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MONGOLIA

Disaster Management Reference Handbook

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Front Cover

Altai mountains, Western Mongolia, by Bolatbek Gabiden on Unsplash https://unsplash.com/photos/ogoOCZ9SdYw

Disclaimer

This handbook has been prepared in good faith based on resources available at the time of publication. Information was gathered from the public domain, from local and government sources, as well as from subject matter experts. Where possible, a link to the original electronic source is provided in the endnote (reference) section at the end of the document. While making every attempt to ensure the information is relevant and accurate, the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) does not guarantee or warrant the accuracy, reliability, completeness, or currency of the information in this publication. Each handbook is a working document and will be updated periodically as new and significant information becomes available. We hope that you find these handbooks informative, relevant, reliable, and useful in understanding disaster management and response. We welcome and appreciate your feedback to improve this document and help fill any gaps to enhance its future utility. For feedback, comments, or to request a printed copy please email cfe.dmha.fct@pacom.mil. Please visit our website to download copies of this publication and other products (https://www.cfe-dmha.org). All parts of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval systems, and transmitted by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

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Letter from the Director

Since 2004, Mongolia's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has provided administration, coordination, and direct assistance during emergencies and has built domestic and international partnerships that expand the country's preparedness and mitigation capacities. Indeed, in recent years, international experts have praised Mongolia for its progress on disaster risk reduction, and the country is clearly invested in building a network of experts and implementing partners who will remain mainstays of disaster risk reduction and life-saving response.

The U.S. Government is among the public and private sector players who are helping to build Mongolia's domestic disaster management structures and policies and to integrate Mongolia's expertise into regional and global disaster management. The U.S. considers Mongolia an important partner, and the U.S. Department of Defense has a history of military-to-military engagement with Mongolia. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the cancellation of recent iterations, Mongolia's NEMA and the U.S. armed forces undertake an annual disaster management-related exercise, the GOBI WOLF series. This exercise allows participants to rehearse disaster responses and implement best practices in the fields of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. U.S. INDOPACOM's CFE-DM has participated in GOBI WOLF iterations via subject matter experts and is committed to continuing consultation and education with Mongolia's disaster management stakeholders.

The present, updated Mongolia Disaster Management Reference Handbook provides a baseline of understanding of factors that influence disaster management within the country. It is intended to help inform persons who are planning or executing a disaster response mission in Mongolia and who will be working alongside Mongolia's own responders and international humanitarians.

Sincerely,

Joseph D. Martin, SES
Director

About the Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance

Overview

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) is a United States (U.S.) Department of Defense (DoD) organization comprised of nearly 30 subject matter experts that provide academic research, civil-military coordination training, and operational insights to support decision making before, during, and after crises. The Center is designed to bridge understanding between humanitarians, civilian, and military responders. CFE-DM partners with a diverse group of governmental and nongovernmental actors, as well as academic institutions to increase collaborations and capabilities in humanitarian assistance and disaster response. While maintaining a global mandate, the Indo-Pacific region is our priority of effort and collaboration is the cornerstone of our operational practice. The Center is a direct reporting unit to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) and is located on Ford Island, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Vision

The Joint Force, allies, and partners are fully prepared to conduct and support foreign humanitarian assistance.

Mission

CFE-DM builds crisis response capacity in U.S. and partner militaries, enhances coordination and collaboration with civilian and foreign partners, and strengthens those relationships to save lives and alleviate human suffering before, during, and after humanitarian crises.

Contact Information

Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
456 Hornet Ave
JBPHH, HI 96860-3503
Telephone: +1 (808) 472-0518
https://www.cfe-dmha.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mongolia is a landlocked country whose more than 3 million people are spread unevenly across its landmass. It is very susceptible to climate change that exacerbates already significant natural hazards. It has experienced warming temperatures at almost three times the rate of the global average in the last 70 years. Hazards include drought, flooding, dust and sandstorms, wildfires, earthquakes, and dzuds – a hazard unique to Mongolia wherein severe winter conditions follow a summer drought and cause massive livestock mortality. This devastates the livelihoods of herders, and the proportion of Mongolians whose primary livelihood is herding has plummeted from 50% to 25% in the last three decades. Moreover, disastrous dzuds have driven an alarming increase in rural-urban internal migration, as former herders move to informal settlements on the outskirts of the capital. Thus, climate change, migration, urbanization, and environmental degradation, are linked issues.

The successive, severe dzuds experienced in 1999-2001 were a catalyst for Mongolia to reform its disaster management approach. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established in 2004 by combining other agencies. During a disaster, NEMA provides administration, coordination, and direct assistance. Mongolia has also emphasized early warning, preparedness, and mitigation efforts. Increasingly, early action is taken to reduce disaster risk. A key part of this is utilizing risk maps produced by the National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring in coordination with partners. A good example is dzud risk maps, which are used to determine when to release forecast-based financing to the people most at risk in order to stave off the most devastating disaster effects.

Mongolia is also increasing community-based disaster reduction efforts. In 2015, the government passed the National Program for Community-based Disaster Reduction to create a legislative framework. It included targeting efforts for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, children, elderly citizens, and low-income persons. All Mongolian cities have a local disaster risk reduction strategy, and the country has fulfilled the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction goals. In 2020, Mongolia received praised for its disaster risk reduction progress. Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for Disaster Risk Reduction Mizutori Mami stated, "Mongolia's efforts for strengthening coherence between national and local administrations, increasing awareness of all local authorities on having disaster risk reduction strategy by the end of 2020 as well as developing national program on making settled areas resilient are a great example of world's best practices."[1]

The U.S. considers Mongolia an important partner and is pleased to be one of the "third neighbors" it cultivates relations with beyond its land borders. Moreover, Mongolia's NEMA and armed forces alongside units of the U.S. armed forces undertake an annual disaster management-related exercise, the GOBI WOLF series, to rehearse disaster responses and implement new best practices as the fields of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) evolve.

Mongolia's Third Neighbor Policy is the cornerstone for relationships with countries other than Russia or China, both of which have historically had a large influence on the country. It started the Policy shortly after transitioning to a market-based economy in the 1990s. The country has since achieved significant economic development due largely to the increase in mining, the principal component of national revenue. However, the Third Neighbor policy is critical for more than just economic growth as it allows Mongolia to build diverse, global partnerships in security, including disaster management.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Mongolia is a resilient country full of dynamic contrasts. It has growing urban areas as well as herding communities who, though declining steeply in numbers, retain a centuries-old traditional pastoralist lifestyle. After its democratic revolution in 1990, it emerged from a seven-decade era of Soviet influence as a young democracy. Since the subsequent loss of substantial Soviet aid upon the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Mongolia has recovered from economic collapse to build a promising economy that incorporates mining, agriculture, and tourism.

Mongolia has grappled with various challenges in recent decades, including those involving natural disasters. Increasingly frequent and harsh dzuds – a uniquely Mongolian hazard wherein a severely cold winter follows summer drought and leads to mass livestock death – have destroyed the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable herders. This has increased internal migration from rural to urban areas and led to explosive growth on the outskirts of the capital of informal "ger" settlements, mostly inhabited by former herders who came to the city for work opportunities after losing their herds. The skyrocketing rate of urbanization driven by migrants creates new challenges in making services accessible to everyone. Dzuds have multiple contributing factors, some linked to climate change and others linked to humans such as allowing overgrazing by livestock. However, climate change is contributing to a range of worsening climate hazards in Mongolia, including droughts, severe winter weather, floods, wildfires, and dust storms.

History

Mongolia has been inhabited by people of numerous ethnicities since Neolithic times. Most prehistoric inhabitants were nomads who occasionally formed confederations, most notably the Xiongnu tribal league in the 3rd century BCE. Turkic-speaking peoples were predominant in the 4th–10th centuries CE.[2]

In 1206 Chinggis Khan (also known as Genghis Khan) founded the Mongol Empire, the largest empire in history, by uniting the Mongol tribes and conquering Central Asia and beyond. The territory of the Mongol Empire covered approximately 33 million square kilometers (km^2; 12.7 million square miles), stretching west to present-day Poland and the Arabian Peninsula, east to the Korean Peninsula, north to Siberia, and south to present-day Vietnam. After Chinggis Khan's death in 1227, the Mongol Empire was subdivided into four kingdoms, with Kublai Khan, Chinggis Khan's grandson, ruling one that encompassed present-day Mongolia and China from 1260. In 1271, Kublai Khan formally established the Yuan Dynasty, the first foreign dynasty to rule all of China until it was overthrown by the Chinese Ming Dynasty in 1368.[3] Upon the Yuan Dynasty's collapse, the Mongolian court returned to their native land rather than submit to Ming Dynasty rule. Manduhai the Wise, considered Mongolia's greatest queen, reunited Mongolia by the end of the 15th century, but the era passed with her death. The Qing Dynasty conquered Mongolia in the 17th century and ruled it until the dynasty's end in 1911, when the Mongols established their own independent country under their highest Buddhist leader, the 8th Jebtzun Damba (or Jebtsundamba, "Living Buddha"). He was proclaimed the Bogd Khan ("Holy King"), and he declared Mongolia's independence.[4] Following the upheaval of the 1917 Russian "Bolshevik" Revolution, Mongolia was briefly ruled by a Chinese warlord, followed by the anti-Bolshevik Russian "Mad Baron." Mongolian nationalists formed an alliance with Bolshevik forces to retake the country. In 1921, they marched into the present-day capital, which was renamed Ulaanbaatar (meaning "Red Hero")

three years later. The Bogd Khan was reinstated as a constitutional monarch but served as a ceremonial figurehead with limited power until his death in May 1924, which marked the end of Buddhist rule in Mongolia.

The Mongolian People's Republic was established on 26 November 1924, and the new communist government forbade the official recognition of a 9th Jebtzun Damba.[5] In the late 1920s, Joseph Stalin consolidated absolute power in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union). Stalin also gained influence over Mongolia through Khorloogiin Choibalsan, a former revolutionary who oversaw Stalin-ordered purges of Buddhist clergy, perceived dissidents, and others.[6] During the communist era, Buddhism was severely suppressed, with monks comprising a large proportion of those Mongolians who were executed or disappeared. In 1937, approximately 27,000 people (3% of Mongolia's population then) were executed or never seen again; of these victims, 17,000 were monks. By the end of 1938, there were fewer than 500 monks, as the others had been killed, had fled, or had reduced themselves to secular members of the public.[7] Land and herds were seized from aristocrats and redistributed to nomads, herders were compelled to join cooperatives, and private business was banned. Upon Choibalsan's death in 1952, he was replaced by Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal. Mongolia was admitted to the United Nations (UN) in 1961. During the 1960s Sino-Soviet split, Mongolia allied with the USSR, expelled thousands of ethnic Chinese, and halted trade with China. Soviet influence continued to grow over the following decades as many Mongolians travelled to the Soviet Union for technical training and Tsedenbal's Russian wife helped impose Russian culture on Mongolia.

The dissolution of the USSR in 1991 led to drastic changes in Mongolia. Pro-democracy demonstrations had broken out in Ulaanbaatar in 1990 and led to the first free, multiparty elections in June 1990. In 1992, a new constitution was adopted, and the country's name was shortened from "the Mongolian People's Republic" to "Mongolia."[8] The new era brought freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. But the 1990s were also a turbulent time of shock transition to a market economy, as Mongolia abruptly lost the massive amount of Soviet aid it had received while the USSR existed. The economy collapsed, and some western districts that could not pay electrical bills to Russian suppliers experienced a years-long blackout. Mongolia began privatization of animals and large state-owned corporations and created a political synthesis that included old communists from the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in a Democrat coalition. Mongolia also started embracing a "Third Neighbor" foreign policy of fostering ties and trade with countries other than Russia or China. Former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is credited with first using the term to refer to the U.S. during a visit to Mongolia[9] just three years after the U.S. recognized Mongolia as it emerged from Soviet influence.[10] The Government of Mongolia has now adopted the term to refer to multiple third neighbors, particularly countries with which it has established a partnership relationship, including Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, and the U.S.[11]

Culture and Demographics

Mongolia has an estimated population of 3,198,913 people.[12] With 1,553,556 km^2 (599,831 square miles) of land area, Mongolia is the country with the lowest average population density in the world.[13] It has a little over 2 people per km^2 (about 5 people per square mile).[14]

Mongolia's population is 66% settled and 34% nomadic.[15] The median age is approximately 28.3 years old, close to the global median age of 31.[16]

The capital, Ulaanbaatar, hosts most of the country's major cultural institutions. These include the Green Palace, the former winter residence of Buddhist leader Bogd Khan who ruled 1911-1924; the National Museum of Mongolian History; the Natural History Museum; and the State Central Library of

Mongolia, which contains Tibetan Buddhist books written in gold and silver and other priceless historical works.

The Mongolian way of life is traditionally a nomadic one that remains an intrinsic part of the culture and lifestyle for many despite increasing urbanization. A central part of the Mongolian nomadic lifestyle is the ger, the traditional portable shelter that is home for most rural families and allows them to move in accordance with the seasons and their livestock's grazing needs. The outermost and innermost layers of the ger are usually canvas, with an insulating layer of felt in between. In the center of the ger is the stove with the chimney passing through an opening in the roof. The door always faces south, to avoid the wind from the north and maximize sunlight. The interior is divided into sections; the west side is the man's area, the east side the woman's, and the northern part is usually where images of Buddha and family photographs are located. A family's animals are critical, as they provide all basic necessities, including food (meat and milk), fuel (dung), and transportation. Horses are valued and beloved; they allowed Mongolian tribes to spread across and cover great distances centuries ago and still provide transportation for rural families today. Horse images are common, including the traditional musical instrument, the horsehead fiddle (morin khuur or морин хуур). Horse racing, along with archery and wrestling, comprise the games naadam, an annual traditional festival celebrated in mid-summer.[17]

Mongolian citizens typically have three names, a given name (ner); a patronymic (etsgiin ner) based on the father's given name; and a clan name (oyag). Mongolians customarily marry outside the clan, and families once kept family tree charts. However, family trees, clan names, and aristocratic titles were banned in 1925 as they were deemed by the socialist regime as feudalistic. The 1996 Law on Culture brought back the practice of keeping family trees and using clan names. While clan names are not necessarily in widespread use, they are now recorded on identity cards and official documents.[18]

Ethnic Makeup

The ethnic makeup of Mongolia is approximately 83.8% Khalkh (Халх), 3.8% Kazakh or Kazak (Казах), 2.6% Durvud, Dörvöd, or Durbet (Дөрвөд), 2% Bayad (Баяд), 1.4% Buriad (Буриад), 1.2% Zakhchin, Jakhchin, or Dsakhchin (Захчин), 1.1% Dariganga (Дариганга), and 0.8% Uriankhai (Урианхай).[19]

The term "Mongol" in the 13th century became an umbrella term for many tribes united under Chinggis Khan. Today, ethnic differences between Mongol tribes are relatively minor and not a political or social issue. The Khalkh, the largest single ethnic group, are the core of all the Mongol peoples across North Asia and considered the direct descendants of Chinggis Khan. The vast majority of Mongolian Kazakhs live in the far west of the country close to Kazakhstan, in Bayan-Ölgii and Khovd aimags (provinces).[20] The Durbet are a Western Mongol tribe who reside primarily in the western part of Mongolia, near the Russian border. In the early 1600s, most Durbet ancestors, known as the Oirat, left their homeland, Dzhungaria, now in the Xinjiang region of China. Many stayed in what is now Russia, though some tried to return to their homeland and, of those who survived, some of their descendants are found in western Mongolia. The Bayad are another of the Mongol tribes living in western Mongolia. The Buryat, northern Mongolians, are reportedly descendants of western Mongols and northern Siberians. While Mongolian Buryats primarily reside in the forested lowland regions along the Russia-Mongolia border, most of the ethnic group lives in Russia's Buriat Autonomous Republic. The Dariganga belong to the eastern group of Mongols, which includes the Khalkha Mongols, the Buryat, and most Chinese Mongols. The Dariganga primarily reside in southeastern Mongolia, in Sükhbaatar province's southern area, on a plateau near the Gobi Desert.[21] The Zakhchin are an Oirat subgroup and emerged in the 18th century as an independent ethnic group. The Zakhchin reside primarily in Khovd aimag, largely in the Altai, Zereg (Dsereg or Jereg), Mankhan (Manxan), Möst, and Üyench (Üyenč)

soums (districts).[22] Uriankhai is a Mongolian term referring to people living in the forested regions in the north and northwest around the Mongolian-Russian border.

Key Population Centers

More than one-third of Mongolia's population remains nomadic, though internal rural-urban migration following dzuds has contributed to the sprawling growth of the capital. Ulaanbaatar, the national capital, is by far the country's largest city, located in the north-central part of Mongolia.[23] With a population of approximately 1.4 million people, Ulaanbaatar hosts a little less than half of the country's 3.2 million people and is more than 10 times as populous as Mongolia's next biggest city.

Ulaanbaatar is the country's economic, cultural, and political center and serves as the hub for trips to other destinations in Mongolia. The capital has the country's only international airports – Chinggis Khaan International Airport (UBN) and Buyant Ukhaa International Airport (ULN), the latter of which is closed to regular traffic. The city also is the hub of Mongolia's only international rail line, the Trans-Siberian railway. The capital is located on the bank of the Tuul River and is surrounded by four mountains considered sacred, with dense pine forests on the northern slopes, and grassy steppes to the south.[24]

Internal migration has been dramatic, as households move from rural areas to urban centers, particularly following devastating dzuds that kill off livestock. Ulaanbaatar is now home to nearly half of all people in Mongolia.[25] Figure 1 shows the expansion of Ulaanbaatar in the last 30 years, largely seen in the growth of the outlying ger districts.[26]

Following the national capital, the next largest cities and towns in Mongolia include Darkhan, Erdenet, Khovd, Ölgii, and Ulaangom; each is the capital city of its aimag (province).[27]

Darkhan city, capital of Darkhan-Uul aimag, has an estimated population of 97,700. The city was developed in the 1960s by the Soviets as an industrial base, and during communist rule, it was considered a model urban cooperative of factory workers, coal miners, and government officials. The economy plummeted in the 1990s



Figure 1: Ulaanbaatar's Expansion in the Last 30 Years

along with much of the country after Mongolia's independence and shock transition to a market economy, but it has been recovering. Darkhan-based industries produce concrete, lime cement, bricks, wood and steel products, woolen textiles, carpets, sheepskins, and clothing. Other economic activities include food processing and vehicle repair.[28]

Erdenet, capital of Orkhon aimag in northern Mongolia, has an estimated population of 95,000. One of the youngest cities in Mongolia, Erdenet was founded in 1974, almost a decade after the discovery of the "Erdenetiin ovoo" copper-molybdenum reserve. Following the Mongolian-Soviet Joint Mining Venture's 1973 establishment in the city, the Erdenet Mining Corporation became the city's largest business, contributing one trillion Mongolian tögrög or tugrik (MNT; US$380 million) to the local budget in 2020.[29]

Khovd City, capital of Khovd aimag, has a population of 31,100. The aimag has long been a hub for trade and administration in western Mongolia, stretching back to the Chinese Qing dynasty (1636-1912) when the Manchus built a military garrison there. Khovd City, though the size of a small town, hosts the largest agricultural university in Mongolia outside Ulaanbaatar, as well as food processing and textile manufacturing plants.[30]

Ölgii City, the capital of Bayan-Ölgii aimag in western Mongolia, has a population of some 34,000 people. Ölgii originated as an ethnic Kazakh village stretching back prior to the formation of modern Mongolia in 1911, and the city's primary dialect remains Kazakh. After Mongolia's democratic revolution in 1991 and the break-up of the Soviet Union, about one-quarter of Ölgii City's population moved to the newly independent Kazakhstan, though many later moved back.[31] Ölgii has several mosques and is known for its embroidery, Kazakh music, art, and hunting with eagles, which is primarily seen during the annual Golden Eagle Festival in October.

Ulaangom, the capital of Uvs aimag in western Mongolia, has a population of approximately 30,000 people. Ulaangom was founded in 1686 and is located on the slopes of Mount Kharkhiraa near the Russian border. Ulaangom is one of the lowest points in Mongolia, at an altitude of 939 meters (m; 3,081 feet).[32] Its Dechinravjaalin monastery was established in 1871, and Ulaangom also has a university branch, five secondary schools, and a vocational college.[33]

Language

The country's only official language is Mongolian. Other languages used in Mongolia include Kazakh, spoken by the Kazakh ethnic group, Russian, due to the country's Soviet history, and English, as spoken by a growing number of people.

The main Mongolian language is that of the Khalkha Mongol tribe. It is known as "Halh" and is understood throughout Mongolia and by Mongols in Central Asia.[34] Mongolian is part of the Ural-Altaic family of languages and distantly related to Turkish, Kazakh, Uzbek, and Korean. The Cyrillic alphabet was adopted in 1944 and is still widely used today. There is also a traditional Mongolian cursive script, written vertically and read from left to right; it is primarily used by Mongolians living in China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. For representing Mongolian sounds in the Roman alphabet, a loose Romanization standard was adopted in 1987; in this Romanization, the capital is now written as Ulaanbaatar (previously Ulan Bator).

Kazakh is spoken by the approximately 101,000 Kazakhs in Mongolia. Worldwide, Kazakh is spoken by almost 10 million people in nine countries, predominantly by almost 7 million people in Kazakhstan, as well as 1.2 million people in Xinjiang, China, 850,000 in Uzbekistan, 650,000 in Russia, and elsewhere.[35]

Religion

Buddhism is the dominant religion of Mongolia. It is estimated to be followed by 52-74% of Mongolians. For followers of other religions, 3-5% are Shamanist, 3% Muslim, and 1-5% Christian.[36]

Tibetan Buddhism was introduced to Mongolia in the 13th century. It gained a

foothold in Mongolia in 1578, when Altan Khaan, descendant of Chinggis Khaan, met Tibetan leader Sonam Gyatso, converted, and bestowed on Gyatso the title Dalai Lama. Mass conversions to Buddhism occurred under Altan Khaan. Buddhism gained prominence in the 16th and 17th centuries, and monasteries grew with considerable power and wealth until the early 20th century. Socialist Mongolia was influenced from the 1920s by the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Soviet Union had an enduring influence until it dissolved in 1991. Under the socialist period, Buddhism declined until most monasteries were closed by the 1960s. Since 1991, there has been a resurgent interest in Buddhism.[37]

Shamanism was the indigenous belief among Mongolian tribes. It is based around the shaman, a bo if a man and udgan if a woman, believed to have special medical and religious powers, which are referred to as udmyn if inherited and zlain if powers manifest after sickness and apparitions. A Shamanist perspective does not consider humans greater than other creatures and greatly values balance between the human and natural world. Shamanist beliefs continue to shape much of Mongolian culture. For example, honoring the sky gods is reflected in the widespread customs of flicking droplets of vodka in the air before drinking and leaving blue scarves on ovoos (sacred piles of stones used as repositories of offerings for local spirits). Photo 1 depicts an ovoo in Mongolia.[38] Nomads still fill in the holes left by horse posts when they move camp in a behavior that stems from shamanist beliefs of returning the land to its natural state. The landscape damage rendered by extractive mining practices, which comprise a large portion of the national economy, conflict with a shamanist worldview.



Photo 1: Ovoo in Mongolia

Vulnerable Groups

Some groups are more vulnerable to being negatively impacted by disasters or crises, often due to social disadvantage, higher exposure to hazards, or other factors.[39] An individual factor, such as age, sex, disability, etc., may limit access to assistance, but does not in itself make an individual universally vulnerable. The interplay of factors in a given context can undermine access to resources or strengthens capacities.[40]

Former Herders, Internal Migrants, and Small Herders

There is a greater poverty risk among former herders who have migrated from rural to urban areas and among herders with a small number of animals. Nomadic pastoralists with a smaller herd of livestock are more likely to lose their animals in dzuds or severe winter weather and thus lose their livelihoods.[41] Once livelihoods are lost, former herders migrate to the cities, where they often live in informal settlements on the outskirts. Mongolia has approximately 169,000 herder households of which 30% are considered vulnerable households living under the poverty line. Furthermore, only 10% of herder households have sustainable livelihoods.[42] One-third of Mongolia's population depends entirely on pastoral farming.[43] According to the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), particularly vulnerable herder households include single adult-headed households, senior herders over 60 years old with no guardian, households including people with disabilities, and households with five or more children under 16 years of age.[44]

In the last two decades herder numbers have been steadily falling, while livestock numbers have increased by nearly 120% with an estimated 73 million head of livestock in 2016. This has led to overgrazing on Mongolian grasslands.[45] Both climate change and human management are contributing factors that are leading herders who lose their livestock to give up the centuries-old livelihood and migrate to the capital where they often settle in ger districts on the outskirts with no electricity, heat, or running water. Over the past couple of decades, the outskirts of the capital, Ulaanbaatar, have grown substantially with informal settlements or ger districts. Many ger districts are comprised of former herders who moved to the city for work after losing their livestock to dzuds. One such settlement outside Ulaanbaatar is Tahilt, which has grown over the years to accommodate increasing numbers of herder families who, without their traditional means of livelihood had to migrate hundreds of miles to the capital in search of other work. "I had 300 sheep and goats, 30 horses and 20 head of cattle. Most of them died from starvation and the rest were stolen," says Doripagma, an elderly Tahilt resident whose family migrated to Ulaanbaatar after losing their livestock in the 2016-2017 dzud. "Coming to the city was difficult as everything was so costly. Our traditional life was good compared to now. We used to be independent and lived off produce from our animals like milk, cheese and meat. We also produced cashmere wool from our goats."[46] To keep warm during the winter, migrant families in ger districts have little alternative to burning coal, which has led to high levels of air pollution. One ger district resident describes the air pollution being so extreme in the winter that visibility while driving is reduced to 10-15 m (33-49 feet). The air pollution has led to a 40% increase in respiratory diseases over the last decade. One in ten deaths in the capital can be attributed to air pollution, which is estimated to cost Ulaanbaatar 20% of its gross domestic product (GDP).[47] Hundreds of thousands of nomadic people from across this vast country have migrated to Ulaanbaatar over the past three decades. Mitsuaki Toyoda, head of mission for Save the Children in Mongolia, said in 2017, "If you're from the countryside with just secondary education and no relevant work experience, then what proper job can you get? If you don't have a proper job then it's very difficult to get a bank loan. So you can't purchase an apartment. Our conclusion is that the first generation of migrants will live in the ger districts for the rest of their lives."[48] The rapid expansion of ger areas has created numerous challenges for officials including providing water, education, and other services.

Persons with Disabilities

Estimates on the number of persons with disabilities (PWD) in Mongolia vary from 100,000 to 118,000 persons, or just under 4% of the population. The poverty rate among households with PWD is more than double that of households without PWD. Among PWD of working age, 70% are not working compared to 36% of working-age people without disabilities. Among children 6-18 years old, almost 50% of children with disabilities cannot read compared to 4% of children without disabilities. Approximately 64% of children with disabilities and who are 3-5 years old do not attend kindergarten versus 32% of young children without disabilities. Employment rates are lower for PWD, with the rate of economic activity among PWD aged15 years and older at 25.2%, compared to 62.1% in the general population. The average monthly salary for PWD is only 50% of the average salary earned by the general population. The type of employment differs as well, as 45% of economically active PWD are herders, compared to 25% of the general population. Note the cross-cutting issues, as herding households including PWD and herders with smaller numbers of animals are more vulnerable and susceptible to falling into poverty.

