revamped with ADB support. From 2008 onward, in parallel with the assistance for the transition to a 12-year education system, ADB further supported the introduction of international practices, including teacher policy, information and communication technology in education policy and management, career guidance, and diversified senior secondary education

programs. Additionally, almost half of the total number of schools in Mongolia have been equipped with information and communication technology or natural science laboratories under ADB projects.







# HIGHER EDUCATION

Rapid economic expansion has led to increased demand for higher education in Mongolia. The government has emphasized the value of higher education as a principal investment in the country's long-term economic competitiveness. ADB's first funded project in higher education, the Higher Education Reform Project,<sup>3</sup> began in January 2012. The project aims to institute needed higher education reforms to strengthen governance, management, and financing of higher education institutions, improve relevance of higher education programs to labor market demands, and to promote equitable access. Project interventions include institutional capacity building, human resources development, provision of learning and research facilities, equipment and materials, minor civil works, support for public-private partnerships, and improvement of the higher education policy environment through consultant services.

<sup>3</sup> ADB. 2011. *Loan to Mongolia for Higher Education Reform Project*. Manila







## TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mongolia's TVET system collapsed during the transition period, which led to a growing skills mismatch in the labor market.

ADB's loan and grant projects have been supported TVET reform since 2006, with the JFPR-financed project Nonformal Skills for Unemployed Youth and Adults<sup>4</sup> being one of the first.

In close collaboration with three ministries and employers in the

construction sector, the project introduced competency-based curricula into short-term skills training courses in 2006–2009, laying the foundations for the subsequent TVET system reforms.

The loan project—Skills for Employment<sup>5</sup> that started in 2015—aims to further reform the TVET system by aligning it with the country's economic diversification goals by supporting programs and courses in agriculture, construction, and transportation.

To reduce skills mismatch, the project supports essential elements for an industry- and employer-driven TVET system, such as occupational standards, competency-based training modules, skills assessment, and certification systems, as well as workplace training for students and teachers.

The project also establishes systems for training TVET managers and teachers and strengthening career guidance.

<sup>4</sup> ADB. 2006. *Grant Assistance to Mongolia for Non Formal Skills Training for Unemployed Youth and Adults*. Manila

<sup>5</sup> ADB. 2014. *Loan to Mongolia for Skills for Employment Project*. Manila

## PARTNERSHIPS (JAPAN)

ADB's largest development partner in Mongolia, the Government of Japan, has provided strong support for Mongolia's education sector. The JFPR and the Japan Fund for Information and Communication Technology funded a total of \$4.9 million education grant

projects. In addition, the ADB–Japan Scholarship Program, also financed by the Government of Japan, has provided the opportunity for more than 120 Mongolian nationals to undertake postgraduate studies in various development-related fields in the Asian

and Pacific Region. The program covers full tuition fees, a monthly allowance for expenses, housing, books and instructional materials, medical insurance and travel expenses.

# MONGOLIA: ADB Operations in Education

(as of 31 december 2016)

			Net Amount	Milestone Dates	
Project Approval No.		Project Name	(\$ million)	Approved	Closed
Loans					
1.	1507	Education Sector Development Program	6.156	19 Dec 96	2 Dec 99
2.	1508	Education Sector Development Project	8.178	19 Dec 96	8 Nov 02
3.	1908	Second Education Development	15.504	6 Aug 02	15 Jun 09
4.	2238	Third Education Development	13.386	21 Jun 06	26 Jun 12
5.	2766	Higher Education Reform	17.693	28 Jul 11	30 Dec 18
6.	3243	Skills for Employment	23.532	16 Dec 14	30 Nov 19
Subtotal			84.449		
Grants					
1.	0125	Education Sector Reform	9.995	21 Nov 08	06 Mar 15
2.	0158	Education for the Poor-Financial Crisis Response	16.996	18 Sep 09	18 Aug 14
3.	9044	Information and Communication Technology for Innovating Rural Education	0.881	06 Apr 04	21 Dec 07
4.	9085	Nonformal Skills Training for Unemployed Youth and Adults	0.933	20 Feb 06	08 Oct 10
5.	9138	Early Childhood Education for Rural, Nomadic, and Migrant Children	2.747	28 Aug 09	30 Jun 15
6.	9182	Improving School Dormitory Environment for Primary Students in Western Region	3.000	26 Nov 15	31 Oct 18
Subtotal			34.55		
Technical Assistance					
1.	1801	Human Resource Development and Education Reform	0.535	11 Dec 92	31 Jul 95
2.	2228	Education Development	0.400	9 Dec 94	31 Mar 00
3.	2659	Restructuring and Staff Rationalization	0.070	7 Oct 96	31 May 98
4.	2719	Institutional Strengthening in the Education Sector	0.950	19 Dec 96	31 Aug 01
5.	3174	Education Sector Strategy Study	0.150	12 Mar 99	28 Feb 01
6.	3351	Second Education Development	0.550	20 Dec 99	31 Jul 05
7.	3913	Capacity Building for Accounting and Auditing Professionals	0.393	4 Sep 02	31 May 05
8.	4487	Third Education Development	0.500	16 Dec 04	20 Sep 06
9.	4803	Development of a Sector-Wide Approach (Swap) in Education	0.150	21 Jun 06	28 Jan 10
10.	4950	Education Sector Reform	0.600	3 Jul 07	17 Nov 09
11.	7333	Strengthening Higher and Vocational Education	0.611	21 Aug 09	20 Oct 11
12.	7571	Reforming Higher Education for a Knowledge Society	0.500	4 Aug 10	17 May 13
13.	8299	Reforms in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Mongolia	1.000	19 Dec 12	28 Sep 15
14.	8931	Education Sector Development	1.000	16 Jul 15	31 Jul 17
15.	9216	Sustaining Access to and Quality of Education during Economic Difficulties	0.800	3 Nov 16	30 Jun 18
Subtotal			8.209		
TOTAL			127.210		



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