The 2016 Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted a progressive definition of disability, though persons living with disabilities still face social stigmas and structural barriers, including a lack of wheelchair-accessible

facilities in transportation, education, and the workplace.[49] Mongolia has significantly reformed its public employment in various ways, including employment promotion measures targeted at different groups, including PWD. The Mongolian Labor Code also promotes employment of PWD by stipulating that organizations with more than 50 staff must employ at least 3% PWD.[50]

Trafficked Persons

No country is immune to trafficking issues, and Mongolia is known to be a source, destination, and transit country for trafficking in persons. Women, men, and children are trafficked for sexual exploitation and other forced labor. Mongolia has taken extensive steps to improve its legal environment against trafficking, but challenges remain as few cases have been tried, and many perpetrators are not convicted. Mongolia is considered Tier 2 in the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report, meaning that while it does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, the government is making significant efforts to do so. The report uses four categories, of which Tier 1 is the highest in terms of making efforts (though states in that category may still have trafficking and need to improve further), followed by Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List, and Tier 3.[51]

In April 2020 Mongolia and the U.S. signed the U.S.-Mongolia Child Protection Compact Partnership, which is a four-year plan to end child trafficking.[52] The partnership aims to increase capacity of and collaboration among the government, civil society, and private sector stakeholders to strengthen Mongolia's efforts to prevent child trafficking, prosecute and convict child traffickers with a victim-centered approach, and provide comprehensive trauma-informed care for child victims of trafficking.[53] In March 2021, Mongolia's Coordination Council of Crimes Prevention in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) launched a public information anti-trafficking campaign. Titled "Dream Umbrella – Мөрөөдлийн," it raises awareness among young women on what human trafficking entails, where to report the crime or access reliable information, and how to refer a case or seek help. A training and scholarship program for 40 journalists on how to accurately report stories of human trafficking preceded the campaign launch, with six project proposals awarded and selected for publication on national and local media.[54]

Poor

In 2018, approximately 28.4% of the population lived below the poverty line,[55] which Mongolia defined as MNT 166,580 (US$66.40) per month. An additional 15% are considered vulnerable to falling into poverty. Mongolia has made progress in reducing the poverty rate in recent years, but the gains have been made primarily among the rural poor. Rural poverty decreased from 34.9% in 2016 to 30.8% in 2018, while urban poverty hovers just above 27%. Although declining rural poverty rates are still higher than urban poverty rates, 63.5% of the poor live in cities. Mongolia has been experiencing rapid inflation in recent years, with inflation rates increasing from 0.73% in 2016 to 7.26% in 2019. Though the rate dipped to 3.7% in 2020, it rose again to 5.4% in 2021 and is forecast to be potentially higher in 2022.[56] Inflation financially strains vulnerable households struggling to obtain necessities and impacts the urban poor more than the rural poor, as many rural herders and farmers with livestock can produce much of their own food and even gain greater profits from increased prices.[57] Although rural poverty is down, rural children are still more disadvantaged than urban children. The recent economic downturn related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has also resulted in increasing income inequality.[58] Issues across various vulnerable groups are cross-cutting, and poverty rates and the urban poor are interlinked with issues of rural-urban migration among former herders as previously discussed.

Children

The recent economic downturn exacerbated by COVID-19 has constrained spending on

social programs, which has particularly affected children. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted children's well-being various ways, including by shutting down schools for a year of remote learning before returning to in-person classes in September 2021.[59] For children dependent upon school meals during remote learning, the government and non-government organizations (NGO) worked to provide nutrition, education, and health kits with international funding assistance.[60] The economic impacts of COVID-19 contributed to food price inflation reaching 7.8%, exposing the most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition, including children.[61] Although rural poverty has decreased in recent years, there are still greater challenges to rural children's well-being than to their counterparts in towns and cities. Childhood stunting is almost twice as common in rural areas. Rates of enrollment in early childhood education are low, with one in four children not attending preschool across the country. There are disparities based on geography and income, with remote rural areas more challenged in accessing education, health, and other services.[62] Children in informal ger settlements in the outskirts of urban areas, especially around Ulaanbaatar, face other challenges. In urban ger settlements, poor living conditions, air pollution, and environmental degradation are increasing the rates of high-risk pregnancies and leading to a rise in the mortality rates of children under five years old.[63]

Women

The Gender Inequality Index ranked Mongolia 71 out of 162 countries, with 1 being the closest to attaining gender equality, across areas of reproductive health, empowerment (political and educational), and economic status.[64] A separate report, the Global Gender Gap Report, similarly ranks Mongolia as 69 out of 156 countries, looking at women's status across educational attainment, health and survival, economic participation, and political empowerment.[65] Violence against women in Mongolia emerges most prevalently, but is not confined to, contexts of domestic violence. A 2017 national survey found that approximately 31% of women experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence in their lifetimes while 13% reported experiencing it in the 12 months preceding the survey.[66] Mongolia has a "reverse gender gap" in some aspects of education. There is 51.3% female enrollment in secondary education versus 48.7% male, and 76.7% female enrollment in tertiary education versus 54.7% male. With agriculture deemed a male endeavor and women turning to other places for income, parents invest in daughters' education, resulting in greater female representation in the professional class.[67] Unfortunately, women's lower unemployment rate still co-exists with violence against women within the home, partly as a combination of men's higher unemployment rate and alcoholism. An estimated 63% of women report experiencing sexual harassment of some form.[68] Average earnings are higher for men than women, with a relative earnings gap of approximately 12-13%, per 2015 data.[69] Climate change is affecting some women differently than men. More rural women are migrating to urban ger settlements with their children and splitting their families so that the children can get schooling, while adult males continue to herd livestock in the rural areas.[70]

Mongolia has made significant progress in passing legislation to combat gender-based violence against women. In the past 10 years, this has included legislation on domestic violence, trafficking in people, gender equality, and witness and victim protection, which together have developed a stronger legal framework to combat gender-based violence. Services for victims have also expanded, such as shelters, one-stop service centers, and multidisciplinary teams. While services have also expanded at the provincial level, more needs to be done to ensure their availability and viability across the board but particularly for women in remote or rural areas, according to the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, Reem Alsalem. Other challenges include ensuring effective implementation of the laws and promoting a gender-sensitive approach to victim-oriented

services. Many service providers, especially state-run ones, place actions related to women victims of violence under the broader heading of family-related interventions or combine them with actions aimed at preventing violence against children, which can obscure specific needs. Groups especially exposed to gender-based violence include victims of trafficking, sex workers, and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community. Victims would also benefit from alcoholism being increasingly addressed, as it is a triggering factor in many instances of violence.[71]

Economics

Historically, Mongolia's economy was based on herding livestock and agriculture. In the last several decades, mining has emerged as a dominant economic force, with construction and service sectors (including tourism) also playing a significant role in the contemporary economy. Mongolia has large deposits of coal, fluorite (fluorspar), copper, gold, silver, and other metallic ores. Coal is the predominant mining product, produced primarily for domestic use although some is exported to China. The mining sector accounts for approximately 21% of the GDP. Despite this contribution to GDP, mining only employs about 6% of total workers and relies heavily on foreign investors.[72] The largest mining center, located in the southern Gobi region, is the Oyu Tolgoi Copper-Gold mine, which is partly owned by the Mongolian government (34%) and Canada's Turquoise Hill Resources (66%). It is among the largest gold and copper mines in the world with over 35 million tons of copper and about 1,275 tons of gold. It is, thus, expected to significantly contribute to the Mongolian GDP for another three decades. Agriculture plays the second largest role in the modern economy, accounting for 35% of employment, 11-20% of GDP,[73] 30% of exports, and 14% of foreign exchange revenues.[74] Approximately four-fifths of the value of agricultural production is accounted for by millions of sheep, goats, cattle, horses, and camels, which are often referred to as the "five animals" (tavan khoshuu mal). Only about 1% of the country's land area is used to grow crops, primarily in the wetter northern region. Most of the cropland is spring wheat, barley, and oats. Only a single annual crop is possible due to the long, cold winters, with yields being relatively low and varying greatly from year to year.[75] The construction sector directly employs over 100,000 people and creates about 130,000 more jobs indirectly. Mongolia produces over 60% of its construction materials domestically, importing the other 40% from China. The construction sector covers residential apartments and commercial and industrial buildings and has extended into infrastructural development projects as well. However, some of the construction sector's growth is fueled by unsustainable rural-urban migration.[76]

During Mongolia's communist era, Soviet assistance helped establish an industrial sector based on mining as well as processing agricultural products. State-directed economic planning for several decades from the 1960s focused on developing Mongolia's mineral resources.[77] Soviet aid accounted for one-third of Mongolia's GDP at its peak but stopped abruptly when the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991. This led to a severe recession during a turbulent time when Mongolia was also transitioning from a command economy to a market one, following its 1990 democratic revolution. Another economic setback came in 2000-2002, when summer droughts combined with severely cold winters resulting in dzuds, disasters where massive numbers of livestock died, and these disasters were reflected in weak GDP growth of 1%. The economy grew steadily from 2004 onwards but suffered a double setback in 2009. Not only was Mongolia impacted by the 2008 global financial crisis, but during the harsh winter of 2009-2010 Mongolia experienced another very severe dzud, resulting in the loss of 9.7 million animals, or 22% of the country's entire herd. The economy rapidly grew in 2010 as it recovered from the crises but slowed significantly again by 2016-2017 due to an accumulation of factors, including a dispute with a major investor, decline in international commodity prices,

and slowed growth in neighboring China. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided US$434 million in funding as part of a larger US$5.5 billion financing package supported by the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, South Korea, Japan, and China. Overall, GDP per capita has tripled since 1991. Remittance inflows sent by Mongolians abroad accounted for 2.6% of Mongolia's GDP in 2017. South Korea has the largest population of Mongolians abroad, followed by Russia and the Czech Republic.[78]

In 2018, Mongolia's poverty rate was 28.4%.[79] In 2020, it was an estimated 27.8%. That the poverty rate was actually slightly lower during the first year of the pandemic is attributed to a wide range of COVID-19 relief, including funding existing social assistance programs.[80] However, analysis showed the pandemic stalled the rate of poverty reduction, and without COVID-19 the 2020 poverty rate would have been more than 3 percentage points lower.[81] Among people living in poverty in 2020, 64% lived in urban areas, with 43% living in Ulaanbaatar. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mongolia's economic growth averaged 5.9% (2017–2020), supported by increasing external demand and foreign direct investment.[82] However, the GDP growth rate plunged to -5.3% in 2020.[83] Mongolia's economic growth did start to rebound in 2021, with some estimates putting its GDP growth rate around 8%.[84] Economic recovery was aided by robust exports and a surge in private investment, mainly in the mining sector. Main factors in the mining-based economic growth were stronger Chinese demand for commodities, higher commodity prices, and a temporary improvement in the ore grade of a major mine. The government's relief and stimulus measures during the COVID-19 pandemic led to higher credit growth, resulting in increased investment, and supporting domestic demand. Since early 2021, economic recovery has fluctuated and slowed, particularly during periods of pandemic-related mobility restrictions and disruptions in the supply of imported inputs and commodity exports. Despite government support, the unemployment rate rose, and private consumption contracted, a dynamic attributed to inflated food prices and stagnating household labor income amid the pandemic.[85]

Considered a lower-middle-income country by the World Bank, Mongolia faces the economic challenge of diversifying an economy dominated by the export of raw materials, primarily to China, and fostering sustainable and green development.[86] To promote resilient recovery and inclusive and sustainable growth, the government's economic objectives for 2021-2025, supported by the World Bank, fall across three areas:

- Focus Area 1: Strengthening Economic Governance
  - 1.1 Strengthening fiscal management and institutions
  - 1.2 Improving financial sector stability and governance
  - 1.3 Strengthening government efficiency and accountability for better service delivery
- Focus Area 2: Boosting Competitiveness
  - 2.1 Improving business environment
  - 2.2 Promoting sustainable mining investment
  - 2.3 Increasing productivity in non-mining sectors
  - 2.4 Improving connectivity through sustainable infrastructure
- Focus Area 3: Improving Quality of Life
  - 3.1 Enhancing quality of health services
  - 3.2 Improving education quality
  - 3.3 Enhancing efficiency and sustainability of social protection systems
  - 3.4 Improving livability of urban centers[87]

Mongolia's economy ranked as the 66th freest in the 2022 Index of Economic Freedom. Mongolia ranked 12th among 39 countries in the Asia–Pacific region, with its overall score above the regional and world averages.[88]

Government

Mongolia's government takes the form of a semi-presidential representative democratic republic, with executive power exercised by the President.

In the executive branch, the head of state is the president, who is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the head of national security. President Ukhnaa KHURELSUKH has served in this role since 25 June 2021. The head of government is the prime minister, who is appointed by the President to serve a term of four years.[89] Prime Minister Luvsannamsrai OYUN-ERDENE has fulfilled this role since 27 January 2021. Deputy Prime Minister Ulziisaikhan ENKHTUVSHIN has been in that office since 18 October 2017.

The legislative branch is the State Great Hural, or Khural (Ulsyn Ikh Khural), literally meaning the state great assembly. It is the unicameral parliament of Mongolia and located in the Government Palace. It is comprised of 76 seats, with members directly elected for four-year terms in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote. Each constituency requires at least 50% voter participation for the poll to be valid. Parliamentary seats are allocated by mixed-member proportional representation. The districts directly elect 48 of the 76 members, while the remaining 28 are appointed through proportional representation by the political parties. Members elect the speaker and the vice speaker of parliament, each for a four-year term.[90] The 2020 parliamentary election selected the eighth State Great Hural (2020-2024), in which the Mongolian People's Party won 62 of the 76 seats, the Democratic Party won 11 seats, and the remaining seats were won by coalitions of small parties or independent candidates. Women claimed 13 of the 76 elected seats in the 2020 parliament.[91]

The judicial branch is comprised at the highest level of the Supreme Court and Constitutional Court. The Supreme Court is headed by the Chief Justice, appointed for a six-year term, and 24 judges organized into civil, criminal, and administrative chambers. The chief justice also chairs the General Council of Courts, which supervises court work.[92] The Constitutional Court consists of the chairman and eight members. The judicial system also includes the court of cassation or review; aimag (provincial) and capital city appellate courts; the court of appeals; soum (district), inter-soum, and other district courts; and courts of first instance.[93]

The country is administratively organized into 21 provinces (aymguud, plural, or aimag/aymag, singular): Arhangay, Bayanhongor, Bayan-Olgiy, Bulgan, Darhan-Uul, Dornod, Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Dzavhan (Zavkhan), Govi-Altay, Govisumber, Hentiy, Hovd, Hovsgol, Omnogovi, Orhon, Ovorhangay, Selenge, Suhbaatar, Tov, and Uvs. The capital, Ulaanbaatar, has an independent administrative status as a municipality (hot), which consists of several urban districts (düüreg). The 21 provinces are subdivided into districts (soums) and subdistricts (baghs).

The current constitution was adopted 13 January 1992, took effect on 12 February 1992, and has been amended in 1999, 2000, and 2019.[94]

Citizenship is conferred only by descent. Both parents must be citizens of Mongolia, one parent if born within Mongolia. Citizenship is not granted just by being born in Mongolia.

Figure 2 depicts Mongolia's national flag, which contains the national symbol, "soyombo," in yellow on the left.[95] Each aspect of the design is meaningful, with components representing fire, sun, moon, earth, water, yin-yang, and other symbols. The soyombo dates to at least the 17th century and is associated with Lamaism.[96]

Environment

Geography

Mongolia is landlocked, located between Russia to the north and China to the south. It is at least 966 km (600 miles) west of the Pacific Ocean, and does not border or contain any closed, inland seas. The country measures up to 2,392 km (1,486 miles) from west to east and 1,259 km (782 miles) from north to south.[97]

The country is largely a plateau, with an average elevation of 1,580 m (5,180 feet) above sea level.

The west and north contain the Altai Mountains, with the altitude decreasing towards the plains and depressions in the south and east.

Mongolia's highest peaks are in the Mongolian Altai Mountains (Mongol Altain Nuruu) in the southwest. Mongolia also has two other mountain ranges. The older Khangai Mountains are in the central and northern regions, lower in altitude, and covered with forests and alpine pastures. The Khentii Mountains (Mongolian Khentiin Nuruu) are to the northeast of Ulaanbaatar near the Russian border; they are the lowest altitude of the mountain ranges.[98] Photo 2 depicts the Altai Mountains in the west.[99]

The southern region is semidesert and desert. The Gobi Desert covers about one-third of Mongolia and is composed primarily of rock and cliffs, as well as sand dunes in more arid regions near the southern border.

Hundreds of lakes are scattered across Mongolia, the largest of which are Lake Uvs at 3,350 km^2 (1,293 square miles), Lake Khovsgol at 2,620 km^2 (1,012 square miles), and Lake Khar Us at 1,852 km^2 (715 square miles). The longest rivers are the Orkhon at 1,124 km (698 miles), the Kherlen at 1,090 km (677 miles), and the Selenge at 539 km (335 miles).

Approximately three-quarters of Mongolia's land supports herds of grazing livestock, which are a hallmark of traditional Mongolian herding livelihoods. The remaining area is about equally divided between forests and barren deserts, with only a tiny fraction utilized as cropland.



Figure 2: Mongolia's National Flag

Borders

Mongolia shares land boundaries with China and Russia. The border with China is to the south, running 4,630 km (2,877 miles). The border with Russia is to the north, running 3,452 km (2,145 miles).

Mongolia is a landlocked country, with no coastlines.

Climate

Mongolia has a continental climate with long cold winters and short summers that can range from warm to cool.[100] Northern and



Photo 2: Gers in the Foreground of the Altai Mountains in Western Mongolia

central regions have mild to hot summers and cold winters. Winter lasts approximately from November through April, Spring from May to June, and Summer from June or July to September. June and July tend to be warm and mostly dry, though there may be some thunderstorms. Cooler temperatures start arriving by late August along with more rain.[101] Winters bring extremely cold weather across the country. By January, the average temperature can range from about -32 degrees Celsius (°C; -26 degrees Fahrenheit (°F)) in the coldest areas of the north to around -15 °C (5 °F) in the south. In Ulaanbaatar, the average temperature in November is -13.2 °C (8.2 °F), in December is -21.5 °C (-6.7 °F), in January is -24.6°C (-12.3 °F), and in February is -20.3 °C (-4.5 °F).[102] Ulaanbaatar holds the record as the world's coldest capital city.[103] Summers are tempered by much of Mongolia's terrain being occupied by a plateau at an altitude between 1,000 and 1,500 m (3,300-4,900 feet). Summer weather is mildly warm in most parts of the country at 20-25 °C (68-77 °F), though in the Gobi Desert the average summer temperature reaches 40 °C (104 °F).[104] Mongolia typically sees about 250 sunny days a year, and precipitation is generally sparse and concentrated in the summer.[105] Ulaanbaatar usually receives more rain relative to other parts of the country but still only averages about 300-378 millimeters (mm; 12-14.9 inches) per year.[106] There is almost no rainfall in January and February, an increase of rain in April and May, and the rainiest season occurs in the summer months, June through August. The average summer precipitation of Ulaanbaatar, which is in the north and in proximity to mountains, is more than 50 mm (2 inches) per month in June, July, and August. Across southern Mongolia's Gobi Desert, characterized more by rocky terrain than sand dunes, annual precipitation can range from 50 mm (2 inches) in the west to more than 200 mm (8 inches) in the eastern end of the desert.[107] The arid climate can bring wind and dust storms, which occur more frequently in the southern region (more than 30 days per year) and central region (15-30 days per year), but infrequently in the north (less than 10 days per year). The climate in Mongolia can experience significant variations in temperature and precipitation from year to year.

Figure 3 shows the average monthly rainfall (in millimeters) and temperature (in Celsius) in Mongolia for the period 1991-2020.[108]

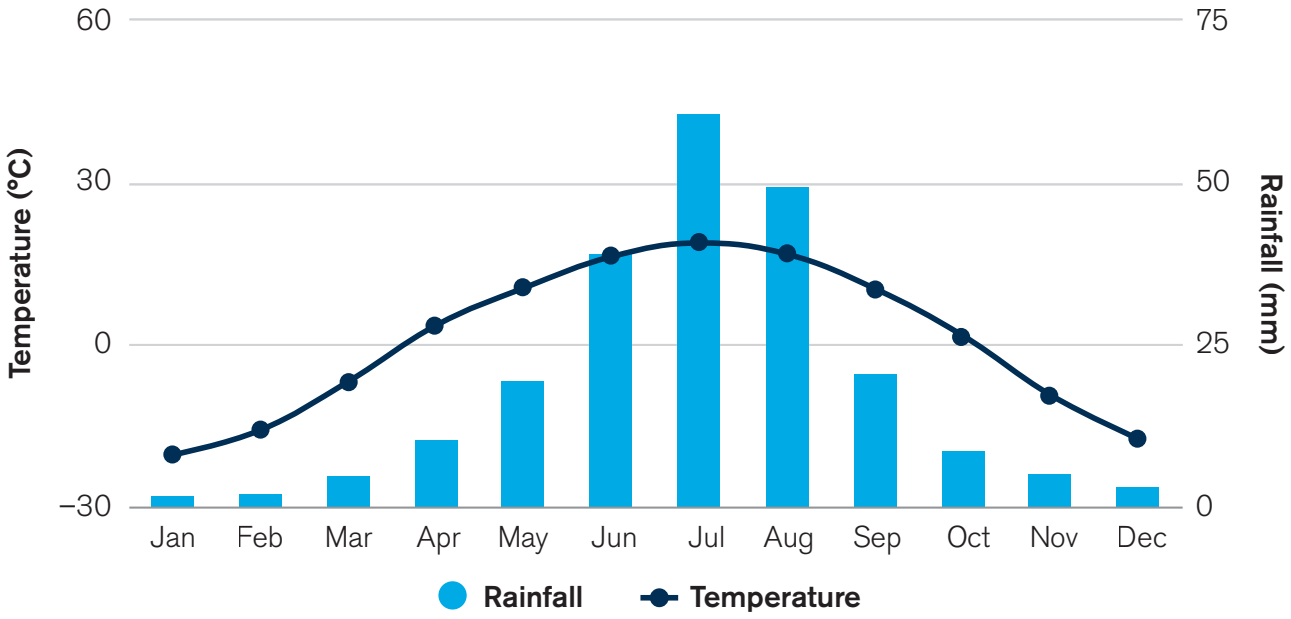


Figure 3: Mongolia's Average Monthly Rainfall and Temperature (1991-2020)

DISASTER OVERVIEW

Climate Change

Mongolia is among the countries most vulnerable to global warming in the world. In the last 70 years, its average temperature has climbed almost three times faster than the world's average increase. Its glaciers have been melting away, shrinking by 40% since the 1990s. In 2017, Mongolia saw the hottest summer in 50 years, with two-thirds of the country stricken by drought. Desertification has already turned one-quarter of its land to desert. Shrinking glaciers contribute to increasing desertification. Climate impacts exacerbated poverty rates that were already sharply rising. Poverty jumped 40% from 2014 to 2016 during an economic crisis. In 2016, Mongolia ranked equally with China on the Human Development Index (HDI), at 90th out of 189 countries. By 2018, it had slipped to 92nd place, while China jumped to 86th.[109] In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2021 Mongolia slipped further to 99th place.[110]

Greenhouse gas emissions have made Mongolia drier and hotter than it was 80 years ago, when data collection began. According to Mongolia's Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology, and Environment, since 1940 precipitation has decreased by 10% and the country's annual mean temperature has increased 2.2 °C (nearly 4 °F). By comparison, the global temperature increase since 1880 has been 0.8 °C (1.4 °F).[111] "We are an inland country, so we don't have an ocean. The exchange of moisture between the atmosphere and the biosphere are very important for us," says Gomboluudev Purevjav, head of climate research at the institute. If rangeland is degraded, it will reduce transpiration, the process that carries moisture and nutrients from a plant's roots.[112] An international group of climate scientists analyzed heatwave and soil moisture records from local tree ring data and found that the recent consecutive years of record high temperatures and droughts in Mongolia were unprecedented in over 250 years.[113] If the current pace of climate change continues, studies forecast that some ecological zones in Mongolia, including the Gobi Desert, will experience a temperature increase of 6-7 °C (10.8-12.6 °F) in the next 50-80 years, according to climatologist Dr. Damdin Dagvadorj.[114]

An IFRC assessment of climate change impacts concludes the following changes are likely or certain in Mongolia:

- Temperatures are rising faster than the global average. (certain)
- Significant warming and drying will continue as a result of the climate crisis. (certain)
- The higher temperatures are likely to increase the frequency and severity of heatwaves and droughts, especially in the south and southwest. (likely)
- Seasons will become more pronounced. (highly likely)
- Dzud – summer drought followed by extremely cold, harsh winters – will become more frequent and fiercer. (highly likely)
- Extreme rainfall will become more intense and more frequent, with more rain falling during very wet days, and this may translate into increased intense rainfall-linked extreme events such as landslides, flash floods, and land erosion. (highly likely)[115]

Climate change is contributing to more extreme weather events and climate hazards. According to the Deputy Prime Minister, Mongolia has experienced a 67.9% increase in weather and climate-related disasters and hazards in the last 15 years, and the death toll has increased by 37.5%, reaching 248 in 2020, up from 180 in 2005.[116] More frequent and harsher dzuds are also expected, with nationwide dzuds estimated to occur every four to five years, instead of every ten, according to Mongolia's Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology, and Environment.[117]

Climate changes are projected to lower

agricultural crop yields, particularly of wheat, threatening Mongolia's food security.[118] Climate impacts would also likely expose the most vulnerable herders to greater risks of losing their livelihoods and exacerbating the rural-urban migration trend where former herders settle in informal settlements on urban outskirts. In 1999, herding was the primary economic means for 50% of Mongolian households, but by 2018 had declined by half to 25.8%.[119] Climate change exacerbating internal migration is not limited to Mongolia. In 2020, climate disasters caused more internal displacement than war globally. Disasters and the effects of climate change regularly trigger new and secondary displacement, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.[120]

Namsrai Dumaa worked for the National Emergency Management Agency for 25 years and observed how climate change is contributing to more extreme weather patterns. "Today in Mongolia the seasons are different. Winter is getting longer and temperatures are getting much colder... The local administration is working with herders to help them adapt to the changes in nature and be better prepared for Dzud. Understanding the risks is the first step, then acting on them is the next. For example, taking out livestock insurance is one way for herders to safeguard their livelihood."[121] Another way local communities are trying to adapt to climate change is forming a water users' association among several communities. Terbish Bataa, leader of the Bayanteel Community Group, describes that the purpose is to use the water in a sustainable way for all agricultural activities.[122]

Hazards

Mongolia faces a range of hazards, including drought; dzud (summer drought followed by severely cold winter, leading to mass livestock death); wildfire in grassland and forested areas; floods; wind, dust, and sand storms; snow blizzards; and earthquakes.[123] Figure 4 shows the average annual natural hazard occurrence for Mongolia during the period 1980-2020, with storms accounting for 34.29%, flood 28.57%, extreme temperature 14.29%, wildfire 8.57%, epidemic 8.57%, drought 2.86%, and landslide 2.86%.[124] The pie chart does not capture dzuds, a phenomenon unique to Mongolia and which results from a combination of summer drought

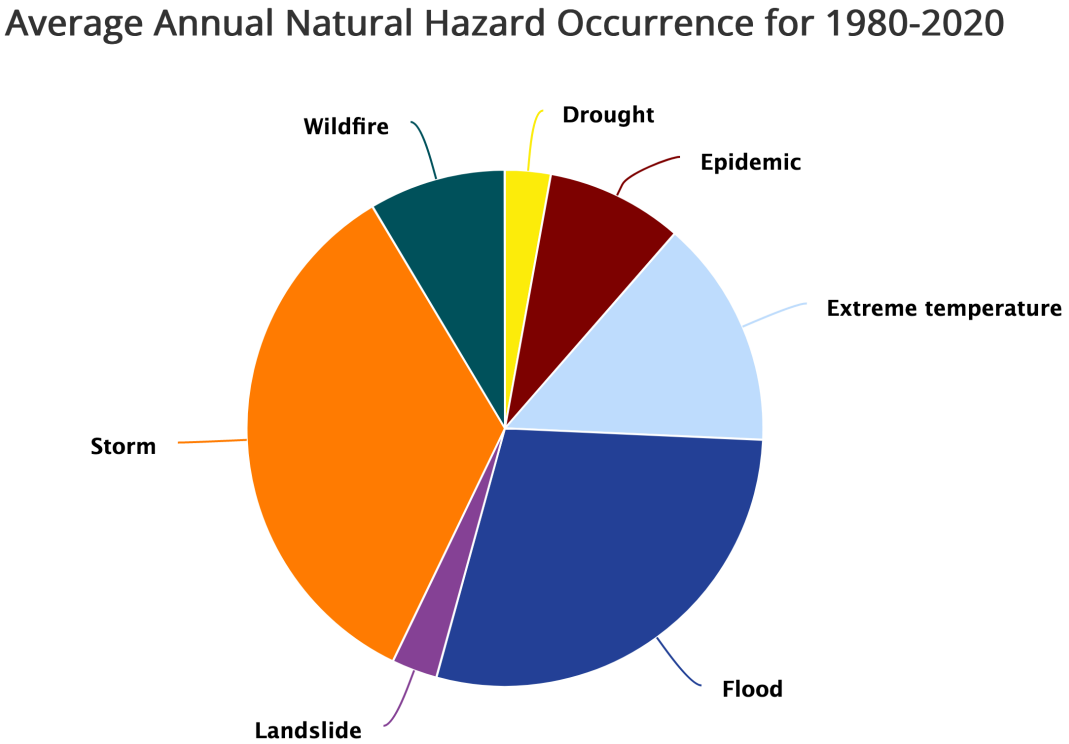


Figure 4: Average Annual Natural Hazard Occurrence (1980-2020)

followed by severely cold winter causing massive livestock deaths.

Drought

Mongolia is at high risk for droughts. Mongolia is also a hotspot of global desertification, as approximately 90% of the country is at risk of desertification, with 41.3% considered deserts and desert steppe areas.[125]

The most recent extended drought in Mongolia lasted from 2000 to 2010 and resulted in major livestock die-offs and a massive migration of nomadic herders to the capital city. "We were able to quantify how unusual this drought was," said University of Arizona geography professor Kevin J. Anchukaitis. "The drought was not unprecedented, but it has a 900-year return interval. It's a once-in-a-millennium drought."[126] The timing of Mongolia's rainy season falling in the summer may potentially mitigate the worst effects of climate change exacerbating droughts in other semi-arid regions with dry summers and winter rains.[127] However, droughts in Mongolia are still expected to worsen in the future, with projections indicating droughts will increase by 5-15% under moderate scenarios. Drought occurs 1-2 times per decade in high mountain and forest steppe regions, once every three years in the steppe, and once every two years in the desert steppe regions.[128] Almost 70-80% of pastureland has become degraded.[129]

Summer droughts followed by severely cold winters combine to create dzuds that engender a livelihoods crisis for nomadic herders.

Dzuds

The dzud is a weather-related phenomenon unique to Mongolia due to the country's unusual environment that is landlocked, semi-arid, and given to swings in temperature and precipitation. It is caused by the combination of drought in the summer followed by severe freezing weather and storms in the winter. This has led to vast numbers of livestock dying, destroying the lifestyle of many nomadic pastoralists, who then migrate to the slum outskirts of urban areas. When droughts occur in the summer, animals of the steppe are not able to eat enough and fail to gain the protective fat that enables them to survive the icy winters. Additionally, herders are not able to collect enough hay to store throughout winter. When these hot, dry summer conditions are followed by severely cold winters, animals are not able to graze for enough sustenance to build up fat stores and core muscle strength to endure the winters. When feed supplies run out, the livestock weaken until they freeze or starve to death.[130]

Dzuds are caused by multiple factors — some climate related and others human made. Drought is a major culprit, and overgrazing is another. In the 2000s, the country lost tens of millions of head of livestock, with the most severe mortality occurring in the 2000-2002 and 2010 winters.[131] The 2009-2010 dzud alone killed 22% of the nation's livestock.[132] Dzuds are disastrous for the herders, often bringing an end to their livelihood. When herders lose most of their livestock, they usually have little recourse but to migrate to the capital in search of urban work. Over the past couple of decades, the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar have grown with informal settlements or ger districts, many comprised of former herders who moved to the city for work. One-third of Mongolia's population depends entirely on herding, and their livelihoods are at risk when dzuds cause pasture loss and widespread starvation amongst their livestock.[133]

Mongolian herders typically identify five types of dzuds, depending on the winter weather characteristics: 1) white dzud – deep heavy snow and cold temperatures; 2) black dzud – freezing temperatures and the absence of surface water and forage; 3) combined dzud – deep snow with a sudden drop in temperature; 4) iron dzud – impenetrable ice cover over the forage area; and 5) storm dzud – high winds and heavy snow. Mongolian society has historically been nomadic and based on herding, which still provides the primary source of income for many Mongolians. Agriculture is comprised by 80% herding and is the second largest contributor to the economy, accounting for 19% of GDP but employing 36% of the working population.[134]

Figure 5 is a bar chart that shows the percentage of national livestock that died each winter, with spikes evident during the worst dzuds and severest winters.[135] A threshold of 6% livestock mortality is used by the Mongolian index-based livestock insurance program to identify a dzud for the purpose of insurance payout.[136]

Flooding

Mongolia's exposure to risk of flooding is considered high.[137] The country typically sees three types of floods: 1) spring or snow melt flood wherein river levels slowly rise and overflow their banks over a relatively longer period of time; 2) rainfall flood wherein a quick rise of water levels from heavy rainfall leads to overflowing banks; and 3) flash flood wherein heavy rainfall over steep riverbeds causes turbulent flows of water along with rocks, sediment, and other surface materials. The majority of Mongolia's floods stem from rainfall.[138] Flooding affects both rural and urban areas, and in the capital old bridges, roads, and avenues built without sewage systems have been severely affected. In June and July 2021, flash flooding negatively impacted six districts in Ulaanbaatar and affected over 234 households.[139] Flood resilience building projects are being supported by UN-HABITAT for the capital's informal settlement ger districts, which account for 68% of Ulaanbaatar's population.[140]

Dust Storms / Sandstorms

The Gobi Desert, which comprises about 41% of Mongolia, experiences dust storms for 30-100 days per year, and the average number of days with dust storms has increased from 18 to 57 days over the period from 1960 to 2007.[141] While reforestation efforts along China's northern border have helped mitigate desertification and dust storms, 2021 brought the worst sandstorm

Mongolia Expects Harsher and More Frequent *Dzuds*

Mongolia's Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment estimates that nationwide *dzuds* will occur every four to five years, instead of every 10. Here's the percentage of the total national livestock population that perished each winter, including the 21.5 million total livestock lost during the 1999-2002 and 2009-2010 *dzuds*.

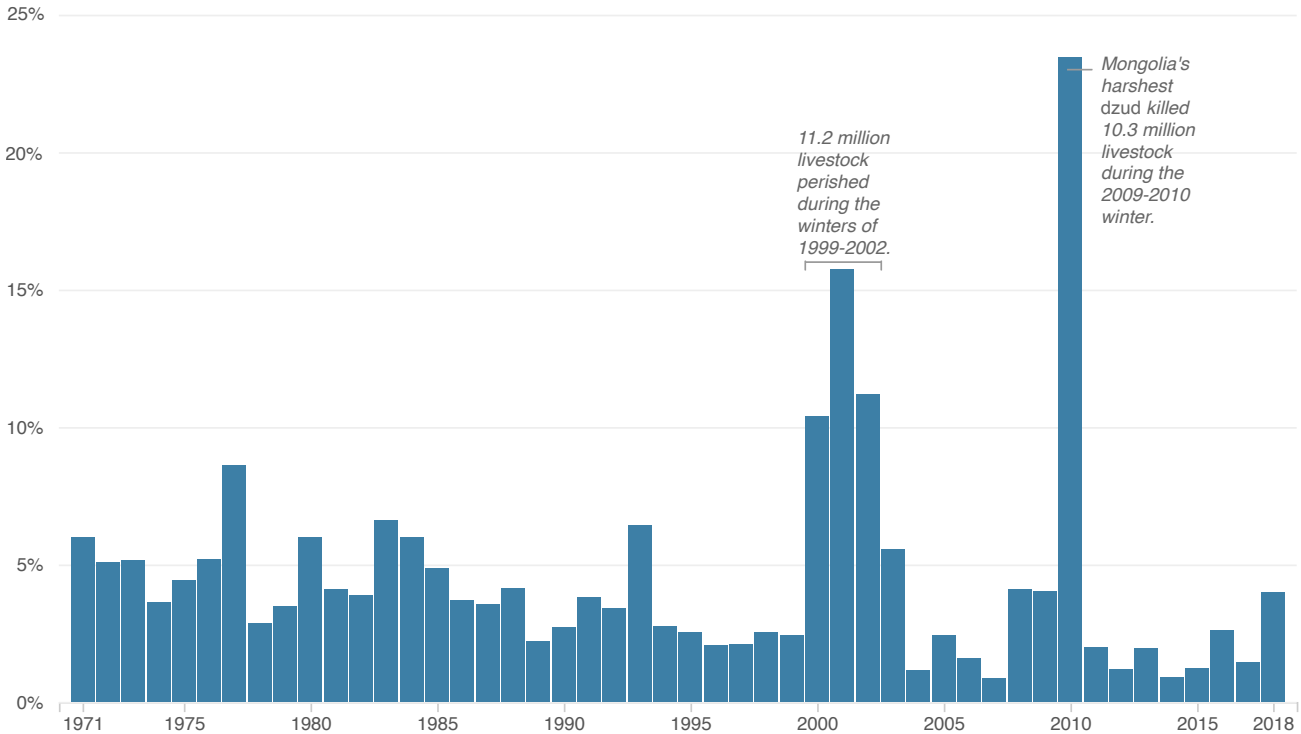


Figure 5: Percent of National Livestock that Died Each Winter (1970-2018)

season in a decade to Mongolia as well as China. At least nine Mongolian herders died in Spring 2021 after they were caught outside during sandstorms. From March to May 2021 a series of eight sandstorms in southern Mongolia and northern China destroyed animal herds, worsened human respiratory problems, and cancelled flights. Mongolia was particularly hard hit, as the successive sandstorms killed an estimated 1.6 million head of livestock. Mongolian climate researchers said an unusually dry year in precipitation created larger amounts of loose sand. Sandstorms are exacerbated by interrelated factors of climate change and environmental degradation, including desertification as the Gobi Desert grows bigger every year. Overgrazing also contributes to sandstorms, as the total Mongolian herd has tripled in size in the last three decades. The fastest growth has been among the number of goats, which eat twice the grass that sheep do but are highly valued as Mongolian goats provide 40% of the world's cashmere.[142]

Wildfire

The risk of wildfire for Mongolia is considered high, with more than a 50% chance of encountering weather that could support a significant wildfire in a given year.[143] In 2020, fires accounted for 79.3% of all disasters.[144] In 2019, there were reportedly 121 forest and grassland fires recorded in Mongolia.[145] However, when taking a longer view of average annual natural hazard occurrences spanning 1980-2020, wildfire accounts for 9%.[146]

Weather patterns create two distinct fire seasons in Mongolia, in spring and fall. Spring weather brings strong, dry winds, which are sometimes forceful enough to divert inbound air traffic from Ulaanbaatar to other cities. Prevalent from March through June, these winds increase fire risk in dry, dead grass from the previous fall. The little rain Mongolia receives falls primarily in the summer, producing new grass growth. In the fall the new grass dries out, becoming potential fuel for wildfires during September and October. Winters are usually very cold and dry. Typically, the majority of wildfires in Mongolia occur in the grasslands or grass understory of the steppe and mountain steppe zones.[147]

Earthquake

Mongolia has a high risk of earthquake hazard, with more than a 20% chance of a potentially damaging earthquake occurring in the next 50 years,[148] and newly discovered risks to the capital. The highest risks had historically been in the far northern, southern, and western areas of the country.[149] Mongolia experienced four magnitude 8 earthquakes during the last century.[150] Smaller magnitude earthquakes occur very frequently, with more than 240 earthquakes of magnitude 3.5 or above in the first half of 2021.[151] The country has suffered no catastrophic damages so far, partially due to earthquakes heretofore striking sparsely populated areas outside the capital where the rural population live in gers, whose flexible construction make them less prone to damage.

However, recently discovered earthquake risks to the capital are spurring renewed preparation activities. While Ulaanbaatar's exposure to earthquake hazard was previously considered very low, publications in 2019-2020 detailed the newly discovered Ulaanbaatar Fault, an active 50-km (31-mile) long fault crossing the urban area of the capital. Based on its length, the fault is believed to be capable of causing earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 7, which could result in considerable building damage and heavy casualties in the metropolitan area.[152] The potential for humanitarian impacts in the city is also heightened due to older buildings lacking seismic design considerations. The structural integrity of buildings in Ulaanbaatar is being scrutinized and assessed. The World Bank tasked engineering firm Miyamoto International with performing a preliminary assessment of the seismic risk to Ulaanbaatar's public school buildings, which are made primarily with unreinforced masonry brick and precast concrete floors with no concrete toppings.[153] The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has coordinated increased public awareness campaigns and drills.[154]

History of Natural Disasters

The following is a list of major natural disasters that affected Mongolia in the last five years.[155]

2021 July – Flash Floods

Flash floods occurred all around Mongolia due to prolonged heavy rainfall from 28 June to 29 July 2021. The rainfall averaged 46-60 mm (1.8-2.4 inches) across the country. The flash floods and heavy rain severely affected 1,549 households (5,676 individuals) in seven aimags: Arkhangai, Umnugovi, Orkhon, Dornogovi, Govi-Altai, Uvurkhangai, and Tuv. Umnugovi was the most severely affected by torrential rains and devastating flash floods on 24 July. The local emergency management agency reportedly received 274 rescue calls, while search and rescue operations helped 397 people. Branch Disaster Response Teams (BDRT) of the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) conducted situation, needs, and damage assessments in affected areas and exchanged information with headquarters. No casualties were reported in Umnugovi. However, five people died in Govi-Altai due to flash flooding also caused by heavy rain on 24 July. By 28 July, 1,506 houses or gers were severely damaged and 43 gers were completely destroyed across Mongolia due to the flash flooding from more than a month of heavy rain. Most rivers in Mongolia at the time had water levels 10-120 centimeters (cm; 4-47 inches) higher than normal.[156]

2021 March – Sandstorm

Violent wind gusts and sandstorms swept across the country 14-15 March 2021.[157] Wind speeds reached 18-34 meters per second (m/s; 40-76 miles per hour (mph)) in Uvurkhangai, Bulgan, and Umnugovi aimags. Wind speeds reached 22-40 m/s (49-89 mph) in Dundgovi aimag, and 16-28 m/s (36-63 mph) in Govi-Altai, Bayankhongor, Arkhangai, Tuv, Khentii, Dornod, Sukhbaatar, and Dornogovi aimags. The Mongolian government classifies wind speeds reaching 18 m/s (40 mph) as a disaster and 24 m/s (54 mph) as catastrophic, a label applicable to this event, in accordance with Resolution No. 286 of 2015. During the wind and sandstorm, 590 people went missing, most of whom were found afterward. Reportedly, 10 people had died (9 adults and 1 child), most of whom were from Dundgovi. Additionally, 1.6 million head of livestock were missing, 69 buildings and houses were severely damaged, and 92 gers were destroyed. The Deputy Prime Minister gave the provincial emergency commissions the task of disseminating prevention measures to protect herders from windstorms when going on otor (traveling to different locations for better pasture for their herd). Although warnings were disseminated two days prior, many people traveling and herding livestock still went missing.[158]

2021 January – Dzud

Mongolia experienced dzud conditions in the winter of 2021-2022. The MRCS activated its Early Action Protocol for dzud on 18 December 2020 based on three or more aimags having a very high risk of 20% or more of their land area being affected.[159] More than 60% of the country was identified with dzud risk, including five aimags with more than 20% of very high-risk coverage.[160] This increased to eight aimags with more than 20% risk by January 2021.[161] In December, early actions were identified, including distribution of cash and livestock nutrition kits.[162] Using forecast-based financing, aid was distributed earlier before the dzud could cause significant livestock deaths. The MRCS targeted 2,000 households across 19 of the country's 21 aimags for unconditional cash grants (MNT 240,000 or approximately US$90) and livestock nutrition kits. The vitamins and minerals in the kits are vital as otherwise malnourished cold-stressed animals cannot digest properly even if fed hay. Assessments determined cash-strapped herders only had a seasonal source of cash selling goat wool in the spring, but cash provisions would allow them to purchase hay locally.[163]

2020 June – Flash Floods

Heavy rainfall from June to August 2020 caused flash floods across the country to varying degrees.[164] Heavy rainfall started 17 June 2020 and continued through July, averaging 50-60 mm (2.0-2.4 inches) across the country with the highest precipitation of 85 mm (3.4 inches) recorded in Bulgan aimag on 8 July 2020.[165] Flash floods on 3-4 July caused the deaths of 5 people in Ömnögovi aimag in central southern Mongolia, 3 deaths in Sükhbaatar in the country's east, and damaged approximately 2,360 houses and killed 7,000 animals across Töv, Khövsgöl, and Khentii aimags.[166] Severe flash floods also occurred 11-15 July, particularly in Uvs, Khentii, and Tuv aimags, with other affected provinces including Arkhangai, Orkhon, Khuvsgul, Darkhan-Uul, Dornod, Govi-Altai, Selenge, and Umnugovi. Parts of Ulaanbaatar were also affected, damaging more than 14,000 m^2 (150,694 square feet or 3.5 acres) of public areas and 13,100 m (8.1 miles) of bitumen road. The hardest hit districts of the capital were Bagakhangai, Sukhbaatar, and Bayanzurkh, where more than 200 households were severely affected.[167]

2020 June-September – Drought

Drought conditions persisted over four months, June to September 2020, in Mongolia with varying degrees of severity across the country. This period is when most annual precipitation occurs, yet a series of moderate to extreme droughts occurred in the central and southern regions.[168] A 10-day drought map in September 2020 showed bands of areas at risk of extreme drought in several central southern provinces.[169]

2020 January – Dzud

Mongolia experienced widespread dzud conditions in the winter of 2019-2020.[170] On 2 January 2020, the National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (NAMEM) announced that more than 50% of the country was at risk of dzud. Emergency funding from IFRC was released to the MRCS to provide US$90.60 cash each for 1,000 vulnerable herder families to prevent their livestock perishing due to poor access to feed, water, veterinary care, and shelter. MRCS Secretary General Bolormaa Nordov said, "Dzud is catastrophic for the agricultural sector, which is vital to the Mongolian culture and economy. We have 70 million livestock, which directly support about a quarter of our people. Horses, camels, goats, cattle and sheep for milk, cashmere, meat and other livestock products are the only source of income for herders."[171] By the following week, 12 January, over 70% of the country was under 10-30 cm (4-12 inches) of snow. The aimags of Arkhangai, Bulgan, Govi-Altai, Dundgovi, Uvurkhangai, Sukhbaatar, Khovd, Khentii, and Zavkhan were experiencing severe winter conditions with local hay and fodder reserves completely consumed at the soum level. The Government of Mongolia allocated funding of MNT 1.7 billion (US$647,000) to provinces at higher risk of being affected by dzud.[172] A key partner in anticipating and mitigating the worst effects of dzuds, NAMEM develops dzud risk maps using satellite data.[173]

2019 June – Flood

On 15 June 2019, heavy precipitation started across Mongolia. The NAMEM, NEMA, and MRCS disseminated early warnings about flash flooding, which occurred across large areas of the country.[174] Approximately 500 people were affected, and several roads, buildings, and an electric sub-station were damaged, according to initial assessments.[175] By 18 June 2019, NEMA reported 12 fatalities from the floods across central and northern Mongolia. Increased river levels led to roads connecting Ulaanbaatar with rural districts being blocked by flood waters.[176] Local emergency management agencies mobilized search and rescue efforts with the support of local police agencies and local governors' offices.

2018 November – Sand and Snowstorms

On 25 November 2018, sand and snowstorms struck four aimags, leading to missing people,

missing livestock, and local damage. Strong winds around 20-30 m/s (45-67 mph) swept across Bayan-Ulgii, Govi-Altai, Uvs, and Khovd aimags, reaching up to 40 m/s (89 mph) in Govi-Altai's Bugat district. The resulting sand and snowstorm meant that a number of people and livestock went missing or were injured; they also caused electricity failures and construction wreckage. At least 285 gers were completely destroyed. The NEMA reported that 173 people with 26 pieces of technical equipment from the "national network of electricity distribution" government company worked to restore the electric substation. Local emergency authorities assessed damage and responded, including the MRCS distributing relief with support from the IFRC.[177]

2018 July – Flash Floods

Intensively heavy rainfall fell 3-5 July 2018 and caused flash flooding in several parts of Mongolia.[178] More than 792 households were affected across the country. Khovd, Bayan-Ulgii, Zavkhan, and Uvurkhangai aimags and Ulaanbaatar's Khan-Uul District were affected, with over 210 families losing their homes, over 700 head of livestock perishing, and at least 55 hectares (136 acres) of agricultural land destroyed.[179] Bayan-Ulgii in the west was among the hardest hit aimags, with approximately 2,500 people severely affected, and roads, homes, and shelters damaged. People who evacuated used school dormitories as temporary shelter, with the government providing shelter, drinking water, and support in logistics and waste management.[180]

2018 January – Dzud

A drought in the summer of 2017 followed by a severely cold winter created dzud conditions that affected areas in the majority of the country's aimags.[181] May-July 2017 saw a prolonged period of severe dry weather and some extreme high temperatures, which damaged large swatches of cropped areas and caused a severe deterioration of pastures and rangeland conditions. Approximately 80% of the country was affected by the summer drought, resulting in severe crop losses, including wheat production being almost half of the previous year's level and over 40% less than the five-year average. The severe deterioration of pasture conditions during the drought prevented livestock from gaining fat stores and strengthening core muscle strength, critical to endure the winter months.[182] By December 2017, an estimated 40% of the country was at extreme risk of dzud and 20% was at high risk of dzud. In February 2018, a national total of 141 out of 330 districts and a city were experiencing dzud conditions with temperatures approaching -50 °C (-58 °F). Approximately 2,500 of the hardest-hit herder families in seven aimags received cash grants or emergency supplies through the MRCS with IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Funds, which targeted households with young children, or five or more children, an older person, or someone with a disability.[183]

2016 December – Dzud

A drought in the summer of 2016 followed by a severe winter created dzud conditions that affected herders in the majority of Mongolia's aimags. The NEMA issuing a dzud warning in November 2016, and the Deputy Prime Minister called for international help in mid-December at a meeting with international aid agencies.[184] By mid-January 2017, severe winter conditions affected 37,000 herder households (an estimated 157,000 people) in 17 out of 21 aimags, and the Deputy Prime Minister's office established a task force to coordinate the response.[185] By the end of January, the UN had allocated US$1.1 million to launch a rapid humanitarian response to address urgent needs of 3,500 of the poorest and most vulnerable herder households across 36 districts in 13 aimags.[186] By February 2017, the IFRC launched an emergency appeal to assist 11,264 people for 10 months.[187]

2016 January – Dzud

Mongolia started experiencing very low temperatures and heavy snowfall in early November 2015,[188] and by January 2016 saw

snow covering 90% of the country and 16 out of 21 aimags having declared dzud in some of their areas.[189] This came on the heels of drought the previous summer where low vegetation growth yielded insufficient hay, leading to livestock deaths during the severe winter. Parts of Mongolia experienced continuous heavy snowfall and snowstorms with average temperatures below -25 °C (-13 °F) during daytime and around -40 °C (-40 °F) during the night. Approximately 965,000 people were affected by the dzud, close to one-third of the country's population.[190] Where livestock started dying from cold and starvation in the thousands, many herders tried selling their animals while they were still alive, but the oversupply resulted in very low market prices, which was particularly devastating for vulnerable families with fewer animals to sell. As a result, poor herders lacked the cash to buy food, warm clothes, and coal for heating. Impassable roads covered with thick snow and ice also made it impossible for many herders to reach urban settlements to access necessities or receive medical care. The weather situation and grazing conditions were worse than in the dzud of 2009-2010 when millions of animals died, according to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.[191] In February 2016, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked for international aid to deal with the dzud, with an estimated US$4.4 million needed for emergency vehicles, warm clothes, medicine, food, hay, animal feed, and livestock vaccinations to not only assist herders with their needs but to mitigate loss of their livestock and livelihoods.[192] By June 2016, 56 million head of livestock had perished, affecting 41% of the population who rely on livestock for their main source of food and cash. NEMA led the Humanitarian Country Team's response to the dzud, which provided targeted agriculture support to 78,764 households in all 21 aimags, protection support to 17,162 households in eight aimags, multi-sector support to 16,681 households in five aimags, early recovery support to 12,219 households in 13 aimags, food support to 11,182 households in 15 aimags, and nutrition support to 4,390 households in six aimags.[193]

Country Risk Profile

Risk calculation takes into account exposure to hazards, vulnerability, and institutional coping capacity, all of which are important factors in Disaster Risk Management. The Index for Risk Management (INFORM) measures the risk of humanitarian crisis and disasters in 191 countries. The INFORM Risk Index supports a proactive crisis management framework. INFORM is helpful for establishing an objective allocation of resources for disaster management as well as for coordinating actions focused on anticipating, mitigating, and preparing for humanitarian emergencies. The INFORM Risk Index is based on risk concepts published in scientific literature with three dimensions of risk: Hazards & Exposure, Vulnerability, and Lack of Coping Capacity. The first dimension measures the natural and human hazards that pose the risk. The second and third dimensions cover population factors that can mitigate against or exacerbate the risk. The vulnerability dimension considers the strength of individuals and households relative to a crisis, while the lack of coping capacity dimension considers factors of institutional strength.[194]

The INFORM Risk Index is split into different levels to provide a quick overview of the underlying factors leading to humanitarian risk. INFORM gives each country a risk score of 1-10 (1 being the lowest and 10 the highest) for each of the dimensions, categories, and components of risk, as well as an overall risk score.[195] The higher the score the more at risk a country is to disasters. In the 2022 INFORM Risk Index, Mongolia had an overall risk score of 2.6/10 and ranked 128 overall out of 191 countries surveyed, leading to a categorization in the "Low" risk class. The Hazards and Exposure dimension score takes into account a combination of both natural and human hazards, for which Mongolia was rated 1.6/10, ranking 155 out of 191 countries. The Vulnerability dimension score was 2.3/10 with Mongolia ranking 130 out of 191. In the Lack of Coping Capacity dimension Mongolia scored 4.8/10 and ranked 77 out of 191 countries

covered. Figure 6 depicts Mongolia's rankings in these three dimensions.[196]

In the Hazards & Exposure dimension, physical exposure to drought, 6.7/10, was the highest-risk component, followed by flood, 4.3/10. In the Vulnerability dimension, Development and Deprivation was the highest-risk component at 4.4/10. In the Lack of Coping Capacity dimension, Governance was the highest-risk component at 6.0/10.[197]

While INFORM ranks Mongolia at relatively low risk for humanitarian crises and disasters, Mongolia has been ranked at higher risk of extreme weather. A different risk index, the Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) by Germanwatch, examines 180 countries and ranks to what extent they have been affected by climate-related extreme weather events (storms, floods, heatwaves, etc.). The CRI ranked Mongolia 22nd among 180 countries in 2019, an increased rank in risk up from 48th for the period 2000-2019. The CRI states it is not a comprehensive climate vulnerability scoring, as it does not account for slow-onset processes such as rising sea levels.[198]

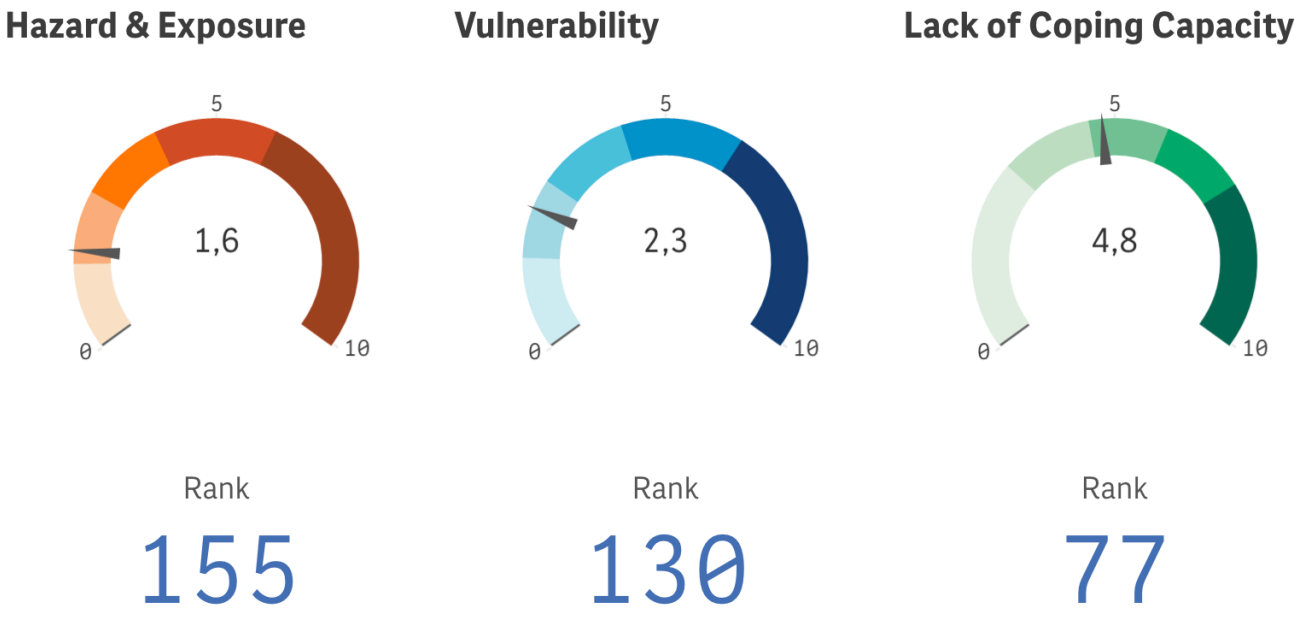


Figure 6: Mongolia Country Profile by INFORM Risk Index 2022

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Disaster management in Mongolia is led by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the organizational structure of which is illustrated in Figure 7. There are several subdivisions of NEMA including rescue units, firefighting units, and others. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities at the national level are organized under the oversight of the Government, specifically the Prime Minister, who leads the charge during emergencies. Activities at the regional level are organized by the Governor or top administrator of the aimag, soum, or other legal entity.[199]

Lead Government Agencies in Disaster Response

NEMA

NEMA, first established in 2004, has the responsibility to conduct nationwide activities for disaster protection. NEMA's main duties are:

- developing environmental legislation on disaster protection
- providing management
- evaluating disaster risk and vulnerability
- implementing disaster prevention, disaster reduction, and disaster preparedness
- organizing search and rescue work
- responding to disasters by restoring and rehabilitating main infrastructure
- strengthening capacity of national disaster protection
- cooperating with foreign countries and international organizations in the disaster protection field
- monitoring laws and legislation; and
- implementing policy.

During a disaster response, NEMA is responsible for coordinating the activities of different stakeholders who are involved in disaster response including non-governmental and governmental organizations, the private sector, community groups, and international organizations. In addition, all 21 provinces and the capital city have a NEMA emergency

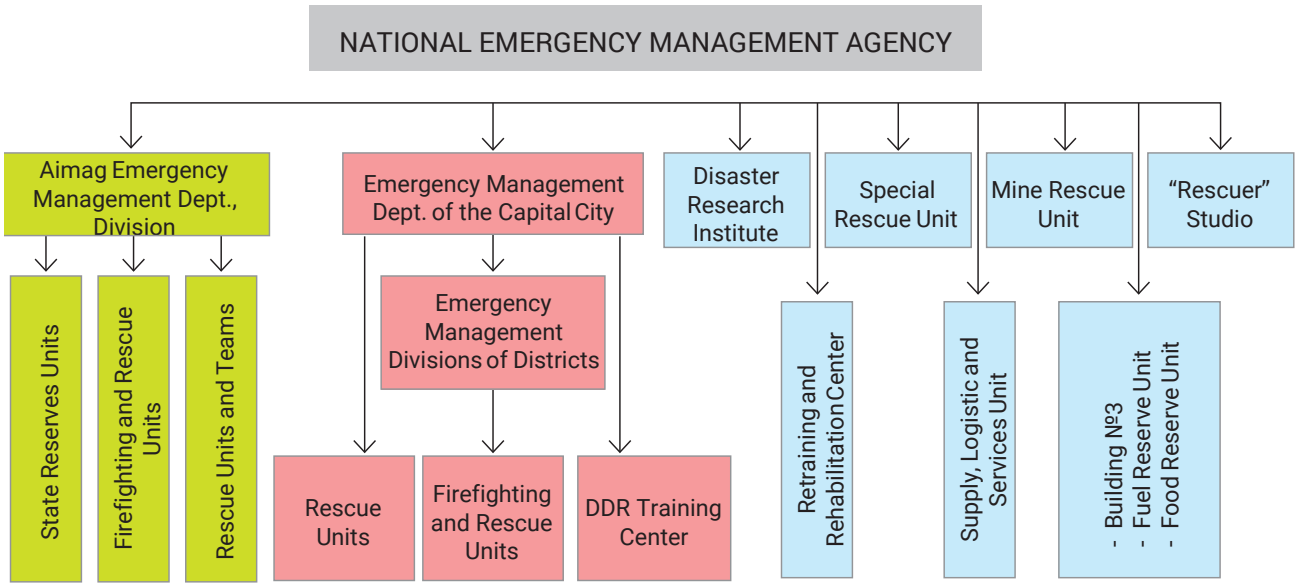


Figure 7: National Emergency Management Agency Organizational Chart

management division and department.[200] NEMA's Disaster Risk Management Department was established in 2017, and DRR is high on the country's disaster protection policy agenda.[201]

State Emergency Commission

The State Emergency Commission (SEC) is tasked with organizing DRR activities and coordinating and monitoring initial response actions established by the Government. The Commission is also responsible for organizing emergency commissions at the aimag, Capital, soum, and district level that are mandated to be established by the Governor of the relevant administrative unit.[202]

Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry

The Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry is a key player in addressing the risk of and preparations for dzud. It oversees implementation of government policies prior to and in the immediate aftermath of dzud; however, as soon as the dzud is declared a disaster, NEMA takes over as the coordinating body to manage whatever inter-agency, public-private, and international assistance is delivered. Thus, livestock policy and rangeland and water management fall under the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry while NEMA is responsible for dzud disaster research and assessment as well as accumulating and managing state reserves of fodder to be stockpiled for emergency release. When the actual dzud disaster occurs, the SEC, with representatives from ministries, agencies, and civil society, acts as a headquarters and executes all actions through NEMA.[203]

Disaster Relief and Emergency Response

Mongolia is extremely vulnerable to natural hazards not only because of its geographical location and climate that directly influence the nature, scale, and frequency of hazards experienced but also because of its poorly developed infrastructure, poverty, and minimal institutional capacity.[204] The hazards that impact the country include harsh winter disasters (dzuds), dust storms, drought, floods, wildfires, and earthquakes.[205]

Currently, the country does not have a post-disaster recovery program; however, the State Reserve Department under NEMA is responsible for conducting all recovery activities. There is a lack of available funds for all operations. As a result, response capacities are higher at the national level, while the local levels are often supported by NGOs and international organizations who supplement the government's efforts to manage disasters. NGOs, such as People in Need, the IFRC, and Mercy Corps have conducted and supported recovery programs in the country. Guidance on international humanitarian assistance is included in the 2017 Disaster Protection Law.[206]

The international community together with NEMA has streamlined coordination arrangements depicted in Figure 8.[207]

Figure 9 represents the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) partners supporting the Government of Mongolia and NEMA in particular with dzud response.[208]

Armed Forces Role in Disaster Relief

The Mongolian Armed Forces consist of the Mongolian Army, Air Defense Force, Cyber Security Center, Special Forces, Civil Engineering Force, Civil Defense Forces, Border Troops, and International Security Troops. The Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs includes the National Police Agency (NPA) and General Authority for Border Protection. It is estimated that Mongolia has approximately 9,000 active-duty troops. Since 2002, Mongolia has deployed more than 19,000 peacekeepers to UN operations in more than 12 countries. In addition, from 2003 to July 2021, approximately 3,000 Mongolian troops served in Afghanistan alongside U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces.[209]

While Mongolia's military has been active abroad, they also have important duties at home.

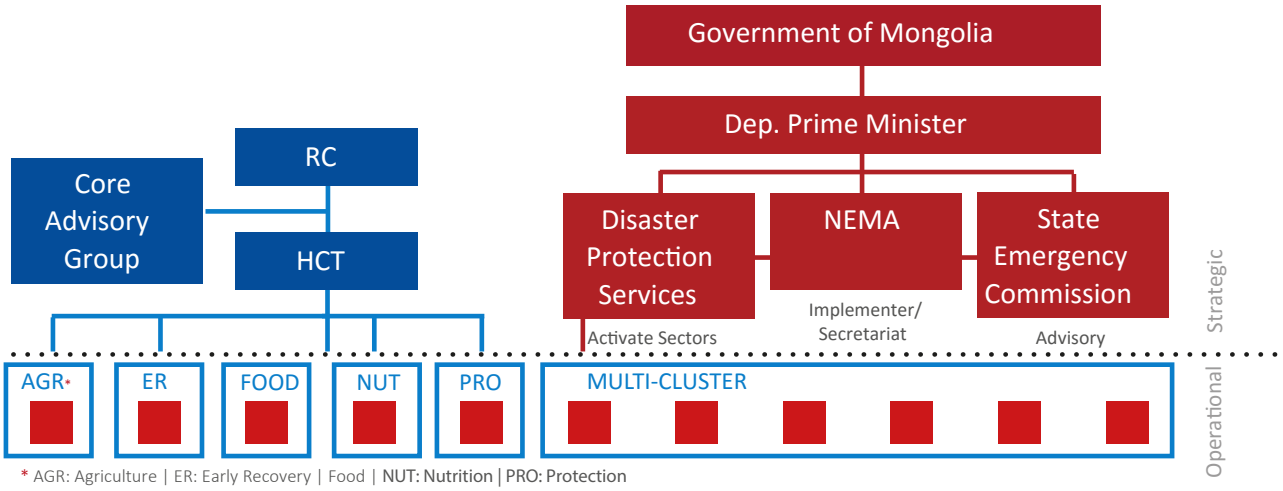


Figure 8: Coordination Arrangements in Mongolia with NEMA and the International Community

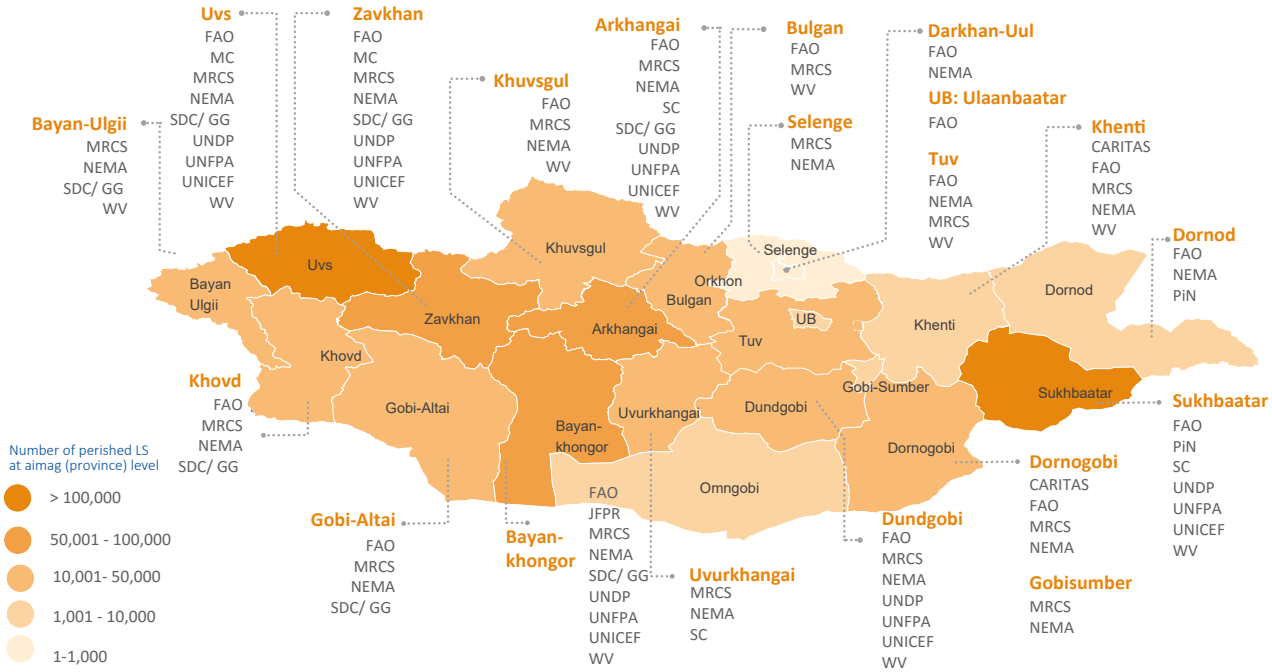


Figure 9: Overview of HCT Partners at Aimag Level in Mongolia

Through the National Center for Emergency and Disaster Relief (NCEDR), the military serves as first-responders for earthquakes, wildfires, forest fires, contagious diseases, snow and dust storms, and severe winters. The NCEDR's programs have produced humanitarian medics and construction engineers who build schools, hospitals, and emergency centers.[210] The Mongolian Armed Forces also have the important responsibility to protect and rescue citizens and their property during disasters or harsh weather events, including dzuds. When a large-scale dzud or any other disaster occurs, Mongolian military personnel conduct disaster relief and recovery operations.[211]

Disaster Management Partners

A number of partners and stakeholders have played an important role in protecting Mongolia's people from disasters and supporting the government after large-scale disasters. In addition, DRR activities and projects have

been steered jointly with several partners including stakeholders listed below.[212] This is not an exhaustive list; however, it does provide a detailed snapshot of disaster management partners in Mongolia. IFRC and the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) will be discussed in the next section of this handbook.

Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has had a partnership in Mongolia for more than thirty years. Most recently, ADB has been providing assistance to the country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with funding for medical equipment and vaccines, support for social protection, and assistance to private businesses' economic recovery. ADB finances reforms that will better prepare Mongolia to manage future health crises.[213] ADB also provides support to other programs. In 2020, ADB provided Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund resources for two emergency response grants. Through a US$2 million grant from the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction, ADB helped to improve accessibility in schools, while a US$100 million loan and a US$3 million grant will install advanced battery energy storage.[214]

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center

The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) has conducted more than two decades of DRR work in Mongolia. ADPC assisted with the development of the Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) framework in 2014 by supporting the implementation of pilot activities at the community level to include "Strengthening and Integration of Community-Based Disaster Risk Management into Local Development Planning through Pilot Initiatives in Mongolia," with assistance from the MRCS and funding support provided by the Japan Tobacco International Foundation. The project builds capacities of hazard-prone communities by designing and implementing community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) activities.[215]

Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation was the first NGO invited into the country in 1990.[216] The foundation has worked to reduce corruption, improve urban governance, support justice sector development, increase gender equality, and advance sustainable resources and climate change mitigation efforts in Mongolia.[217]

International Organization for Migration

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is part of the UN system as an inter-governmental organization with 174 member states and a presence in over 100 countries. Mongolia joined IOM in 2008, and in 2011, IOM opened an office in Ulaanbaatar. Since then, IOM has been contributing to the efforts of the Government of Mongolia (GoM) to manage migration effectively through a wide variety of projects and programs. The country's geographical location and dependence of the nation's rural population on animal husbandry make Mongolia particularly vulnerable to environmental changes and severe weather events. Rural to urban migration in Mongolia has been linked to factors resulting from climate change, such as declining livelihood opportunities in rural areas that have been amplified by the increasing incidence of dzuds. Therefore, the increasing incidence of disasters will drive higher rates of rural to urban migration into Ulaanbaatar where the government confronts significant challenges in accommodating new arrivals. IOM has a project supporting government officials to provide training to track climate change and disaster related migration and coordinate their responses; the project will improve the coordination of onsite responses to events in rural locations and will aim to improve government provision of shelter, water, food, fodder (dried hay or feed for livestock), and other necessities to minimize instances of forced migration.[218]

Japan International Cooperation Agency

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) focuses on three priority areas and eight developmental issues in Mongolia. The areas are: 1) Sound Macroeconomic Management and Strong Governance; 2) Environment-friendly and Balanced Economic Development; and 3) Realization of Inclusive Society.[219] Since 2016, JICA has been implementing the Project for Strengthening the National Capacity of Earthquake Disaster Protection and Prevention in Mongolia alongside NEMA. This project supports capacity building and DRR education for NEMA's personnel. Project activities include creating disaster preparedness and response plans that incorporate concepts from the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, as well as developing school DRR education guidelines.[220]

Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps has worked in Mongolia since 1999, with the aim of reducing vulnerability and increasing opportunities for rural communities. Mercy Corps works with the GoM to strengthen the capacity of rural communities and businesses to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate natural disaster impacts. They help with the livestock sector by aiding herders, farmers, veterinarians, and emergency personnel to develop and adopt disaster plans, early warning systems, short message service (SMS or text) technology for notification of weather changes, and science-based health and rangeland management practices.[221]

United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network working in 177 countries and territories. UNDP supports to the process of democratic governance, climate and disaster resilience, youth employability, and the private sector.[222] UNDP Mongolia is designing and implementing interventions to increase the enterprising tendencies, skills, behaviors, and activities of young people in the country. UNDP is providing an opportunity to drive a transformation in the way entrepreneurship is used in addressing development challenges.[223]

World Food Programme

The World Food Programme (WFP) has empowered government partners in Mongolia with tools to monitor dzud risks with the aim of preventing livestock losses. In 2017, WFP continued to develop relationships in Mongolia with NEMA and a network of international NGOs with the objective of providing technical support on dzud risk monitoring. WFP in 2019 successfully proposed a project to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) to establish remote-sensing and SMS-based systems for government and partners to monitor dzud risk across the country using satellite data. WFP expanded on a mobile phone-based monitoring system in close partnership with USAID and Mercy Corps, deploying the Platform for Real-time Impact and Situation Monitoring (PRISM).[224]

World Vision

World Vision aims to improve food security, enhance preparedness for severely cold winters, and protect children from violence and exploitation, particularly as children move into urban slums.[225] In Mongolia, they have implemented a national program on CBDRR where more than 500 trainers were prepared to conduct participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments.[226]

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

International Committee of the Red Cross

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an independent, global humanitarian organization, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The ICRC bases its activities on the provisions of International Humanitarian Law, and it is neutral in politics, religion, and ideology. The ICRC assists with the protection of civilian

victims of armed conflict and internal strife and their direct results. Within these roles, it may take any humanitarian initiative as a neutral and independent intermediary.[227]

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), founded in 1919, is an international organization that strengthens, coordinates, and represents the humanitarian action of 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worldwide. The National Societies are auxiliaries to their governments in humanitarian action and – through their 14 million volunteers – are integral parts of communities in nearly every country in the world, including in many fragile and crisis-stricken settings. This local presence, combined with the IFRC Secretariat's role in global coordination, capacity building, resource mobilization, and representation, form the world's largest, most diverse, and inclusive humanitarian network, which is uniquely placed to deliver life-saving services before, during, and after disasters and health emergencies and to deliver the long-term programming that is critical to building sustainable communities. The IFRC network is neutral and independent. It is a trusted partner in development and a leader in anticipation, prevention, and response to disasters, health emergencies, and other crises. The IFRC Secretariat has its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, five regional offices, and a number of sub-regional and country offices worldwide. The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) is supported and serviced by the Beijing, China-based IFRC East Asia Country Cluster Delegation, which is responsible to the IFRC Secretariat Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.[228] The Delegation's extended office in Mongolia supports MRCS on the National Societies' Operational Plan in areas of emergency preparedness and response, disaster law promotion, anticipatory actions and preparedness, climate crisis, livelihoods, health interventions, Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), community engagement, and accountability.[229]

Mongolian Red Cross Society

The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) is the sole nationwide humanitarian organization that has a mandate to act as an auxiliary to the GoM. MRCS has four main roles that fall under different stages of emergency response: 1) disaster prevention and risk reduction; 2) disaster preparedness; 3) disaster response; and 4) disaster recovery. Taken from the Disaster Protection Law, MRCS' roles and responsibilities include:

- MRCS shall cooperate and provide support in organizing disaster protection training within its scope of activities.
- MRCS is to be a government auxiliary in organizing disaster protection activities in accordance with law and regulations.
- MRCS is to request humanitarian assistance from the IFRC and implement the process of receiving, registering, storing, transporting, and distributing humanitarian aid in accordance with law and regulations.[230]

MRCS was established in 1939 and has significant outreach in the country through 34 mid-level branches, 14,800 trained volunteers, and 78,600 Red Cross youth members. MRCS has conducted recent responses to fires and floods as well as dzuds in 2017, 2018, and 2020, the latter via cash assistance and livestock nutrition kits to 1,000 vulnerable households in eight targeted provinces. In 2016, the MRCS established an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), which contains necessary equipment to manage operations; this equipment includes Information Communications Technology (ICT) equipment. In 2017, the MRCS played an important role in the amendment of Mongolian Disaster Protection Law, which revitalized the legal basis for DRR and response preparedness.[231]

U.S. Government Agencies in Mongolia

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) supports Mongolia's continued democratic development. USAID also facilitates sustainable, inclusive economic growth aiding the country in greater independence and self-reliance.[232] USAID has helped small- and medium-sized enterprises improve their access to credit and has facilitated linkages between financial institutions. USAID builds on these gains by providing technical assistance focused on food security and operations management intended to increase harvests and incomes and strengthen food security.[233] USAID first launched the Gobi Regional Growth Initiative in 1999 focusing attention on business development in rural Mongolia. The Ger Initiative, which began in 2002, provided support to districts surrounding Ulaanbaatar and other urban centers to address the impacts of internal migration such as the need to generate employment, income, and economic activity in ger areas.[234]

USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) provides assistance through partner organizations to implement early recovery, DRR, and resilience activities to bolster community and government capacity to prepare for and respond to natural hazards. BHA supports World Vision to strengthen the resilience of Mongolia's low-income communities in urban and rural settings to update disaster management guidelines, build response capacity, and run disaster simulations, and to provide herders with support in livestock management. BHA also supports the IFRC to increase the capacity and readiness of MRCS, and, separately, BHA supports MRCS to promote greater resilience against droughts, dzuds, and forest fires. Finally, since 2002, BHA has supported the U.S. Forest Service to strengthen the capacity of Mongolia's government to respond to emergencies by integrating the U.S. National Incident Management System's Incident Command System (ICS) platform. In 2004, Mongolia adopted ICS as the primary guiding framework for NEMA's approach to disaster management.[235]

USAID's contact information includes:
Mission Contact:
Ryan Washburn – Mission Director
USAID/Mongolia
U.S. Embassy
11th Microdistrict, Big Ring Rd.
Ulaanbaatar
Mongolia
Phone: +(976) 7007-6288
Email: *infomongolia@usaid.gov*

USAID Contact
Sarah Mentrup, Desk Officer
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20523, USA
Phone: (571) 217-0270
Email: *smentrup@usaid.gov*

Laws, Policies, and Plans on Disaster Management

Mongolia has current laws and policies, which focus on disaster preparedness and emergency response.[236] Emerging environmental challenges, combined with urbanization and economic development, led to the 2017 revision of the institutional and governance framework established under the earlier 2003 Disaster Protection Law. NEMA led the GoM process to revise the 2003 Law alongside other stakeholders, including MRCS, who participated in the five-year revision process.[237]

2017 Disaster Protection Law (Amended)

Disasters were addressed by the government in the 2003 Law of Mongolia on Disaster Protection, where matters and roles relating to disaster protection were entrusted to state organizations, local authorities, NGOs, the private sector, and individuals. The law mandated that information related to disaster and disaster activities should be made public and that a nation-wide disaster communications

network would be established to enhance disaster protection measures through disseminated news, information, and warning signals.[238] In 2017 the Disaster Protection Law was revised and strengthened in three key areas, including: 1) disaster risk reduction and prevention; 2) humanitarian coordination; and 3) recovery. The revision also provided guidance for multi-stakeholder national and local platforms to be embedded into the new institutional structure. Also included in the 2017 Disaster Protection Law is a chapter on rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens and public, private, and non-governmental organizations in disaster risk management activities. International procedures for coordinating and facilitating foreign assistance in the event of a large-scale disaster response are also explained.[239]

The National Security Concept and State Policy on Disaster Protection was enacted in 2010, and the National Program for Strengthening DRR was enacted in 2011.[240] These policies, programs, and laws as well as other legislative frameworks for DRR, including climate resilience, are found in Table 1.[241]

Disaster Management Communications

Early Warning Systems

Mongolia has a drought/dzud monitoring system known as "DroughtWatch-Mongolia,"

IMPLEMENTATION	LEGISLATION	SCOPE	PURPOSE
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	The Constitution of Mongolia (1992)	National, districts and municipalities	Guarantees the rights of citizens to live in safety from harm, protected against pollution and ecological imbalance. The Foundation of disaster related policies.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	Concept of National Security of Mongolia (1994)	National, districts and municipalities	Requires the establishment of prevention and response mechanism to protect the national security from disaster threat.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	Law of Disaster Protection (2003)	National, district, municipalities, and the private sector	Intended to regulate matters and clearly assign responsibilities related to disaster protection to state agencies, NGOs, local authorities, and the private sector.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	Concept of National Security of Mongolia (2010)	National, districts and municipalities	The updated concept highlighted efforts to strengthen the DRR mechanism and to reduce vulnerabilities by encouraging participation and increasing capacity at all levels.
NEMA, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	State Policy and Programme on Disaster Protection (2011)	National, districts and municipalities	Intended to support sustainable development and to strengthen the DRM system by guaranteeing educational and participation of all sectors and citizens.
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	National Program of Community Participatory Disaster Risk Reduction (2015)	Municipalities	Aims to achieve enhanced DRR activities aligned with SFDRR via community participation, capacity training, climate change adaptation and training the localities.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	Policy of Sustainable Development in Mongolia 2030 (2015)	National, districts and municipalities	Aims to achieve enhanced DRR and disaster protection actives aligned with SFDRR and other national mechanisms.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA	Mid-term Strategy to Implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Mongolia (2017-2030)	National, districts	Strives towards gradual implementation of the SFDRR in Mongolia at national regional levels by establishing measurable objectives and indicators.
THE GOVERNMENT OF MONGOLIA, MONGOLIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY	Amended Law on Disaster Protection (2017)	National, districts, municipalities, NGOs, the public and the private sector	Aims to strengthen the DRR framework and move towards a more proactive approach.

Table 1: Mongolia's Legislative Frameworks for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Resilience

which was provided by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth (RADI) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 2018. DroughtWatch-Mongolia is a system based on satellite data providing real-time drought monitoring to the country's disaster prevention and mitigation departments. Signs of drought can be observed from space before they are visible to humans; therefore, advances in space technology allow Mongolia to monitor the condition of crops and availability of water via satellite images. The system required cooperation between UNESCAP and Mongolia's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) within the Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology, and Environment (IRIMHE) along with the technical support of RADI and further support from three service nodes of the mechanism in China, India, and Thailand.[242]

NEMA owns and manages a platform originally developed by Mercy Corps to share weather and pasture information via SMS. It was expanded to serve more provinces in 2019. There are several partners that made this platform and training possible. The international NGO People in Need (PIN), in partnership with Mercy Corps Mongolia, organized a closing conference for the Leveraging Technology and Tradition for Resilience in Rural Mongolia (LTT4R) project at the Mongolian University of Life Sciences. The project is funded by the European Union's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), Czech Development Agency (CzDA), and PIN Club of Friends in order to increase herders' resilience to drought, dzud, and climate change across rural Mongolia. The training builds local capacity to strengthen disaster resilience and has provided weather forecast information to herders.[243]

Early Warning Systems (EWS) are operational and transmit information about seismic activity and weather forecasts through different platforms, including internet, mobile phone services, national radio, and television. NEMA disseminates warning messages to aimags and soums; however, it is difficult to reach remote herder communities. Several EWS have been developed jointly with other stakeholders. Mongolia has an Earthquake Disaster Warning System, funded by the GoM with the objective to disseminate warnings via siren towers in Ulaanbaatar, television networks, and radio stations. In the event that EWS becomes inoperable, a mobile control center will be utilized. In addition, earthquake sensor devices connected with satellites provide a backup. Warnings may be directly delivered by mobile phone service providers and radio stations.[244]

Information Sharing

Sharing information is critical since no single responding entity, NGO, International Governmental Organization, assisting country government, or the host government can be the source of all required information.[245] Collaboration, information sharing, and networking have been the backbone of successful disaster response and preparation. Disseminating information not only to those in-country and threatened by disaster, but also to those responding to assist in the emergency has been crucial to timely, efficient, and effective disaster response. Recent technology has advanced to aid predicting and alerting of disasters around the world and has led to development of early warning and evacuation measures as well as opportunities to react and prepare for incoming threats to countries. The following are some of the ways in which information regarding disaster risk management and response are shared. Managing information is central to the overall mechanisms within disaster preparedness and response. There are many resources, stakeholders, and components to consider before, during, and after a natural disaster. This section will discuss country-specific, humanitarian, regional, government, and U.S. DoD information sources.

Mongolia Information Sources

National Disaster Management Authority (NEMA)

NEMA has the responsibility to conduct nationwide activities for disaster protection.[246] NEMA's website has information on current operations, DRR projects and programs, and links to subsidiary organizations throughout the country: *http://en.nema.gov.mn/*

Mongolia's National Statistics Office publishes official statistics to an open application programming interface (API) where the latest data available on vulnerability and exposure, including statistics on the distribution of livestock and herder households across the country, data on children under five, and elderly households, among other vulnerable groups can be found.[247] The National Statistics Office API: *http://opendata.1212.mn/en/doc*

Platform for Real-time Impact and Situation Monitoring (PRISM)

Mongolia's government is among those using WFP's PRISM system. PRISM is designed to mitigate the impact of climate-driven hazards by ensuring that decision makers have up-to-date risk and impact analytics to support planning and response. In the case of slow-onset disasters like droughts, PRISM provides an overview of current conditions within an historic context and combines this information with data on vulnerable groups to highlight areas at risk and inform potential early actions. When an acute disaster strikes, PRISM can rapidly produce statistics on the number of people potentially exposed to help governments and humanitarian partners immediately assess the scale of the disaster without deploying people to the scene. The information within PRISM can be delivered directly to government agencies, humanitarian actors, and the public.[248] Mongolia's public-facing PRISM website is: *https://prism-mongolia.org/*

Mongolian Red Cross Society

MRCS participates in disaster prevention and risk reduction, disaster preparedness, disaster response, and disaster recovery to Mongolia.[249] MRCS maintains updates on its programs and interventions on its website: *https://redcross.mn*.

MRCS also posts regular updates on Facebook: @MongolianRedCrossSociety

Humanitarian Information Sources

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP)

UN OCHA's ROAP seeks to optimize the speed, volume, and quality of humanitarian assistance and coordinates emergency preparedness and response in the world's most disaster-prone region in support of national governments. ROAP covers 41 countries and partners with them for coordinated and effective international responses to emergency situations.
Website: *https://www.unocha.org/roap*

For OCHA situation reports, click on "Subscribe" button on bottom of page.

ReliefWeb

ReliefWeb is a service of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) that consolidates information and analysis from organizations, countries, and disasters for the humanitarian community.
Website: *https://reliefweb.int/*

PreventionWeb

PreventionWeb is provided by the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) to consolidate DRR information into an online, easy to understand platform.
Website: *https://www.preventionweb.net/english/*

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The IFRC is the world's largest humanitarian organization, comprised of its 192-member National Societies including the Mongolian

Red Cross Society, a secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland, and over 60 delegations around the world. The IFRC carries out relief operations to assist victims of disasters and combines this with development work to strengthen the capacities of its member National Societies. IFRC's work focuses on four core areas: promoting humanitarian values, disaster response, disaster preparedness, and health and community care.[250]
Website: *https://www.ifrc.org/*

IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO)

IFRC's APRO, located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, works in support of 38 National Societies, including MRCS. Through Country Cluster Delegations and Country Delegation Offices, it provides coordination, financial and technical support for disaster operations, and longer-term development programs. In the case of East Asia National Societies (China, Japan, Mongolia, and South Korea) the IFRC East Asia Country Cluster Delegation provides the aforementioned support. Via the IFRC "Go Platform," the organization publishes a dashboard regarding regional operations.
"Go Platform": *https://go.ifrc.org/regions/2#operations*
Twitter: @IFRCAsiaPacific

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

ICRC is an impartial, neutral, and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. It also works to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. ICRC, together with the IFRC and the 192 Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, make up the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.[251]
Website: *https://www.icrc.org/en*

Humanitarian Response

Humanitarian Response is a platform providing the humanitarian community a means to aid in coordination of operational information and related activities.
Website: *https://www.humanitarianresponse.info*

Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS)

GDACS is a cooperation framework shared by the United Nations, the European Commission, and disaster managers worldwide to improve alerts, information exchange, and coordination in the first phase after major sudden-onset disasters.
Website: *https://www.gdacs.org/alerts/*

Virtual OSOCC

The Virtual OSOCC is a real-time online coordination tool for disaster response professionals from urban search and rescue (USAR) teams, national authorities, and regional and international organizations at a global level.
Website: *https://vosocc.unocha.org/*
The latest alerts can be found here: *http://www.gdacs.org/Alerts/default.aspx*
To subscribe: *http://www.gdacs.org/About/contactus.aspx*

ThinkHazard!

ThinkHazard! is a website that provides detailed information on a country. Information is provided on Mongolia regarding hazards, country assessments, projects, early warning systems, and other resources.
Website: *http://thinkhazard.org*

Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT)

HCT is a strategic and operational decision-making and oversight forum established and led by the Humanitarian Coordinator in each country. It is generally comprised of representatives from UN agencies including the IOM, international NGOs, and the IFRC as well as the respective National Society. During a disaster response, HCTs often produce a Situation Report (SitRep), usually in conjunction with OCHA.
Most HCT SitReps can be found through ReliefWeb: *https://reliefweb.int/*

Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)

HDX is an open platform for sharing data across crises and organizations. It launched in 2014 with the goal of centralizing humanitarian data for easy access and analysis. HDX is managed by OCHA's Center for Humanitarian Data in The Hague.
Website: *https://data.humdata.org/*

U.S. Government Sources

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID is committed to responding to crises around the world to help people and places most in need. They aim to:

- Promote Global Health
- Support Global Stability
- Provide Humanitarian Assistance
- Catalyze Innovation and Partnership
- Empower Women and Girls

USAID produces a monthly newsletter called USAID Newsletter which is available digitally at *https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/newsletter.*

More information and updates from USAID are available via their blog, IMPACT, at *https://blog.usaid.gov/* and on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.
Website: *https://www.usaid.gov/*

USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)

USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) is responsible for leading and coordinating the U.S. Government response to disasters overseas. BHA responds to an average of 75 disasters in 70 countries every year. BHA fulfils its mandate of saving lives, alleviating human suffering, and reducing the social and economic impact of disasters worldwide in partnership with USAID functional and regional bureaus and other U.S. government agencies. BHA works with the international population to help countries prepare for, respond to, and recover from humanitarian crises.[252]

USAID/BHA products include situation reports and maps, which are available via email mailing lists as well as Reliefweb.int. Info products (HA Updates/Fact Sheets, etc.) are also available on USAID.gov (*https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance*)

For BHA updates on a disaster response, ask the BHA representative for the respective DoD Geographic Combatant Command to add you to the email list, if you have a U.S. government email address:

- *BHA.INDOPACOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.SOUTHCOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.NORTHCOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.AFRICOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.SOCOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.CENTCOM@usaid.gov*
- *BHA.EUCOM@usaid.gov*

Pacific Disaster Center Global

Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) Global has trademarked an early warning and decision support system called DisasterAWARE®. DisasterAWARE® is primarily for disaster management practitioners and senior decision makers. It supports DRR and best practices throughout all phases of disaster management from early warning to multi-hazard monitoring. It has a collection of scientifically verified, geospatial, data and modeling tools to assess hazard risks and impacts. A restricted version of DisasterAWARE is the EMOPS (Emergency Operations) system, which is specifically for the disaster management community, including government agencies and humanitarian assistance organizations serving at local, state, federal, and regional levels.[253]

PDC also provides a public version, Disaster Alert, which offers open access to a world map documenting 18 hazard types.[254] Disaster Alert also has a free, early-warning app to receive customizable maps-based visual alerts of active hazards. The app offers a global notification system covering natural and man-made hazards. It is available on both iPhone and Android.[255]
Website: *https://www.pdc.org/* and *https://www.pdc.org/apps/disasteraware/*

Emergency Operations (EMOPS) system (request account): *https://emops.pdc.org/emops/*

All Partners Access Network (APAN)

APAN is the Unclassified Information Sharing Service for the U.S. DoD. APAN provides the DoD and mission partners community space and collaboration tools to leverage information to effectively plan, train, and respond to meet their business requirements and mission objectives. Importantly, APAN's technology team has been supporting HADR operations for over 15 years.[256] APAN has played an integral role in the success of disaster responses, such as the 2015 California Wildfire Response and the 2013 Typhoon Haiyan Response in which they provided organizations and militaries a centralized location to share information, increase situational awareness and decrease response time and duplicated efforts for best practices in HADR services.[257]
Website: *https://www.apan.org/*

Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC)

JTWC provides advanced warning for U.S. Government agencies and organizations in relevant areas.
Website: *https://www.metoc.navy.mil/jtwc/jtwc.html*

Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (DKI-APCSS)

DKI-APCSS is a U.S. DoD institute that addresses regional and global security issues, inviting military and civilian representatives of the U.S. and Asia-Pacific nations to its program of executive education and workshops.
Website: *https://apcss.org/*

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM)

The Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CFE-DM) is a U.S. DoD organization that was established by U.S. Congress in 1994 and is a direct reporting unit to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. CFE-DM provides training and education to help U.S. and foreign military personnel navigate complex issues in disaster management and humanitarian assistance. They produce country focused disaster management reference handbooks, after action reports, best practice pamphlets, and lessons learned for advancement in response coordination. CFE-DM also works to improve cross-coordination and reduce duplication of efforts and promote U.S. involvement in civilian-military consultations and dialogues with relevant HADR parties. CFE provides resources and updates at its website, as well as via Facebook and Twitter (@cfedmha).
Website: *https://www.cfe-dmha.org/*

Disaster Management Reference Handbooks are available for download at: *https://www.cfe-dmha.org/DMHA-Resources/Disaster-Management-Reference-Handbooks*

CFE-DM Disaster Information Reports are available for download at: *https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Publications/Reports*

Civil-Military Coordination in Foreign Disaster Relief Missions: Best Practices for Information Sharing is available here: *https://www.cfe-dmha.org/Publications*

COVID-19 Information Sharing Sources

Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center
https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/

Cases Database
https://github.com/CSSEGISandData/COVID-19

INFORM's COVID-19 Risk Index
https://data.humdata.org/dataset/inform-covid-19-risk-index-version-0-1-4

INFRASTRUCTURE

As Mongolia is landlocked and has a low population density in general, transport and logistics are perennial challenges. The existing energy system is heavily dependent on coal although Mongolia has substantial renewable energy potential. While there is very good information technology use and connectivity, communications infrastructure remains concentrated in Ulaanbaatar. Among other benefits, digital transformation could bring investment in 5G, thereby boosting citizens' access to digitalized public and private sector services, including health information, a gap noted during the country's fight against COVID-19. The state is heavily involved in core infrastructure such as power, water, and transport, and the state is a key partner in overcoming gaps and overseeing the country's energy and communications transitions. The long-term development strategy, known as Vision 2050, was approved by Parliament in early 2020. It elevates the priority of green growth for the country's economy and infrastructure.

Transport

With its huge land mass, sparse population, and climate extremes, Mongolia faces formidable challenges in building roads and railways, the former needed both internally and to connect the country to its external trading partners, and the latter to provide carrying capacity for bulk cargo. Tough physical conditions and difficulties in recovering costs from roads built in remote locations with limited traffic had long undermined the development of a quality network. In 2012, the government announced a plan to connect all aimag centers to Ulaanbaatar with paved roads and launched an ambitious program to triple the length of the country's paved road network within the decade. By 2021, all 21 aimags had paved road connections with the capital city.

Zamyn-Uud, in the southeast, is the country's main gateway for trade with China and the rest of the world. The Zamyn-Uud (Mongolia)-Erenhot (China) border crossing point (BCP) links Mongolia to China's Tianjin port, the nearest point for sea access. The border area was recently given a major makeover with a logistics terminal, transshipment facilities, and the installation of modern technology to smooth transactions.[258] This multi-modal hub fits within Mongolia's participation in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program, initially conceived in 1997 by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Mongolia sits on CAREC Corridor 4, as detailed in Table 2.[259]

In the post-2015 development agenda world, Mongolia has tried to match its own Vision 2050 planning with the Sendai Framework, particularly in terms of developing greener transport and promoting equitable economic participation across the national territory. As part of its National Green Development Policy, Mongolia laid out several goals for the transport sector. These goals were expounded upon in the 2011 National Action Program on Climate Change (NAPCC), the 2015 Urban Public Transport Investment Program, the 2010 Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions, and the 2010 Midterm New Development Program. The goals include:

- Improve the national paved road network, upgrading/paving 11,000 km (6,835 miles) by 2021
- Improve the Ulaanbaatar city road network to decrease traffic by 30-40% by 2023
- Increase the share of privately-owned hybrid road vehicles to 13% by 2030
- Shift from liquid fuel to liquid petroleum gas for vehicles in Ulaanbaatar and aimag centers by improving taxation and environmental fee system; and
- Improve enforcement mechanism of standards for road vehicles and non-road transport.[260]

	CAREC 4a	CAREC 4b	CAREC 4c
COUNTRY			
RUSSIA	Tashanta (road) – BCP	Naushki – BCP	Naushki – BCP
MONGOLIA	Ulaanbaishint/Tsagaanur (road) – BCP	Sukhbaatar – BCP	Sukhbaatar - BCP
	Olgii	Ulaanbaatar	Ulaanbaatar
	Khovd	Zamyn-Uud (rail/road) – BCP	Chingiis
	Yarant (road) – BCP	-	Buruun-Urt
	-	-	Bichigt – BCP
CHINA	Takeshikent (road) – BCP	Erenhot (rail/road) - BCP	-
	Urumqi	-	-

Table 2: CAREC Corridor 4: Russian Federation – East Asia

The country's transport authorities include:

- Ministry of Road and Transport Development (MRTD) - the main policy-making body aimed at supporting the expansion and improvement of road, rail, and air as well as logistics and transport services.
- National Road Transport Center - a state-owned enterprise under MRTD; in charge of coordinating implementation of policies, laws, and legislation on road transport; issues permits for cross-border transport of freight under bilateral road transport agreements with other countries and routes approved by MRTD.[261]
- Civil Aviation Authority of Mongolia (CAAM) – executive-level agency with a statutory duty to oversee and regulate the civil aviation sector; responsible for aviation safety, airports, registration of aircraft, and security.[262]

Airports

Given the vastness of the country, the concentration of infrastructure in Ulaanbaatar, and the dangers of overland transport, Mongolia's air transport sector is a lifeline to the people, economy, and government and will serve as a key component in any disaster response.

The Ulaanbaatar airport (Chinggis Khaan International / UBN) is the country's major international gateway. UBN handles 98% of international flights. Khovd, Choibalsan, and Ulgii have scheduled international flights that serve neighboring Kazakhstan and China's Inner Mongolia region.[263] The new Chinggis Khaan International opened in 2021, replacing the former "Chinggis Khaan" Buyant Ukhaa International (ULN), which now operates solely as a charter, training, and emergency field.[264]

Mongolia has 44 airports, several of which are privately owned, and only 15 of which have paved/asphalt runways. All but one of the airports have runways longer than 1,500 m (4,900 feet) in length.[265] In many cases, grass/gravel runways host domestic services. Winter can severely hamper air traffic due to inadequate snow clearing and deicing equipment.[266] Table 3 provides some details of Mongolia's airports.[267]

Mongolia has three privately owned commercial carriers providing domestic and international travel services, on top of the state-owned flag carrier, MIAT Mongolian Airlines. Eight international commercial airlines also operate in and out of the country.[268]

Seaports

Mongolia is landlocked. The primary seaport allowing Mongolia access to international trade is China's Tianjin.

Roads

Mongolia has a state road network of 113,000 km (70,215 miles). Of this network, only about 10,000 km (6,213 miles) are paved.[269] Most overland roads are gravel or simple cross-country tracks, and most are not reliable year-round; consequently, loading capacity is limited. Lack of snow or ice clearing in winter and no system of sanding or gritting road surfaces leads to ice formation that can slow traffic. Only two paved

International Airport	IATA/ICAO Code	Runway Length	Runway Surface
Chinggis Khaan International Airport	UBN/ZMCK	Runway 1: 3,100 x 60 m (10,170 x 197 feet)	Runway 1: Concrete
Buyant Ukhaa Airport (closed to regular traffic)	ULN/ZMUB	Runway 1: 3,100 x 60 m (10,170 x 197 feet) Runway 2: 1,999 x 40 (6,560 x 131 feet)	Runway 1: Asphalt Runway 2: Grass

National Airport	IATA/ICAO Code	Runway Length	Runway Surface
Altai Airport	LTI/ZMAT	2,880 x 60 m (9,449 x 196 feet)	Asphalt
Arvaikheer Airport	AVK/ZMAH	2,300 x 50 m (7,546 x 164 feet)	Grass
Bayankhongor Airport	BYN/ZMBH	Runway 1: 2,800 x 35 m (9,186 x 114 feet) Runway 2: 2,100 x 50 m (6,889 x 164 feet)	Runway 1: Asphalt Runway 2: Grass
Bulgan Airport	UGA/ZMBN	1,900 x 50 m (6,234 x 164 feet)	Grass
Bulgan (Khovd) Airport	HBU/ZMBS	1,800 x 40 m (6,234 x 131 feet)	Grass
Buruun-Urt Airport	UUN/ZMBU	2,200 x 50 m (7,217 x 164 feet)	Grass
Choibalsan Airport	COQ/ZMCD	2,600 x 40 m (8,530 x 131 feet)	Concrete
Dalanzadgad Airport	DLZ/ZMDZ	2,300 x 50 m (7,545 x 164 feet)	Asphalt
Donoi "New Uliastai" Airport	ULZ/ZMDN	Runway 1: 3,200 x 30 m (10,498 x 98 feet) Runway 2: 2,880 m (9,400 feet)	Runway 1: Grass Runway 2: Asphalt
Kharkhorin Airport	KHR/ZMHH	1,800 x 50 m (6,234 x 164 feet)	Grass
Khanbumbat (Oyuu Tolgoi) Airport	ZMKB	3,250 x 45 m (10,662 x 147 feet)	Concrete
Khatgal Airport	HTM/ZMHT	2,400 x 30 m (7,874 x 98 feet)	Unpaved
Khovd Airport	HVD/ZMKD	Runway 1: 2,850 x 49 m (9,352 x 160 feet) Runway 2: 2,000 x 50 m (6,535 x 164 feet)	Runway 1: Asphalt Runway 2: Grass
Khujirt Airport	HJT/ZMHU	2,200 x 60 m (7,217 x 196 feet)	Grass
Mandalgobi Airport	MXW/ZMMG	1,800 x 40 m (6,234 x 131 feet)	Grass
Muren (Mörön) Airport	MXV/ZMMN	Runway 1: 2,440 x 42 m (8,005 x 137 feet) Runway 2: 2,000 x 40 m (6,561 x 131 feet)	Runway 1: Asphalt Runway 2: Gravel
Olgii (Ulgii) Airport	ULG/ZMUL	2,900 x 30 m (9,350 x 98 feet)	Concrete
Ovoot Airport	ZMGT	2,220 x 30 m (7,283 x 98 feet)	Concrete
Tsetserleg Airport	TSZ/ZMTG	1,650 x 35 m (5,413 x 114 feet)	Grass
Ulaangom Airport	ULO/ZMUG	2,697 x 30 m (8,815 x 98 feet)	Concrete
Underkhaan (Öndörkhaan) Airport	UNR/ZMUH	1,800 x 50 m (6,234 x 164 feet)	Grass

Table 3: Codes and Runway Lengths for Mongolia's Main Airports

roads lead to border posts, i.e., the roads from Ulaanbaatar to the Russian border and to the Bulgan border post with China. The road south to the Chinese border includes about 450 km (280 miles) of unpaved road. Other paved roads from Ulaanbaatar exist but are very limited (500 km (310 miles) westward and 250 km (155 miles) eastward). There are few bridges on dirt roads, so fords are common.[270] Fords and low-water crossings are road and trail stream crossing structures designed to be overtopped by high water flows in streams or icy environments, sometimes as an alternative to culverts and bridges on low traffic volume roads and trails.

Despite the relatively low density of engineered roadways in the country, the population's overall concentration in Ulaanbaatar means that some 60% of the population and 70% of the GDP is still served by improved roads. The road construction and maintenance industries are fully privatized but overseen by MRTD. Although the industries have expanded by more than 400% since the 1990s, they still struggle to maintain sufficient equipment and personnel due to skills mismatches, cost of machinery, fuel costs, and other factors.[271]

Since the 1990s, the government has made road construction the backbone of its regional development plans. In 1998, the government established a domestic road network and

connected the country to the Asian Highway Network, which links Asia and Europe. In 2001, the government launched the Millennium Road project to build a main east-west highway and several north-south highways to connect provinces and expand links among Mongolia, China, and Russia. As of 2020, Mongolia had built or improved about 15,000 km (9,300 miles) of national roads, but as the infrastructure network has grown, constant repairs have strained the system. In 2020 alone, heavy rain damaged and destroyed national roads in 46 locations in 18 aimags. Many of the problems are the consequence of changing weather conditions caused by climate change. The rising global temperature is increasing the size and intensity of floods and melting the permafrost atop which many roads are built. Paved roads also contribute. The black asphalt heats up as it absorbs sunlight, then melts the permafrost beneath it.[272]

Central to the goal of promoting sustainable economic growth and improving human development, the country's focus has been on the main road corridor, which runs for nearly 750 km (466 miles) and connects Mongolia to China in the south and the Russian Federation in the north. The road, which traverses extreme terrain, has been built in sections. As of 2021, what had been a 14-hour journey in a four-wheel drive vehicle had been cut by two-thirds in any type of vehicle, according to ADB. ADB has been involved in two key road projects. The first was the north–south corridor, connecting Altanbulag at the Russian border and Zamyn-Uud at the border with China. That work was completed in 2015.[273] The second is the western regional corridor that is part of the UNESCAP-backed Asian Highway Network that incorporates 145,000 km (90,099 miles) of road across 32 countries.[274] The western regional road corridor also provides a direct route between China and Russia with a potential for new trading opportunities between Mongolia and its immediate neighbors and further afield.[275] Figure 10 shows Asian Highway Route 32 across Mongolia from Khovd to Namrug; the north-south axes of routes 3 and 4 connect Russia to China across Mongolia in the central and western sectors, respectively (red lines are highways; black lines are national borders).[276]

In its long-term development policy (through 2050), the country is set to pursue development via regional economic integration but with sustainability and green principals in mind. The infrastructure component of this objective is dominated by the goal of finishing construction of the main east-west road and extending some north-south vertical axes as branches by 2030. The next stage, expected to be completed by 2040, includes the north-south arteries to neighboring countries and connecting smaller Mongolian settlements to these roads. Finally, by 2050, the country expects to be able to manage its new road network to accommodate the technology-based vehicles and logistics networks that can be expected to have developed by then.[277]



Figure 10: Map of Asian Highway Links between Mongolia and Russia

Railways

Among the country's Vision 2050 goals is to create conditions to boost export of mining products through building railways connecting strategic mineral deposits with border points by 2030.[278] The Ulaanbaatar Railway dates to 1949 and joins Russia with China via Ulaanbaatar. In most of Mongolia, the route is single track. The gauge is 1,520 mm (59.8 inches) in Russia and Mongolia and 1,435 mm (56.5 inches) in China.[279] Rail transport accounts for over 60% of the country's freight traffic.[280] Total freight carriage was 25.8 million tons in 2018, 28.1 million tons in 2019, 30.0 million tons in 2020, and 31.2 million tons in 2021.[281] Despite its efficiency in the case of bulk cargo, the railway system is less effective for smaller-scale freight over shorter distances. Moreover, railway transport is subject to delays caused by the different railway gauges used in Mongolia and China; cargo must be transferred from one gauge to another at the border. The Erenhot–Zamyn-Uud complex is the only rail link between China and Mongolia. Capacity at Zamyn-Uud is 420 wagons per day. It can take more than two days to complete the border crossing.[282]

The rail network comprises 1,815 km (1,128 miles) of 1,520 mm-gauge track, of which 1,110 km (690 miles) are on the main line linking Russia to China; 238 km (148 miles) are on a separate network in Eastern Mongolia that has its own link to the Russian railway, and the remaining 477 km (296 miles) are branches from the main line, to Erdenet, 164 km (102 miles) southwest of Darkhan off the main Sukhbaatar - Zamyn-Uud Line, and to Baganuur, 94 km (58 miles) east of the main Sukhbaatar - Zamyn-Uud Line. There can be issues during winter with snow on the tracks causing closures for days at a time. There can also be issues with blowing sand on the southern section of the line in the Gobi Desert. The southern section has four large bridges that are 100-150 m (328-492 feet) long. If they were to be damaged, Ulaanbaatar Railway does not have the capacity to repair them and so the line would be closed for an extended period. The current lines are shown in Figure 11.[283]

All of the railway lines are maintained and owned by Ulaanbaatar Railway, a joint venture between the governments of Russia and Mongolia who each hold a 50% share.[284] Since 2009, Russian Railways has held trust rights for the Russian shareholding. In 2017, a meeting of the Board of Ulaanbaatar Railways considered a draft long-term development program for modernization to include track repairs, updated rolling stock and locomotives, construction of a sorting hill at Zamyn-Uud, and other measures, including passenger transport.[285]

Waterways

Only Lake Khovsgol has boats that operate on a regular, year-round basis. Much of Mongolia's 580 km (360 miles) of waterways freezes over between September and May. The boats serving lakes are mostly for tourist travel and have a capacity for fewer than 140 passengers. Lake Khovsgol is 136 km (85 miles) north-south, and it takes approximately 7 hours to cross the entire lake. The Selenge (270 km; 168 miles) and Orkhon (175 km; 109 miles) rivers are navigable but see little boat traffic. There is a customs boat that patrols the Selenge to the Russian border.[286]

Schools

In a sparsely populated country with more than one-quarter of the population engaged in seminomadic herding, Mongolia faces major challenges delivering quality education to all. Among those challenges are siting and supporting schools, and the result is uneven coverage and vastly differing enrollment and attendance numbers. Observers have noted a decrease in the number of primary schools at the bagh or lowest administrative level and increases in the number of soum- or secondary administrative-level upper-secondary schools with a low number of students. Meanwhile, in some aimags almost every soum has a 12-year secondary school while in other aimags there are a very few such schools.

Integrating the children of seminomadic families into the formal education sector has proven a long-term challenge as persistent rural

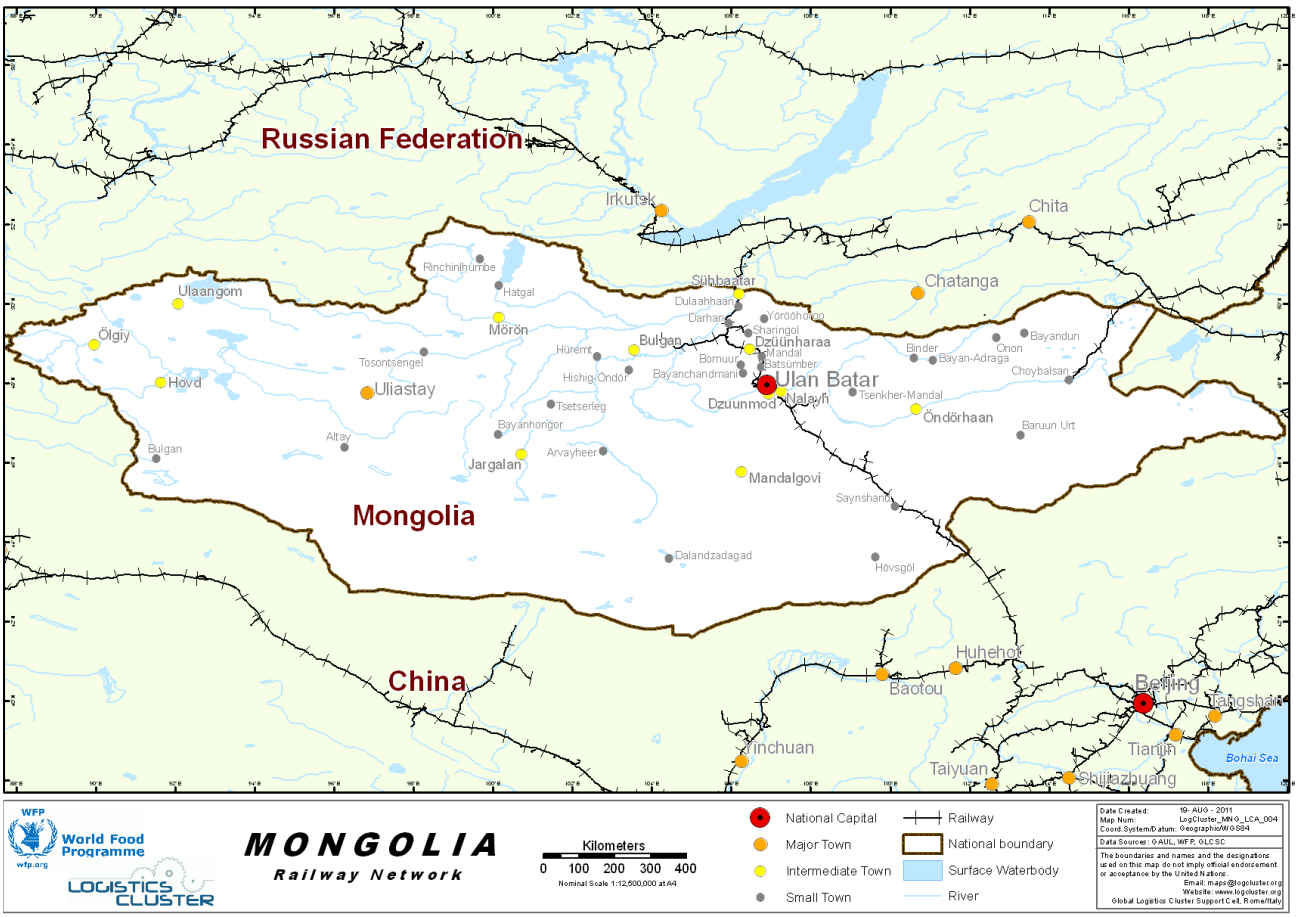


Figure 11: Mongolia's Railway Network

poverty affects household capacity to keep children at school and to manage hidden costs such as school uniforms and winter clothing, textbooks, school supplies, public transportation, and school events. Meanwhile, well-educated, skilled, and experienced general education teachers – particularly those with experience in mathematics, English, physics, and information technology – are unwilling to work in rural areas where laboratories, teaching aids, and other resources are scarce. Concurrently, urban children often enter school later because of over-crowding and the difficulty of finding a space in a school.[287]

One of the most significant developments the government undertook to strengthen the education system was to switch from a 10-year curriculum cycle to a 12-year cycle between 2004 and 2015. This shift put the country in line with international standards but required revising and updating teachers' knowledge and skills by providing teaching and learning resources and upgrading the overall education environment.[288] The Ministry of Education and Science (MEDS, until 2020 the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sports) oversees most of the education sector. The Law on Education mandates basic education (completion through Grade 9) as a legal requirement for every citizen and makes it free for all. Since the 2015 reforms, the system has comprised non-compulsory pre-school (2–5 years of age), followed by a 12-year schooling program of primary (ages 6–10), lower secondary (ages 11–14), and upper secondary (ages 15–17) levels. There is an exit point to vocational education at Grade 9 and to tertiary education or higher technical and vocational education and training (TVET) at Grade 12. Figure 12 shows the structure of the Mongolian education system.[289]

Since 2012, management of TVET has been under the authority of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP). According to the Law on Vocational Education, the highest

administrative body in the sub-sector is the National Council of Vocational Education. As of 2019, 77% of vocational training students were in programs leading to certification as skilled workers. Three-quarters of institutions deliver programs in manufacturing, followed by construction and transportation trades; these three tracks enroll 59% of all trainees.[290]

As of 2019, there were 1,435 kindergartens throughout the country. Of these, 889 kindergartens were state owned and 546 were privately owned. Of state-owned kindergartens, 27% were in Ulaanbaatar, 28% were in aimag centers, 40% were in soum centers, and 5% were in bagh centers. Eighty percent of privately owned kindergartens were in Ulaanbaatar. During the 2018-2019 academic year, a total of 261,354 children were covered by all kindergartens, 92% in regular kindergarten and 8% in alternative programs. Also in the 2018-2019 academic year, 803 primary and secondary schools (65 public and 147 private) were operating. Of these, 558 were in rural areas and 245 were in Ulaanbaatar; all together, these schools served 593,150 students who were led by 30,411 full-time teachers. In the TVET sub-sector, a total of 86 polytechnic colleges and Vocational Training and Production Centers provide vocational education and skill training to nearly 40,000 students.

In post-secondary education, there are nearly 100 institutions, of which only 20% are state owned. As of 2019, there were 157,625 students enrolled across all tertiary institutions, and of these students, 87,992 were at state-owned universities while 69,633 were at private or foreign-backed universities. The most common curricula studied across all tertiary institutions

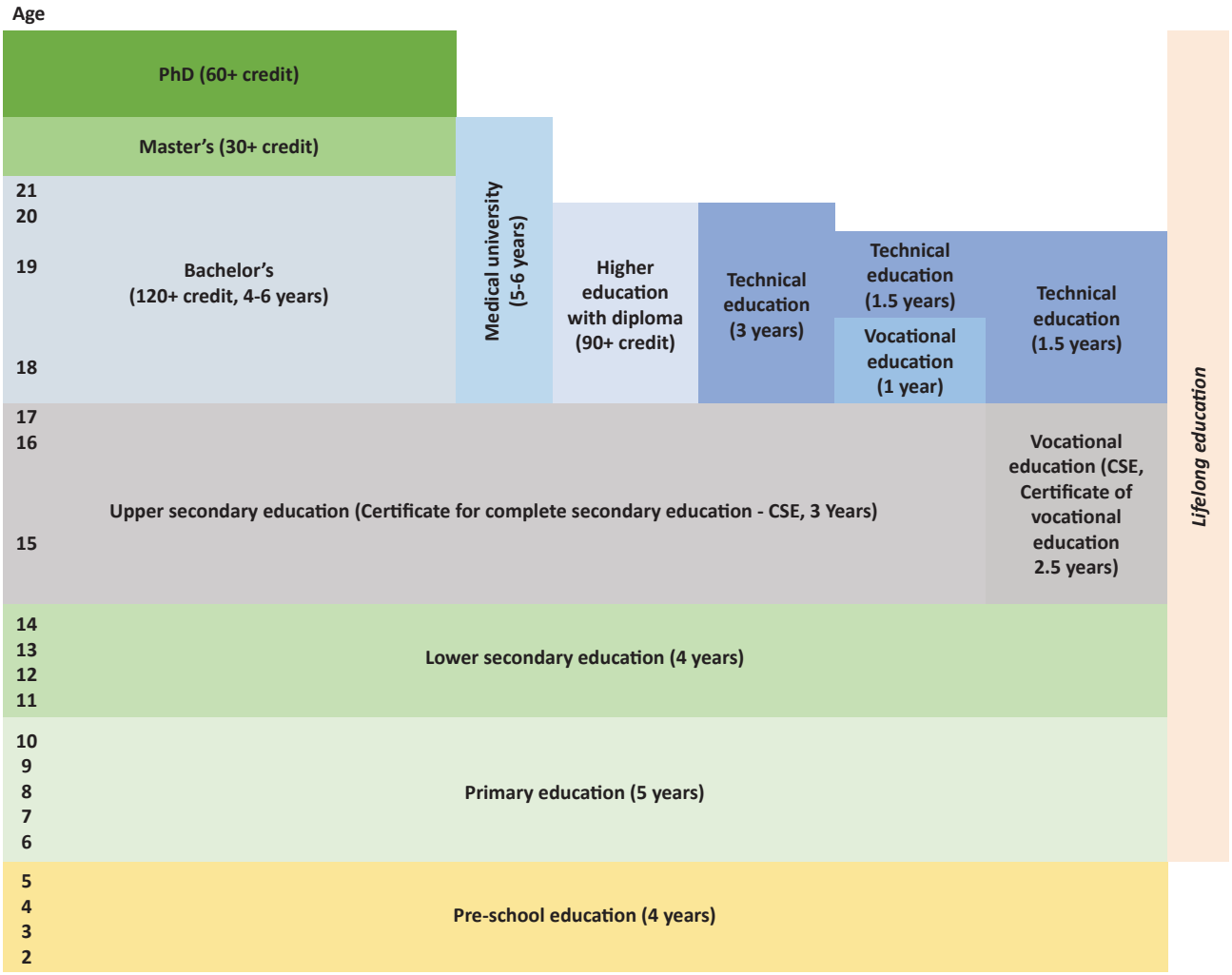


Figure 12: Mongolia's Education System

are business administration or law (27.5% of students), education (14.8% of student), and health (14.2% of students).[291]

Boarding schools have been a key part of integrating herding families' children into formal education since the Soviet Era. In 2018–2019, more than 76% of applicants for open dormitory places were from herding families; herders' children number more than 25,000 of nearly 35,000 children boarding at school. There are 513 dormitories, and an estimated 92% of children who apply for dormitory stays secure places. Although it serves tens of thousands of children, the boarding school program suffers from facility and protection issues. Almost one-fifth of dormitory facilities are in poor condition with inadequate heating and lack of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) facilities, violating government policy. Moreover, there are long-standing concerns that children who use dormitories are exposed to abuse, including intimidation, bullying, and group discrimination, as well as corporal punishment. Finally, for the youngest children, many herding families have adapted their winter movement, splitting families to send men with the herds while mothers and children move to soum centers to sustain formal education. Although this allows the children to deepen integration in formal structures, it disrupts transmission of culture and lifeways.[292]

Disaster Risk Reduction in the Education Sector

Disasters can affect children and disrupt their schooling by damaging infrastructure and scattering families or undermining their livelihoods, thereby affecting the most vulnerable in society and perpetuating poverty. Beyond physical safety of children, disaster impacts on the education sector force children to drop out of school and erode the resilience of communities. One way to reduce the risk of such impacts is via education curricula that increase public awareness and equip children with critical thinking.

From 2014, World Vision Mongolia formed "Junior Rescuer" clubs in public secondary schools as part of its program to build capacity among children to address disaster risk. There are more than 80 clubs with more than 1,500 members who are trained to educate their peers on: 1) what disasters are; 2) what disaster risk reduction (DRR) is; 3) how to reduce disaster risk in schools; 4) what children can do in DRR; 5) how to assess children's contributions toward DRR; and 6) how to provide First Aid. Moreover, these children are taught how to talk to their own parents on DRR at the household level. Junior Rescuer clubs lead disaster risk assessments using a "risk mapping" tool that identifies risks and causes in school areas. Based on this assessment, children then develop a DRR plan. Via these Clubs, more than 14,500 children were involved in DRR trainings planned and run by Junior Rescuers and their adult supervisors. The clubs have been recognized by MEDS and NEMA as effective extra-curricular ways to build DRR skills.[293]

Mongolia's NEMA and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) ran the "Strengthening the National Capacity of Earthquake Disaster Protection and Prevention in Mongolia" project from 2016 through 2020. One of the objectives of the project was to foster DRR education and awareness. As part of the project, the "Life-Safety Education Program" targeted a school-based DRR curriculum developed by MEDS and implemented in schools from September 2019.[294] By November 2019, the project had gone through the process of developing guidelines for school and pre-school DRR education, developed education materials for schools and pre-schools, and begun teacher training on the materials. Various classroom materials and practical exercises were developed for use in the classroom.[295] Figure 13 shows the JICA team working with MEDS and teachers to develop the materials and processes of the "Life-Safety" program.[296]

Communications

Despite the difficulties posed by low population densities and long distances, Mongolia has a thriving information and

communications sector. There are more mobile telephone accounts than people, and at least 82% of the population is connected to the internet either via mobile or fixed broadband. The expansion of modern, digital communications has been especially important for key communities, e.g., seminomadic herders, the elderly, and Mongolians with disabilities. In addition to critical services, the reach of communications infrastructure means that almost all Mongolians have access to hundreds of national mass media outlets as well as to global media.

Telephones
Landlines: 160,153
Mobile subscriptions: 4.36 million

The country's telecoms market is competitive with six fixed-line and four mobile-cellular providers; among the latter, all have installed 4G LTE equipment. With greater than 133 mobile subscriptions per 100 people, mobile broadband is almost ubiquitous, and tariffs remain reasonable as operators compete for market share.[297] Mobile telephone service is offered by Mobicom, Skytel, Unitel, and G-mobile. Mobicom holds about a 38% market share; its closest competitor is Unitel (34%). Still Skytel and G-mobile each have greater than 10% of the market. 4G LTE service launched in 2016 and is now dominant for mobile data usage (measured by terabytes down-/up-loaded). Android handsets are more common than Apple handsets by a ratio of more than 3:1.[298]

A challenge within the telephone network is that most Mongolians connect via a mobile telephone to one of hundreds of thousands of base stations, each of which serves a relatively small area. A disaster that damages a base station will cut off people who are in that geographical space and who are the most likely to need



Figure 13: NEMA and JICA Develop School-Based DRR Program

information related to the disaster. At the same time, given the limited geographic area covered by each base station, an early warning alert can be highly tailored. The data capacity of mobile and wireless can be a limiting factor in how much information can reach targeted populations when an early warning system is activated. Most individuals will be able to receive voice, SMS, or app-based information seamlessly while authorities with fiber-optic connections will receive more substantial data packages. Satellite connections are used to back up the national fiber-optic backbone connections, especially in remote areas. There is also a relatively high degree of redundancy built into Mongolia's fiber-optic network with at least 10 overlapping "rings" of cable reaching most parts of the country. In case of an earthquake or flood that disrupts one network, there is a high probability that another can pick up information transfers. There is an earthquake early warning system that alerts mobile telephones as part of the Earthquake Disaster Warning System (EDWS).[299]

Internet Access

Internet users: 2.7 million (June 2021)[300]
Broadband (fixed) subscriptions: 307,166

The country's telecoms companies have installed a fiber-optic network that connects all aimags and soums.[301] Since 2002, the network has been built and modernized by NetCom, Mobinet, Railcom, Gemnet, and Skynetworks, the five companies that own and operate portions of the national fiber-optic backbone. Most of the backbone is underground, providing some protection against some natural disaster risks. Moreover, the fiber-optic backbone consists of several interconnected rings, ideal for redundancy because if a ring is broken, virtually all locations along it can still be reached by routing traffic in the other direction around the ring. There are three landing stations for international fiber-optic cables (one each owned by NetCom, Railcom, and Gemnet) in two border towns, one on the border with Russia and the other on the border with China. The geographic distance between landing stations and the multitude of cables at each one provide some protection against service disruptions during natural disasters.[302]

More than 82% of the population uses the internet, and nearly all internet users are also users of one or more social media platform.[303] Survey data shows that some 99% of social media users access their profiles via mobile device. Nonetheless, website traffic indicates that about one-half of all page views from within Mongolia come from mobile devices and one-half come from lap-/desk-top computers. The average connection speed for mobile devices is 18.40 megabits per second (Mbps) while speeds for fixed connections average 38 Mbps.[304]

As of 2020, all commercial banks in the country were offering mobile banking services, through the internet, SMS, and telephone banking. There are more active mobile bank users than there are people in a sign of many multiple account holders across personal and business customers. Mobile banking services have been especially significant for the country's large seminomadic herder population, as well as for the elderly and disabled, all of whom typically have mobile phones but little or no access to physical banks. Businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises, and consumers have also taken advantage of the opportunities that mobile banking and the internet provide for e-commerce, with 10 local or national online shopping platforms established as of June 2020.[305]

By law, individuals and groups may engage in the peaceful expression of views on the internet. The government maintains a list of blocked websites and adds sites to the list for alleged violations of relevant laws and regulations, including those relating to intellectual property. Information on the number of newly blocked websites is generally not available. A regulation places broad restrictions on inappropriate content without defining objectionable content explicitly. The regulation requires websites with heavy traffic to use filtering software that makes publicly visible the internet protocol addresses of those commenting or sharing content.[306]

Top 10 Websites Accessed from within Mongolia
1. Google.com
2. Youtube.com
3. Ikon.mn
4. Facebook.com
5. Gogo.mn
6. Pixnet.net
7. Xopom.com
8. Caak.mn
9. Dcard.tw
10. Google.mn[307]

Mass Media

As of the end of 2019, there were 500 registered media outlets that employed nearly 4,750 people, out of which one-half are journalists and creative staff, according to a Mongolian Press Institute survey.[308]

According to Freedom House, press freedom is generally respected, and media outlets collectively present a wide range of views. However, coverage can be partisan, particularly during election seasons when xenophobic rhetoric and unsupported allegations of corruption are more likely to appear. A combination of factors does erode some of the liveliness and credibility of the national mass media including: 1) ownership of media companies is opaque; 2) many journalists self-censor to avoid offending political or business interests and facing costly libel suits; and 3) a 2017 law leaves journalists open to fines for publishing false and defamatory information.[309]

The Communications Regulatory Commission (CRC) is the sole regulatory authority for digital and broadcast media, including social media and content aggregators. The government appoints the chair and members of the commission, which grants television and radio broadcast licenses without public consultation. CRC regulations on content and service impose content restrictions in broad terms, for example on extreme violence and certain issues related to sex and sexuality.[310] The regulations also set standards on issuing, terminating, and withdrawing licenses and standards on studio equipment.

There is no state regulation to limit internet users' access to any domestic or foreign websites or their joining social networking sites. Nonetheless, the National Police Agency (NPA) and CRC issued a joint order in August 2020 to regulate online space with the stated goal of preventing the spread of disinformation on the COVID-19 pandemic. It would require the removal of the offending information; those service providers who disseminated such information would be temporarily restricted until the end of the pandemic. During its efforts to implement the order, CRC delivered recommendation to 134 website service providers to disable users' comments for COVID-related official information and data.[311]

A range of laws impose positive obligations on the media to carry certain types of messages either from the State or that are in the public interest. Based on the Law on Civil Defense, the media must transmit information in case of attack and during disasters and accidents; the Law on Meteorological and Environmental Assessment and Analysis requires media to provide information to the public about natural disasters; and the Law on Fire Security requires media to publish or broadcast urgent information necessary to prevent and fight fires. All media, alongside religious and public organizations and businesses are required to educate the public about HIV/AIDS prevention, per the Law on Prevention of HIV/AIDS. Minority language and sign language services are rare in traditional media; however, marginalized and minority groups have intensified their use of social media to organize, build awareness, and protect themselves. This is particularly true of sexual and linguistic minority communities.

There are more than 100 television stations, 50 radio stations, 100 newspapers, and 100 news websites. Television has historically been the most popular source of information, followed by the internet;[312] the audience for radio is significantly smaller than other media.[313] State-run MONTSAME is the only national news agency. In addition to Mongolian, it publishes in English, Russian, Chinese, and Japanese.

From around 2005, the number of print media outlets declined precipitously even as large business and political groups began acquiring media companies. According to a 2016 survey on media ownership undertaken by the Press Institute of Mongolia and Reporters Without Borders, some 74% of the country's most popular media outlets (measured by audience share) are owned by politicians, public officials, or business groups with political ties. Furthermore, owners of or investors in 29 of 39 top media outlets are involved, in some way, in politics. The 2019 Law on Broadcasting that requires transparent ownership of media outlets has made little headway in creating a more transparent atmosphere.[314]

Television channels reach the entire population through terrestrial and satellite distribution while Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB) delivers programs through analogue and digital systems via terrestrial, satellite, and cable. Digital TV has been present since 2011 with internet-protocol TV offered by Univision (owned by Unitel) and Skymedia (owned by Skytel). Most daily newspapers have their own news websites or mobile apps. Privately-owned DDish TV is the major satellite distributor and Sansar CATV dominates the cable market, out-competing 10 other operators. Despite the increase in television stations and broadcast penetration, there is still a problem of access for those of lower socio-economic status who cannot afford to purchase television sets or essential satellite television decoders to access programming. UNESCO did support MNB to develop and operate a second channel targeting minorities, and it broadcasts around 30% of its content in the Kazakh and Tuva languages and in the Buryat dialect. MNB and TV5 use Mongolian Sign Language in their primetime newscasts.[315]

Print/Digital
Udriin Sonin – largest-circulation daily newspaper, in Mongolian, privately-owned
Unoodor – major daily newspaper, in Mongolian, owned by Mongol News Group
Zuuny Medee – top five daily newspaper, in Mongolian, owned by ZGSM
The UB Post - English-language print and on-line, owned by Mongol News Group

Broadcast/Digital
Mongolian National Broadcaster (MNB) - national, public broadcaster; among top ten channels by audience
MN 25 – national, premium channel, owned by Mongol News Group
UBS TV – three channels (local, global, and Ulzii), privately-owned
TV5 – satellite, cable, and on-line, privately owned
TV9 – two channels; satellite, cable, and on-line; privately-owned

On-line Only
Ikon.mn – multimedia news and entertainment; privately-owned
Gogo.mn – multimedia news and entertainment; privately-owned

Post

Postal services fall under the CRC's Department of Postal Services Regulation, which oversees international and domestic postal and parcel service licensing and regulation. Mongol Post is the public general postal service (https://postnews.mn/). It is mandated to operate letter, parcel, stamps, and money order businesses with service throughout the country. CRC regulations allow additional postal and parcel service networks (FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.) to operate in the country.[316] Given the dispersed nature of a large portion of the national population and the continued existence of seminomadic communities, delivery of letters and parcels can be extremely difficult and time-consuming. Mongol Post has sought to modernize its processes by exploiting the near ubiquity of mobile telephones in the country. By partnering with app developers and information management teams at What3Words, Mongol Post hopes to connect even the remotest people although actual delivery of physical letters and parcels may still be expensive and challenging.[317]

Utilities

Mongolia continues to experience a rapidly growing urban population that is driving up demand for energy and water. On the periphery of urban areas, informal ger areas long lacked public utilities such as district heating and piped water. While recent investments have connected many peri-urban ger areas' water kiosks to piped water, residents of these areas still burn solid fuel, mainly raw coal and biomass, for heat and cooking. Meanwhile, more remote ger areas will not see connection to public utilities for some time.

Power

Mongolia's power system contends with extreme winter temperatures that fall as low as -40°C/°F[318] and average annual temperatures of -3°C (26.6°F).[319] The country has long relied on district heating with both heat and electricity mainly produced by coal-fired Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants. At the same time, the sparse population and limited number of consumers outside Ulaanbaatar means that no country-wide transmission system has developed and that the power system remains small (1.3 Gigawatts (GW) total installed capacity) and inflexible with few cross-border interconnections. Finally, energy demand is expected to continue growing rapidly with 5-6% annual growth, putting significant strain on the limited infrastructure and institutions. Electricity demand is projected to reach 2,700 Megawatts (MW) by 2030, one-third of which will be consumed by the mining sector. The Mongolian energy sector has a high level of energy inefficiency and is carbon intense with outdated coal-fired CHP producing 74% of the total electricity consumption while 5% is produced by a handful of renewable-fired plants. The remainder of consumed power is imported from Russia and China. All CHP are owned by the state.[320]

All 21 aimags and 314 soums are supplied by centralized power; 10 soums are connected to foreign electricity supply.[321] The national grid consists of five unintegrated segments: Central Energy System (CES), Western Energy System (WES), Altai-Uliastai Energy System, Eastern Energy System (EES), and South Gobi Region. These systems include CHPs, hydropower plants, coal-fired power plants, wind parks, off-grid renewable energy systems, regional diesel generators, and distribution systems.[322] Figure 14 shows the power system's regional segments and transmission lines.[323]

The country's energy system is the most heavily dependent on coal among the ADB's developing member countries. In 2018, coal-fired CHPs constituted 93% of total power generation in the CES, which accounts for more than 80% of the domestic demand. Because of coal reliance, Mongolia suffers severe urban air pollution and its accompanying health problems. Moreover, the energy sector is Mongolia's largest contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, accounting for about two-thirds of emissions. According to Mongolia's nationally determined contributions to address climate change, GHG emissions will increase to 51.5 million tons of carbon dioxide (mtCO2) by 2030 in the business-as-usual scenario, with energy's share of total emissions increasing to 81.5%. However, the country targets a reduction in GHG emissions of 7.3 mtCO2 by 2030 through emission reductions from power generation (4.9 mtCO2), industry (0.7 mtCO2), and transportation (1.7 mtCO2). However, reduced investment in coal-fired CHP expansion due to climate change impact sits awkwardly beside growing electricity demand, and the combination means greater utilization of aging CHP plants during peak energy demand hours in winter, exceeding 90%.[324] Figure 15 shows the country's total primary energy supply and renewable energy supply in 2018.[325]

The Program on Integrated Power Energy System was adopted in 2007 by the State Great Hural. The purpose is to form the Integrated Power System of Mongolia that enhances reliability, improves efficiency and loss reduction, and builds export of energy resources.[326] The program has three phases:

- Phase I (2007-2012: complete) - Provide

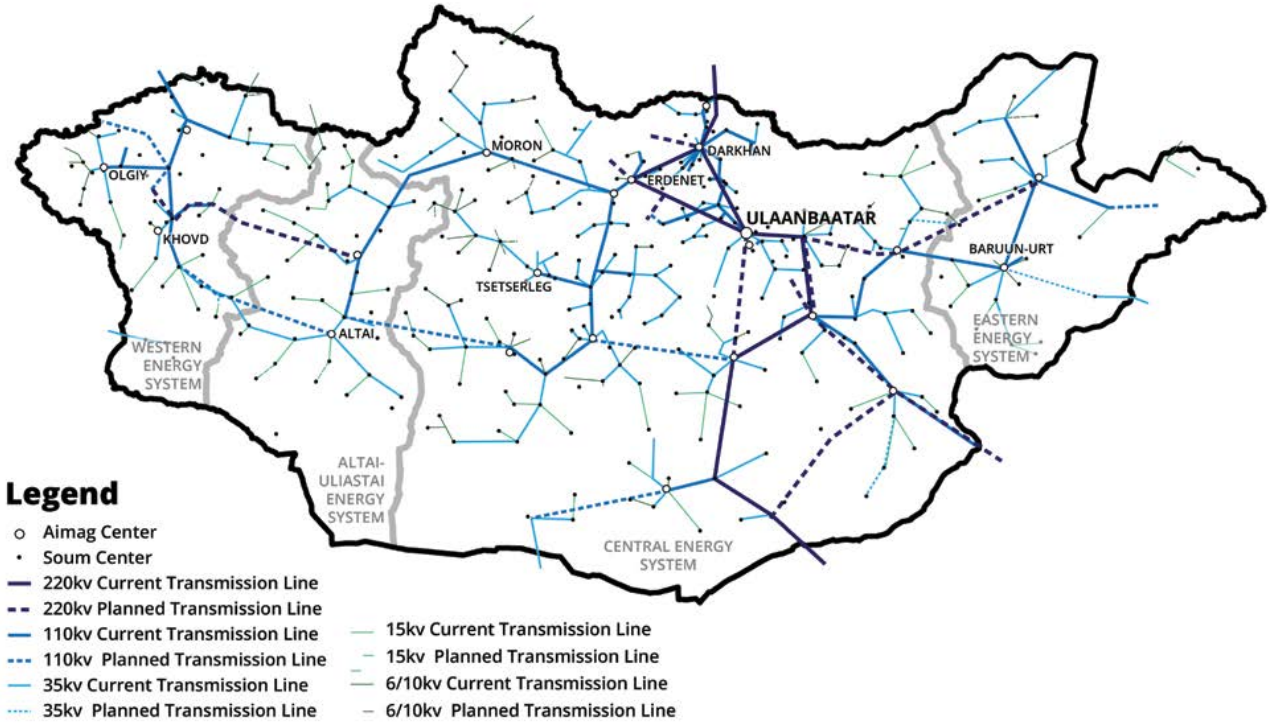


Figure 14: Electrical Distribution Infrastructure (Current and Planned, 2019)

all soums and settlements with permanent power from central and renewable sources.

- Phase II (2012-2022) - Construct new power generating sources and electricity transmission lines and connect WES, EES, and CES by high voltage transmission lines; create conditions for formation of the integrated energy system.
- Phase III (2022~2040) - Form the Integrated Energy System by connecting CES and WES with a high voltage transmission line.[327]

Upon a successful implementation of the program, the amount of added generating capacity is expected to reach 5,500 MW, not including renewables or private sector-financed plants. A total of 385 MW of new renewable facilities are expected to be constructed by 2022 under the Program. The sector development plan builds toward a capacity to export electricity to neighboring countries by producing energy from hydropower plants at Eg, Orkhon, and Selenge river, and solar and wind power plants to be built in Gobi and central region.[328]

Based on the Government Action Program,

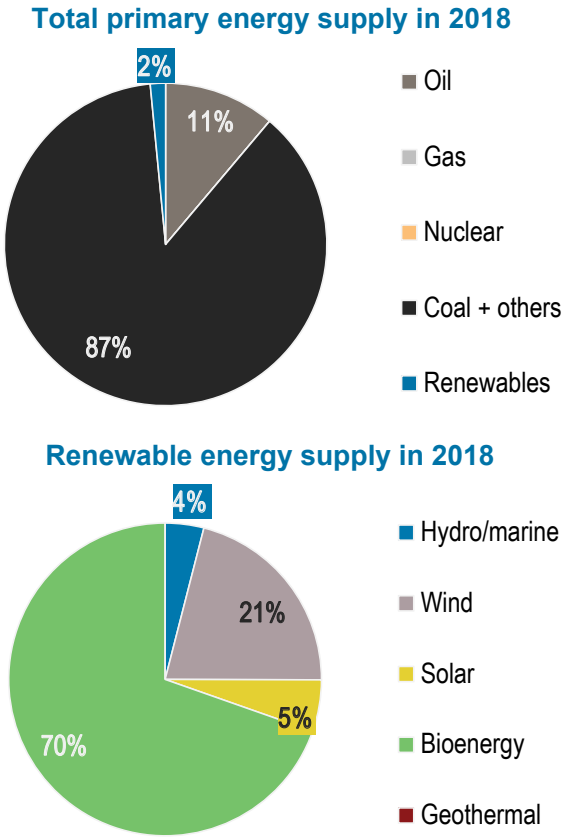


Figure 15: Mongolia's Total Energy and Renewable Energy Supplies (2018)

the Regional Development Concept, and the Sustainable Development Strategy, the Parliament approved the Renewable Energy Law in January 2007; it was amended by the State Great Hural in June 2015 and June 2019. Parliament also approved the Government Energy Policy Document in 2015. It indicated that the renewable energy production share shall be 20% by 2023 and 30% by 2030. In 2018, the government approved a medium-term national policy program for the implementation of state energy policy. In the second stage of the present policy (2024-2030), state-owned power companies will become public utilities, distribution and supply services will be privatized, and the energy sector will be transformed into a competitive marked with regulation.[329]

To decarbonize Mongolia's energy sector, the government aims to increase the country's share of renewable energy, especially wind and solar. The country's combined wind and solar power potential is estimated at 2,600 GW of installed capacity or 5,457 terawatt hours of clean electricity generation per year, enough to meet the country's energy demand. This level of generation would allow Mongolia to begin contributing to regional energy if it can develop a suitable transmission infrastructure. An additional challenge is that the country's energy market lacks the system to provide regulation or ancillary service for this level of renewables. At present, renewable energy plants' output is curtailed during off-peak hours.[330] Figure 16 shows Mongolia's installed renewable electricity generation capacity.[331]

The country has excellent wind resources, and good solar and hydropower resources. In addition, it has a lot of land available to develop projects. Despite its vast potential, renewables development has been slow; capacity only reached 276 MW in 2019. There is also a small off-grid renewable capacity, mostly photovoltaic panels used by nomads.[332] Figure 17 shows the country's overall renewable potential, including planned and installed capacity.[333]

The GoM sought ADB assistance for the

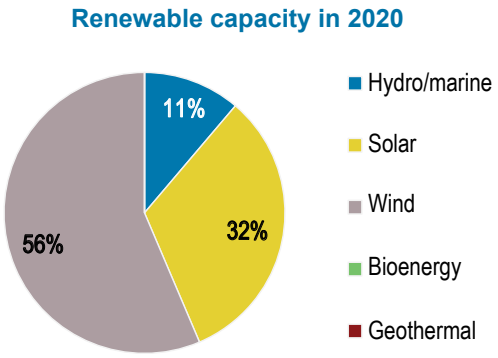


Figure 16: Mongolia's Installed Renewable Electric Generation Capacity (2020)

installation of a battery energy storage system (BESS). The country's first utility-scale advanced BESS with a capacity of 125 MW/160 Megawatt hours is being financed by an ADB loan of US$100 million and a grant of US$3 million from the High-Level Technology Fund approved in April 2020. The BESS plant will be owned and operated by the national transmission company, the National Power Transmission Grid, as a smart grid to strengthen the power supply reliability in the CES. On successful completion in 2024 the project will supply 44 GW hours of clean peaking power annually and support the integration of an additional 859 GW hours of renewable electricity into the CES grid annually. Moreover, it will act as a backup power plant in case of possible power failure.[334]

Water and Sanitation

Mongolia's water resources are limited. Northern regions receive only about 350 mm (13.8 inches) of rain yearly while southern areas receive only about 80 mm (3.1 inches). Average water availability is high – i.e., more than 10,000 cubic meters (2.6 million gallons) per person per year – for the country as a whole, but regional differences in rainfall and population result in local hot spots of water insecurity, particularly in densely-populated Ulaanbaatar and in the Gobi region, where mining companies depend on water for their operations. River flows are highly seasonally variable, and rivers freeze in winter. Therefore, groundwater is Mongolia's main water source for drinking and industrial water as well as for livestock and, increasingly, irrigation.

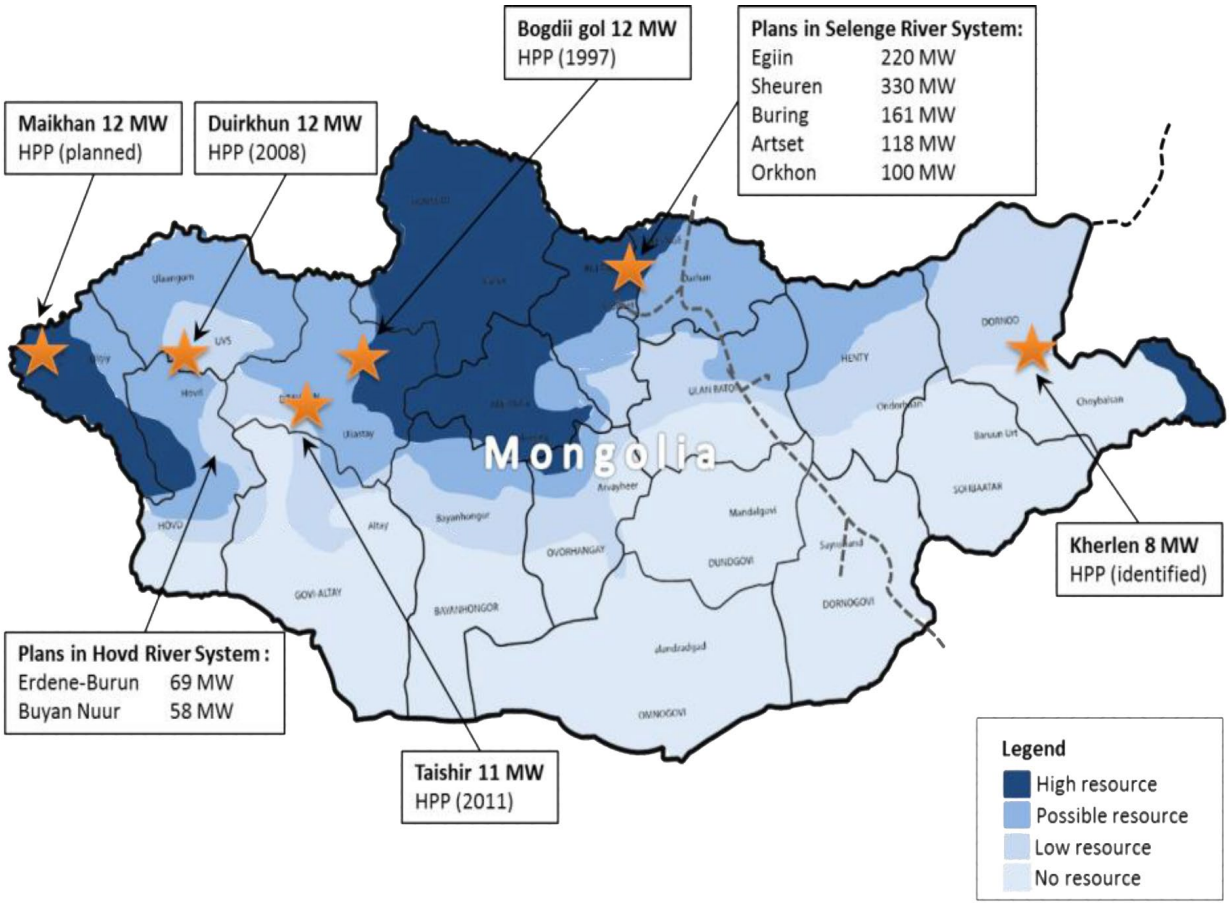


Figure 17: Mongolia's Installed, Planned, and Potential Renewable Resources (2018)

Most river water is suitable for any use, but water pollution has become a major issue. Rivers are heavily polluted by domestic, livestock-related, and industrial wastewater discharges. Water pollution is mainly a problem downstream of urban areas, such as in Ulaanbaatar and aimag and soum centers, and near small mining operations where heavy metals are found in surface water. Wastewater treatment plants are limited and often in poor condition.

Total water withdrawal tops 560 million cubic meters (147 billion gallons) per year. Agriculture is the biggest user of water (40%), followed by industry (25%), livestock (19%), and domestic (16%) sectors. Almost half of the national domestic water supply originates in the Tuul River because of the large population of Ulaanbaatar. With total water withdrawal making up only 1.5% of total renewable water resources, Mongolia is reasonably well positioned to meet current and short-term projected water demands. The estimated 65% increase in water demand by 2030 would require 2.5% of the total annual renewable water resources. On the local level, however, there are significant spatial differences in water demand and available water resources, resulting in local shortages.

At the central government level, five ministries are tasked with major roles in the management and exploitation of water resources. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism is the key agency responsible for integrated planning and management at the national and river basin levels. The other ministries involved, and their responsibilities are the Ministry of Energy for activities such as hydropower; the Ministry of Health for water hygiene and water-related diseases; the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry for agriculture (including irrigation), livestock, and industry; and the Ministry of Construction and Urban Development for urban water supply, flood

protection, and major construction projects. Coordination at the central government level is handled by the National Water Committee, the Water Resource Council, and the Water Services Regulatory Commission.

Infrastructure to provide safe water to consumers is also inadequate. Mongolia's Sustainable Development Vision 2030 incorporates integrated water resource management as a strategic objective with two specific goals: 1) protect water resources and prevent water shortage; and 2) increase drinking water supply that meets established quality standards and accessibility to improved hygiene and sanitation facilities. Vision 2030 strives to ensure that 90% of the population is supplied with safe drinking water by 2030. To this end, the government has made significant investments in water management. In cooperation with international partners, water supply and sanitation infrastructure has been expanded. However, as of 2018, the Government of Mongolia and UNESCAP reported that about 13% of the urban population and 56% of the rural population have no access to safe drinking water. Moreover, wastewater treatment facilities in Ulaanbaatar and most aimag centers are old and use outdated technologies, thereby failing to adequately treat wastewater to the required standard and potentially releasing poorly treated wastewater to natural water sources and putting human and animal health at risk.

A major source of public health risks as well as soil contamination and water pollution comes from the poor water supply and sanitation and from improper disposal of human waste and gray water in the peri-urban ger areas of Ulaanbaatar. There are major ongoing programs for Ulaanbaatar to expand the water and sewerage networks. However, there is limited attention to the poorer outlying ger areas, and many services will not reach them for many years. Other towns and cities in Mongolia have similar problems, albeit at a smaller scale. Water supply and sanitation issues in the peri-urban ger areas are linked to unplanned development, inadequate road networks, and a severe lack of social and economic facilities and basic infrastructure and services in general. Outlying ger areas are commonly not connected to centralized water, sewerage, and drainage networks, and unsanitary living conditions are widespread. The overall development of improved water and sanitation in Ulaanbaatar's ger areas is constrained by high construction costs, lack of urban planning, and inadequate infrastructure.

In 2014, about 180,000 households (equivalent to 65% of Ulaanbaatar's population) were reported to have no sewage network connections. They relied on using pit latrines and open wastewater pits for sanitary needs, gray water, and solid waste disposal. Access to clean water supply is also limited in these zones, with very few house connections and most families reliant on restricted access to water from kiosks or open wells often at some distance from households. Water supplied by a kiosk typically provides about 10 liters (2.6 gallons) per capita per day, which is less than half the recommended minimum of the World Health Organization (WHO).[335]

ADB is among the development partners contributing resources to address water and sanitation in ger areas. Under a series of urban projects, ADB expanded and upgraded a centralized water network connecting existing ger area kiosks to piped systems in 17 out of 21 aimags. It has also built new kiosks, rehabilitated wells, and improved the quality of water through chlorination.[336]

HEALTH

Despite the challenges of a lack of resources, geographical dispersal of the population, and the harsh climate, the country has made significant progress against key diseases since the transition away from a planned economy in the 1990s. Over the last 30 years, overall health has improved, with increased life expectancy and sharp declines in child and maternal mortality rates. Although by law all Mongolians may receive free and universal healthcare, access is not always ensured, and there is insufficient basic healthcare provision, most glaringly due to a lack of diagnostic capacity and a lack of medicines. Preventive and curative care services for children ages five years and under have been a key focus, but routine immunizations still fall short as they are available in only about one-quarter of facilities due to a lack of supply.[337]

As the health system has transitioned from a curative model under Soviet influence, preventative care has meant an overall shift in causes of mortality. In line with much of the rest of the world, Mongolians are dying from chronic conditions more frequently than they are from communicable diseases. Between 2009 and 2019, heart disease, stroke, and liver conditions retained the top spots for mortality rates. Neonatal and respiratory conditions became less deadly, and various cancers became more common as causes of death. A major concern for Mongolia's health care professionals is the sustained – and growing – proportion of Mongolians who are dying in road accidents, from self-harm, and from chronic alcohol use. Figure 18 shows how the causes of death in Mongolia have changed in the past decade.[338]

Health Care System Structure

As part of its transition from a planned to a market economy in the 1990s, Mongolia also shifted its health system to allow the entrance of private providers. Through a series of policies and initiatives, the system today is a public-private partnership supported by a network of rural and urban health centers and hospitals. Primary health care (PHC) utilization has increased dramatically, with a high rate of attendance at both rural and urban health

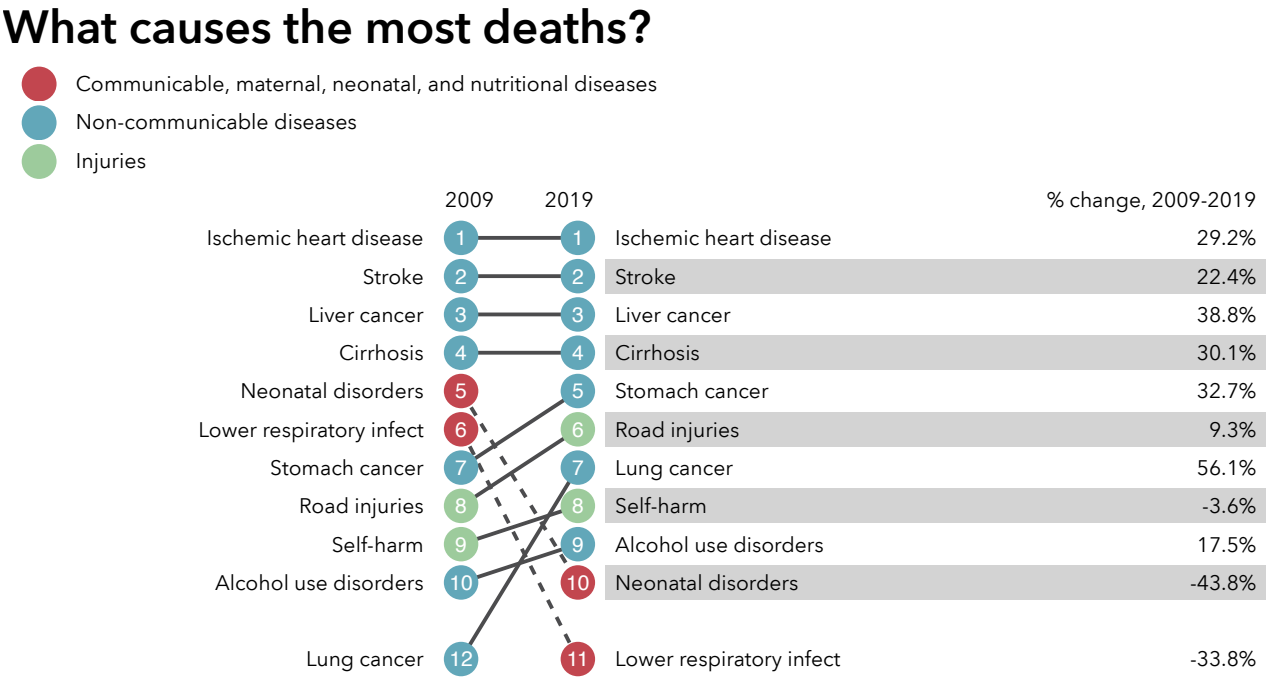


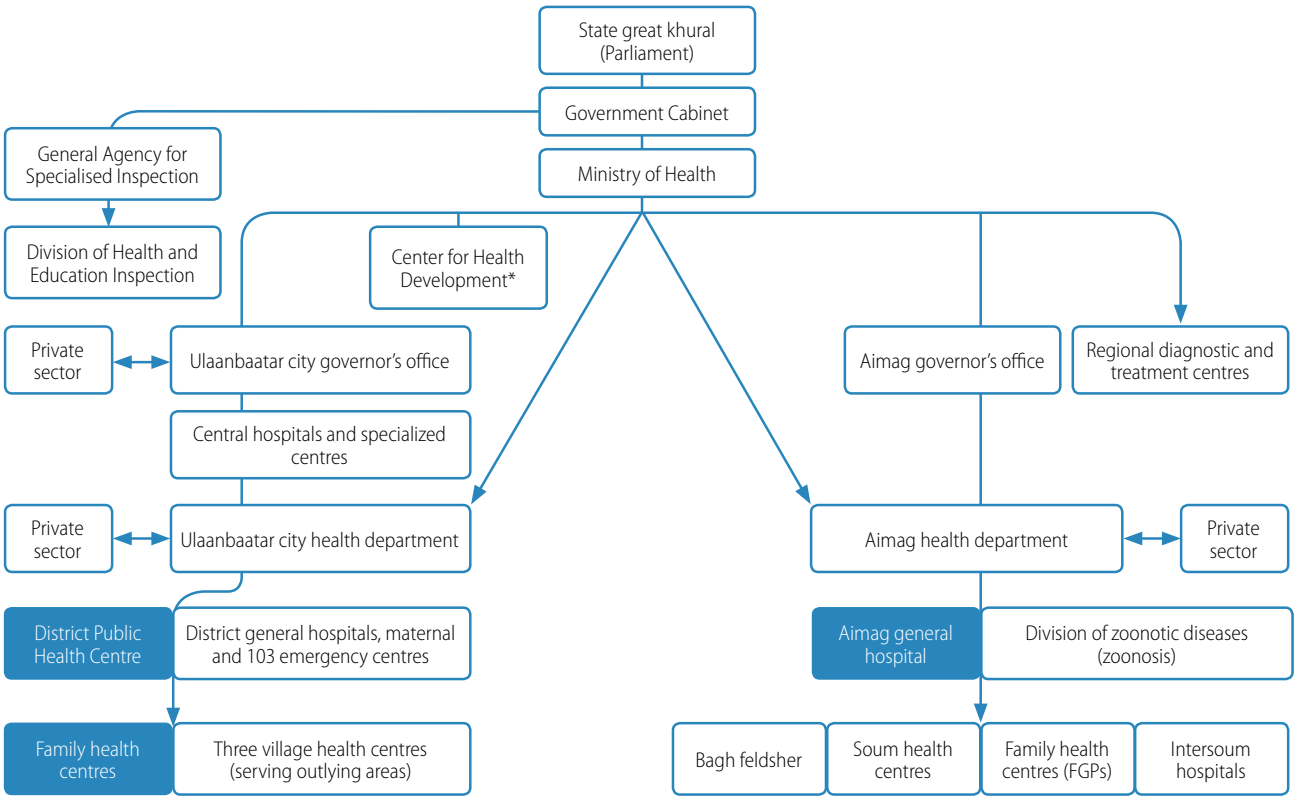
Figure 18: Top 10 Causes of Death and Percent Change (2009–2019)

centers. Health centers are readily accessible in urban areas, and strides have been made to develop functional referral networks in rural areas through expansion of referral centers and hospitals.[339]

The Ministry of Health develops national-level long- to medium-term policies and strategies for health and delegates implementation to the aimag and city health departments and health facilities. Attached to the Ministry are tertiary level care providers. In each aimag and in Ulaanbaatar, there are health departments tasked to ensure coordination and implementation of health policies through technical supervision and guidance. Local departments are responsible for overseeing aimag and district general hospitals, district health centers, and the soum health centers (SHC) and family health centers (FHC) in their localities.[340]

Health care services are delivered by more than 3,200 public and private health centers; all specialized centers are in Ulaanbaatar. The administration of health care is split into two main divisions, one for Ulaanbaatar and one for the 21 aimags. Ulaanbaatar consists of nine districts, divided into 152 sub-districts.[341] In the city, PHC is offered at more than 200 FHCs.[342] Each aimag consists of 3–28 soums; the country's 329 soums are further divided into 1,613 baghs.[343] PHC is offered at some 300 rural/semi-rural SHCs and 39 inter-soum hospitals.[344] Administrative divisions are represented by a two-tier referral system: primary care and specialized care, the latter of which includes secondary and tertiary care.[345] Secondary services are organized at the soum and aimag levels into rural general hospitals and private clinics. Tertiary healthcare takes place at multispecialty central hospitals as well as specialized centers in Ulaanbaatar.[346] Figure 19 shows the overall structure of health care in Mongolia with the division between Ulaanbaatar and the aimags shown by the central two arrows.[347]

Health Sector Development Programs (HSDP, 1997, 2003, and 2007) were designed by the ADB to improve PHC in rural and



*Center for Health Development was an implementing agency of the Ministry of Health until 2012.

Figure 19: Structure of Health Care as Overseen by the Ministry of Health

urban areas through the development of a network of facilities in catchment areas based on administrative units.[348] During the HSDPs, publicly funded PHC began to be delivered in urban areas by FHC, which are privately run state-owned organizations, and in rural areas by SHC, which are government-owned and operated. SHCs hire and oversee trained, community-based personnel that provide care to nomadic herding families and communities. In 2015, the "Mobile Health Services in Mongolia Project" began to run mobile health units to address gaps in access to care and diagnostics among remote populations.

The ADB-backed HSDPs implemented a series of policies and financial reforms designed to promote equitable resource allocation, financial sustainability, and universal access. The Social Health Insurance System established in 1996 helped provide insurance coverage for registered citizens and mobilize health funding, and in 2006, PHC facilities transitioned to a full state budget tax-based funding system allowing primary health centers to play a gatekeeping role, in which primary care providers regulate and authorize patient access to specialty and hospital care and diagnostic services. Additionally, the government has worked to help support low-income and vulnerable populations by subsidizing health insurance contributions and costs. In efforts to expand PHC access and respond to rural-urban migration, the 2011 Health Act made FHCs fully government-funded, a transition that has helped uninsured and unregistered poor people who migrated to urban areas to access basic health services.[349]

Health Strategies and Surveillance

The objectives of the Ministry of Health to improve coordination of health strategies and ensure access to care by all people are captured in the State Policy on Health (2017-2026) and the Health Sector Strategy (2019-2027).

The State Policy on Health (2017-2026) laid out the government's objectives for the entirety of the health sector. These objectives include extending average life expectancy by improving the quality and inclusivity of healthcare services through disease prevention, introduction of new technology for evidence-based diagnostics and treatment, and ensuring proper health sector financing.[350] These goals echo those of the Sustainable Development Vision 2030 where Objective 4 is to decrease the spread of communicable diseases through prevention, early detection, and preparedness to treat through improving the capacity of health services for fast response actions, and ensuring access to vaccines. The phases of this objective are:

- Phase I (2016-2020): Increase the rate of citizens meeting vaccination schedules to 98.5% and reduce the prevalence of hepatitis and tuberculosis to 3 and 14.5 persons in 10,000 respectively.
- Phase II (2021-2025): Increase the rate of citizens meeting vaccination schedules to 99% and reduce the prevalence of hepatitis and tuberculosis to 2.5 and 14 persons in 10,000 respectively.
- Phase III (2026-2030): Increase the rate of citizens meeting vaccination schedules to 99.8% and reduce the prevalence of hepatitis and tuberculosis to 2 and 13 persons in 10,000 respectively.[351]

The State Policy covers public health, medical care, human resources, health financing, health technology, pharmaceuticals, information technology and information management, health sector management, organizational arrangements, and transparency. Under the public health rubric, the policy targets studying new and infectious diseases within the context of climate change to allow an expansion of prevention and immunization programs.[352]

The implementation of the ADB-backed HSDPs coincided with the government initiative to develop a long-term policy document – the Health Sector Master Plan (2006–2015) – a guide for the provision and coordination of the support provided to the health sector. A subsequent ADB project provided technical assistance to

Mongolia's Ministry of Health to update the Plan via the Health Sector Strategy (2019-2027). Since the third HSDP, ADB support for the health sector has shifted toward investing in extending the reach of Mongolia's PHC system. The Improving Access to Health Services for Disadvantaged Groups Investment Program runs through 2029 and will expand and improve access to quality, gender-sensitive, and friendly PHC services in disadvantaged (mostly ger) areas of Ulaanbaatar. The program will support the introduction of low-carbon technology and additional public–private partnership models for equipment maintenance.[353]

As part of Vision 2030, the country targets a national disease prevention system, increased access to diagnosis services, and an increased life expectancy. Phase I (2016-2020) sought to reform the health insurance system, ensure early diagnosis and urgent responses to preventable and predominant diseases, improve the capacity of investigation, establish early diagnosis systems and laboratories, and increase life expectancy of the population to 71 years. Phase II (2021-2025) seeks to increase access to treatment and services covered by health insurance, ensure early diagnosis of predominant diseases, create a national long-distance health network covering all soums, reduce the risk factors of sickness and death, and increase life expectancy of the population to 74 years. The final phase, Phase III (2026-2030) will aim to enshrine the proper shares of insurance, state budget, and personal finance in the medical insurance service, promote and ensure a healthy lifestyle, ensure that every citizen fully receives first aid and PHC services, create a national long-distance health network covering all soums, and increase life expectancy of the population to 78 years.[354]

Among the challenges addressed by the current State Policy on Health (2017–2026), the key issue is that the PHC system is not really functioning as a gatekeeper, as exemplified by high rates of bypass and self-referrals to hospital care. The population makes clear its preference for hospital care and inpatient treatment, both a symptom and driver of declining quality of PHC. A recent study revealed that availability of PHC services within health facilities is low. FHCs contribute the most to providing PHC, but readiness is mostly hampered by a lack of diagnostic capacity and essential medicines. The services that that must be improved at the PHC level include basic laboratory and imaging diagnostics, emergency care, day care and provision of minor surgical procedures, family planning, rehabilitation, and home and palliative care.[355]

Communicable Diseases

Mongolia is burdened with the following communicable diseases:

Hepatitis

The viruses that cause Hepatitis are present worldwide. Humanitarian and healthcare workers are at higher risk than most travelers as they may be exposed to bodily fluids. Chronic Hepatitis B (HBV) and Hepatitis C (HCV) infections, associated with liver cancer and cirrhosis respectively, are responsible for 95% of liver diseases in Mongolia. Since immunization campaigns in the 2010s, the incidence of Hepatitis A has decreased precipitously, but Hepatitis delta infections are a growing concern. With the implementation in 1995 of a national policy mandating single-use syringes in health care facilities, the risk of injection-associated transmission of HBV and HCV has decreased. However, there are persistent problems associated with reuse of medical instruments and other equipment for reasons like budget and stock shortages, autoclave maintenance, inadequate numbers of nurses, and insufficient training. There is some evidence suggesting that health care workers have a higher prevalence of blood-borne infections like HBV related in part to a historically high rate of needle-stick injuries; in 2013, the Ministry of Health initiated a program for systematic HBV immunization of health care workers and students, which made great progress. There is concern about historical beliefs and practices among consumers and providers that resulted in very high rates

of unnecessary medical injections as well as medically unsupervised injections of over-the-counter antibiotics and vitamins.[356]

Measles

Having not registered a single measles case after 2011, Mongolia was one of four countries that received a measles-elimination certificate from the WHO in 2014. However, a large measles outbreak started in early 2015 and lasted into late 2016, triggering an international travel warning and a fresh vaccination drive. In total, 23,464 cases and eight deaths were reported in 2015, and 30,273 cases and 132 deaths were reported in 2016. Most cases were reported in Ulaanbaatar (35,397, 65.9%). Mongolia included measles vaccinations in its Expanded Program on Immunization after 1973. After 2009, it moved to using a measles–mumps–rubella vaccine. Since then, the country has maintained high measles vaccination coverage at >95%. Despite widespread vaccination, high rates of infection and deaths among children under one year of age were experienced in 2015-2016 as these children were least likely to have completed their vaccination series. Once the outbreak subsided, it has not repeated in recent years.[357]

Plague

Plague is an animal disease that can spread to humans. Caused by Yersinia pestis bacteria, it is transmitted to humans through the bite of infected fleas that live among rodents such as squirrels, chipmunks, woodrats, prairie dogs, rabbits, and mice. Hikers, campers, hunters, and persons occupationally exposed to wild rodents in endemic areas are at greater risk of exposure. Risk of Plague is present throughout the country with higher rates of infection in Bayanhongor, Bayan-Olgii, Govi-Altai, and Dzavhan. In October 2020, cases of Plague were reported in Khovd aimag.[358] The 2020 outbreak followed two cases in 2019 that were related to contact with marmots, the most frequent vector for fleas to be in contact with humans in Mongolia.[359]

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is endemic and a major public health problem. TB is an airborne bacterial infection caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis. It can be acquired by breathing contaminated air droplets coughed or sneezed out by a person who has active TB. Humans can also get ill with TB by ingesting unpasteurized milk products contaminated with Mycobacterium bovis, Bovine Tuberculosis. The most common form of the infection is pulmonary TB, which affects the lungs. In some cases, the bacteria can also attack the lymphatic system, central nervous system, urogenital area, joints, and bones. Humanitarian and healthcare personnel working in communities with active TB are at increased risk. Most people with the illness (90-95%) have latent TB infection and do not exhibit any symptoms. The bacteria can remain inactive for many years, and the chance of developing active TB diminishes over time. Persons with active TB have symptoms like excessive coughing (sometimes with blood), chest pain, general weakness, lack of appetite, weight loss, swollen lymph glands, fever, chills, and night sweats. If untreated, active TB can fatal. Drug-resistant TB is a major concern as an increasing number of people are no longer able to be treated with previously effective drugs. Due to misuse of antibiotic therapies, patients can develop multi-drug resistant TB. When a second line of antibiotics fail to cure the multi-drug resistant infection, it is known as extensively drug-resistant TB. To prevent infection, avoid exposure to people known to have active TB and only consume pasteurized milk products.[360]

Treatment and Surveillance

Despite a well-developed system to detect and report epidemics, Mongolia continues to confront the spread of infectious diseases, such as respiratory and blood-transmissible infections. In 2019, the IFRC's Asia-Pacific Health Coordinator reported that the organization had assessed the country's early detection and reporting of epidemics and diseases of potential international concern as ranking 20th in the world. However,

the country lags in its capacity to respond and mitigate. Registered cases of communicable diseases rose by 7.5% to 45,232 in 2019 over the previous year. Of these, more than one-third were respiratory infections and a similar proportion were sexually transmitted infections; about one-fifth of cases were gastrointestinal diseases with the remainder being zoonotic or blood transmitted.

Although there remain some gaps, Mongolia's government-run national control and prevention program has led to the eradication of typhoid and polio in the country; no cases of diphtheria, tetanus, or pertussis have recently been reported, and there has been a steady decrease in the incidence of measles and HBV.[361] The National Strategies in Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and TB have resulted in a decrease of the death rate; nonetheless, Mongolia remains one of the nations with the greatest TB prevalence, with around 4,000 tuberculosis cases recorded every year, 10% of which are pediatric.

For women, the age-standardized mortality and "years of life lost" rates of cervical cancer decreased substantially between 1990 and 2019. Mongolia began early screening of cervical cancer for women aged 24 to 64 years in 2011, and coverage reached 46.5% in 2019. In 2018, the Government also initiated actions to reduce the morbidity and mortality of cervical cancer, such as increased screening coverage, improved diagnosis and treatment capacity, and enhanced surveillance, all of which appear to have led to the decrease in mortality despite an increase in the relative ranking and incidence of cervical cancers between 1990 and 2019. A nationwide Human Papilloma Virus vaccination drive is set to kick off from 2024.[362]

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Despite decisive actions of the Government early in the pandemic, the country was not immune. The State Emergency Committee (SEC) and Ministry of Health reported the first verified case of community transmission on 11 November 2020, and soon afterward, the country went from recording fewer than 100 cases each day to recording thousands by March 2021, a situation that worsened as the Delta and Omicron variant waves washed across the country later in 2021.[363] As of 25 March 2022, there had been 917,732 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 2,108 deaths reported to WHO. As of 11 March 2022, a total of 5,580,780 vaccine doses had been administered. Figure 20 shows the WHO's epidemiological data presentation for Mongolia's COVID-19 experience from 3 January 2020 through 27 April 2022.[364]

The country's strong initial response to prevent the spread of the virus started with a mask order the day after the novel coronavirus was identified in China. Within six weeks, only people wearing masks were permitted to use public transport. Mongolian officials also recognized that extensive commercial contact and air travel between Mongolia and China posed a serious threat and that even a relatively modest outbreak could overwhelm the national health system. Beyond restrictions on travel from China, the country required those traveling from countries with COVID-19 cases to isolate. Officials used broadcast television to replace in-person primary school instruction and switched to online education for universities.

Mongolia's leaders also kept the public informed via text messages and daily updates to the nation on all broadcast media. In addition to the information campaign, response measures included an extensive contact tracing system, quarantining and testing of all travelers, random community testing, the opening of walk-up testing clinics, and the creation of isolation and quarantine camps, all set up in February 2020, before the country's first case. All COVID-related health care was provided free of charge, apart from charges for meals for those in isolation and quarantine camps. Mongolia's government did receive some criticism for not always striking a balance between strict control of the disease and the negative social and economic impacts caused by restrictions. Frustrations would lead to protests that prompted the resignation of many Mongolian leaders, including the Prime Minister, in early 2021.[365]

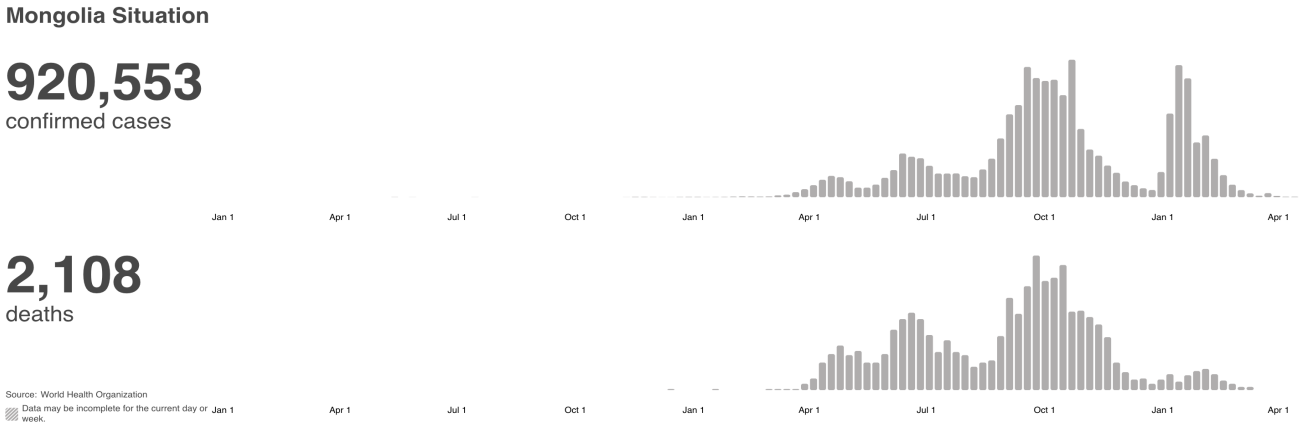


Figure 20: Mongolia's Confirmed Cases and Deaths Linked to COVID-19 (27 April 2022)

From April 2020, the Ministry of Health began working with the World Bank to finance and acquire medical equipment to bolster the Mongolian health system's ability to treat people who would come down with COVID-19. With very slow transmission during most of 2020, the country had time to build its capacity before hospitalizations began rising in late 2020. The equipment acquisition included 6,100 units, mostly ventilators and mobile x-ray machines, and they were distributed to provincial and district hospitals as well as the central hospital in Ulaanbaatar.[366]

In the first year of the pandemic, Mongolia recorded fewer than 1,800 cases of COVID-19 and just two deaths, despite sharing the world's longest land border with China. Late in that first year, on 11 November 2020, Mongolia reported its first case of local transmission, and within a week, the country had reported 428 cases. At the same time, SEC issued a resolution to temporarily suspend public and personal transportation from Ulaanbaatar and to request that the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare close all education institutions and training centers in the city. Meanwhile, Government resolutions closed border crossings and activated the "All-Out" preparedness level.[367]

The funding and acquisitions of 2020 were reinforced in 2021 when the World Bank approved an additional US$50.7 million to support fair and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines, as well as to fund continued response and recovery efforts. The funding supported Mongolia's nationwide vaccination campaign, which rolled out in early 2021. Before this influx of funding, aging infrastructure had made storing and deploying vaccines across the country a challenge, according to the National Center for Communicable Diseases. To address aging infrastructure and inadequate vaccine storage capacity, a new Central Storage for Vaccines and Bioproducts was completed in three months with the project financing; it opened in August 2021. The facility is energy-efficient, earthquake resistant, and fully equipped with modern engineering and safety systems.[368]

As vaccines began to be delivered by producing countries, Mongolia approved those developed by Moderna, Pfizer/BioNTech, Russia's Gamaleya (Sputnik V and Sputnik Light), Oxford/AstraZeneca, and China's Sinopharm. The first doses of India-produced Oxford/AstraZeneca arrived in February 2021.[369] By May 2021, Mongolia had received one million doses each of Russia's Sputnik V and China's Sinopharm jab. The Government's goal was to make the summer of 2021 a "COVID-free" season that would allow long-distance trade across the borders with Russia and China to resume.[370] Despite the roll-out of vaccines, 2021 was a significantly more fraught year than 2020. In June and September 2021, the country registered variant-related spikes of case numbers, resulting in a return to more strict travel and business restrictions, including closure of the borders to travelers from some countries and fresh 10-day quarantine requirements for all travelers.[371]

On 1 March 2022, Mongolia lowered its COVID-19 restriction level. At that time, 92% of the country's total adult population were fully vaccinated and 52% of targeted citizens had received third shots. The Cabinet made the decision to ease restrictions based on an assessment of infection and protection risks. The Prime Minister noted that Mongolia was fully open to international travel, and the only remaining requirements were for people to wear face masks and observe distancing. During the pandemic, Mongolia imposed strict lockdown measures seven times, spending 79 days under the highest level of restrictions, while the country spent the rest of the period from March 2020 through March 2022 under the second highest level of restrictions.[372]

Non-Communicable Diseases

Among the 37 countries in the WHO's Western Pacific Region, Mongolia has the seventh-highest burden of non-communicable diseases (NCD). Ahead of the country's 2017 health policy approval, a 2015 survey found that the burden of digestive and cardiovascular diseases had increased; over 80% percent of mortality was attributed to cardiovascular system diseases, cancer, trauma, and accidents. According to health indicators, one out of every three deaths was related to cardiovascular system disease, one out of five to cancer, and one out of six to trauma, poisoning, and outside causes. Obesity has been increasing, especially among children under five years of age and adolescents, and the country ranks second among WHO Western Pacific Region countries for obesity among adolescents, 11-17 years old.[373]

As observed in other emerging economies, the life expectancy at birth in Mongolia has gradually increased since 1995 and reached 63.8 years for men and 72.7 for women in 2019. The highest increase in the age-standardized death rate between 1990 and 2019 occurred in alcohol use disorders among men and in liver cancer among women. Ischemic heart disease and stroke showed the highest rates of death, years of life lost, and disability-adjusted-life-years (DALY) among both men and women. In 2019, the highest age-standardized rates of DALY were attributable to high systolic blood pressure and dietary risks.

Mortality in Mongolia in 2019 was dominated by five NCDs; ischemic heart disease, stroke, liver cancer, cirrhosis, and stomach cancer together accounted for more than one-half of total deaths for men (54.1%) and women (60.4%). A shortfall in primary and secondary prevention is partly to blame for this burden of NCDs. WHO emphasizes four common behavioral risk factors, i.e., tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and harmful use of alcohol, alongside four metabolic risk factors that increase the risk of NCDs including raised blood pressure, overweight, hyperglycemia, and hyperlipidemia. In Mongolia, a WHO study found that alcohol use, dietary risks, and hypertension were the leading risk factors of death and DALY. According to a 2019 national survey on the prevalence of NCDs and injury risk factors, one in every four Mongolians and one in every two Mongolian men were current smokers, with 90% smoking daily. One-fifth of the population was physically inactive and 83.4% had daily fruit and vegetable consumption lower than the WHO-recommended level. Half of the total population was overweight, and one out of every five people was obese. Nearly half of Mongolians (43.4%) had high blood pressure. In general, one-third of the total population had three or more of the above risk factors. Those living in rural areas had relatively poorer diets with extremely low fiber and high amounts of red meat compared to urban population.

Beyond primary prevention and early detection, WHO emphasizes proper clinical management as crucial for preventing mortality from NCDs. There is a shortfall in specialized units for acute stroke care in Mongolia where only a small fraction of stroke patients receives timely and adequate specialized emergency care in dedicated centers. This condition may contribute to higher mortality rates for stroke.

In 2020, the Government established a second stroke unit in First State Hospital in Ulaanbaatar; the first was established in Third State Hospital in the capital in 2013.[374]

Under the framework of Vision 2030, Objective 3 is to reduce the toll of NCDs, reduce health risk factors, and reduce preventable deaths "through an active and inclusive partnership of individuals, families, communities, and organizations." Under Phase I (2016-2020), the country focused on reducing pernicious habits in the population, improving the living environment, strictly enforcing standards for food products, and decreasing cardiovascular and cancer deaths to 17.4 and 10.5 per 10,000 people respectively. Phase II (2021-2025) intends to improve the quality of and access to health care services and decrease deaths from cardiovascular diseases and cancer to 16 and 9 per 10,000 people respectively. Finally, Phase III (2026-2030) will aim to decrease deaths from cardiovascular diseases and cancer to 14 and 8 per 10,000 people respectively.[375]

Training for Health Professionals

There are an estimated 54,000 health care professionals in the country; fewer than 10,000 are thought to be employed in PHC facilities. Of the total health personnel, 20.2% are medical doctors and dental specialists, and 23.9% are nurses. Assistant or support staff comprise one-third of all health professionals; this number includes pharmacists, radiographers, laboratory staff, and public health specialists. In 2015, there were 31.6 medical doctors per 10,000 people nationwide. In FHCs, there were 4.8 medical doctors per 10,000 people, and in SHCs and inter-soum hospitals the figure was 11.23 medical doctors per 10,000 people. PHC is predominantly provided by medical personnel in the public sector, as all SHCs are government-owned and operated and have much higher numbers of medical personnel than privately-run FHCs. Each bagh, the smallest aimag center administrative division, has a medical point with a bagh feldsher (trained rural health worker).

In the 1990s, in the wake of the country's shift to a market economy, Mongolians were suddenly free to live wherever in the country they wanted, and many medical personnel left rural health facilities, leading to severe shortages in service. In addition, training and education for family practitioners had not matured, and the Ministry of Health was forced to issue a policy by which new graduates of the Medical University were placed in PHC facilities for their first two years of professional experience as physicians or medical doctors.[376] In 2011, Mongolia launched a new incentive remuneration system to address worker retention and staff shortages in rural areas. PHC staff employed for five consecutive years in rural health facilities receive monetary incentives equivalent to six months of salary.[377] By 2015, all SHCs and FHCs employed medical doctors. However, newly graduated personnel lacked experience and expertise, and this affected overall confidence in the PHC facilities and the quality of services. There were also issues with continuity of care, as young medical doctors left PHC facilities soon after completion of their obligatory two years.

Of the total number of medical doctors, 61% are specialized and only 21% are generalists. Annually the country's few medical schools deliver 1,500-2,000 new medical graduates to the Mongolian health system, of which 30% are generalists. PHC providers, such as medical doctors and nurses, complete medical university curricula and programs and are awarded with practice licenses for a certain period that may be extended when the individual takes certain credit-hours of training and passes the refresher licensing exam.

Aimag health departments assign general specialists to one of eight disciplines (e.g., internal medicine, pediatrics, or emergency services) in the aimag general hospital, and when necessary, they provide on-the-job support and consultations to PHC providers. Such arrangements offer support to PHC providers, and in some circumstances, tertiary care specialists and teams from aimags and Ulaanbaatar are sent to soums to assist PHC doctors.[378]

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

The UN Security Council adopted United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) in October 2000; it affirms the role women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, post-conflict reconstruction and maintenance, and promotion of peace and security. Over the intervening two decades the Security Council has adopted nine additional resolutions that address the impacts of conflict on women and women's roles resolving conflict. The WPS agenda has broadened to include applying a gendered perspective to disaster management (DM) and humanitarian aid for more equitable participation, which will not only address humanitarian needs but also benefit the whole of society.[379]

Mongolia ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in July 1981 and accepted the Optional Protocols in March 2002 when it also accepted the convention's inquiry procedure.[380] Under the country's reporting requirements under CEDAW, the National Committee on Gender Equality (NCGE) receives, translates, and advises on how to meet recommendations and observations. The NCGE is the implementing agency for gender components of the Sustainable Development Goals alongside other government and non-government bodies and civil society organizations. The Tenth Periodic Report on CEDAW suggests that 89% of activities laid out in the Action Plan of the National Program on Gender Equality have been completed. Achievements include:

- 70% of national government agencies adopted gender policies and plans
- 91% of aimags (19 aimags) and 60% of metropolitan districts approved the gender sub-program
- NCGE set up a training and research hall and developed a Gender and Policy Planning trainer manual and module under which more than 100 National Gender Trainers have been prepared
- 50% of government employees and 26% of senior executives were involved in gender-specific training
- There are 17 shelters and 15 one-stop service centers in aimags and districts for victims of gender-based violence
- The tasks to prepare "Guidelines for Developing and Implementing Gender Equality Plans in Business Organizations" and to develop and approve "Gender Sensitive Workplace Policy" are included in the National Tripartite Labor and Social Agreement
- Nearly 600 government ministries and agencies, local government agencies, and NGOs have adopted the arrangement on the prevention of workplace sexual abuse in the internal labor regulations
- NCGE and national broadcaster signed a Memorandum of Cooperation to introduce and promote state policies on gender and to deliver specialized programs and information on the promotion of gender awareness; and
- Public advocacy campaigns are regularly held within the framework of "International Women's Day," "16-Day Campaign against Gender-based Violence," and "White Ribbon Campaign."[381]

Mongolia does have laws on the books to provide the same legal status and rights to women and men, including equal pay for equal work and equal access to education. Women do still face discrimination in employment. In 2011, Mongolia's government enacted two laws that addressed gaps in women's participation in society and politics. The Law on Ensuring Gender Equality enshrines the principle of equal

opportunities in political, economic, social, cultural, family, and other relations, and equal participation in social life. More importantly, it asserts that Mongolians, regardless of age, sex, occupation, position, opinion, marital status, or education, shall enjoy human rights and freedoms without discrimination or restriction.[382] The Parliament Election Law of 2011 set a mandatory minimum quota for women in government and political parties. Women must comprise at least 15% of political appointees to government positions at the national, aimag, and capital city levels; this level rises to 20-30% at lower levels or administration. The law also requires that women must represent at least 25% of a political party's senior leadership. Women have still generally been underrepresented. After the country's 2020 elections, of the country's 16 cabinet ministers, three were women. Of the 75 members of the newly elected parliament, 13 were women. One of two deputy speakers named was a woman, as was the secretary-general of the parliament secretariat. Only one of 11 parliamentary standing committee chairs was a woman. Some aimags and soums continue to fail to meet the quota.[383]

On the UNDP Gender Development Index, Mongolia nets a score of 1.023 and has maintained an above 1.00 score for over two decades. This score is a ratio that compares female to male human development; thus, Mongolia, in general, has achieved gender parity (1:1) with women outpacing men in some indicators.[384] Women in Mongolia have near 100% equitable access to services (health, education, banking, etc.). Nonetheless, rates of child marriage and domestic violence remain high at 12% and 30% respectively, and female representation at the highest levels of governance falls short.[385] Indeed, the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum further teases out this inequality revealing high scores for Mongolia's women in health and educational outcomes, fair outcomes in economic opportunity and participation, and very poor scores on political participation, as shown in Figure 21.[386]

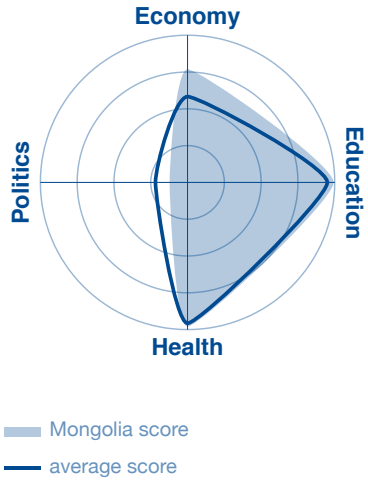


Figure 21: Visualization of the Components of Mongolia's Global Gender Gap Score (2021)

In the Global Gender Gap Index, the country scores at parity (1.00 or 1:1) for women's participation in secondary and tertiary education and in literacy rates and near parity on primary school participation. It scores at over parity (women have better outcomes than men) in life expectancy. It ranks 23rd in the world (0.769) in economic gender balance with parity in female and male professional and technical workers and high scores in labor force participation and pay equality.[387] Nonetheless, in rural areas, the situation for women is worse than in urban areas as many economically active women in rural areas do more unpaid family work.[388] In the political participation realm, factors pulling down Mongolia's score are that it has never had a female head of state or government, and that fewer than 30% of parliamentarians and ministers at the national level are women.[389] In a separate index, the WPS Index from the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace, and Security, Mongolia ranks 54th of 170 assessed countries and has an overall score of 0.769 (on a scale where 1.000 is completely equal and 0.000 is completely unequal). In the WPS Index, Mongolia is compared with 18 other countries in the East Asia and Pacific Region, a grouping that includes powerhouses such as China, Singapore, and South Korea. Factors leading to Mongolia's overall assessment are:

- Women complete 10.7 years of school (of a 12-year primary/secondary program) on average, a slightly higher average than in 2017
- 95% of women have banking or financial access, a rise from 93.2% in 2017

- 60.4% of women are employed in the formal sector
- 100% of women have mobile phone access, an increase on the already high 2017 total of 97.5%
- Only 17.3% of parliamentarians are women, showing almost no change from the previous parliament after 2020 elections
- Discrimination is largely absent based on an assessment of norms, son bias, and an absence of legal discrimination, all of which have remained constant over recent years
- 12% of women report intimate partner violence; and
- Nearly one-half of women say they feel safe in their communities, a slight drop from just over one-half in 2017, making this indicator the only one where Mongolia ranks last in its regional grouping.[390]

The law criminalizes forced or non-consensual sexual intercourse or sexual acts that involve the use or threat of physical violence, abuse a position of authority (financial or official), or take advantage of the victim's incapacity to protect him- or herself or object to the commission of the act due to mental illness, temporary loss of mental capacity, or the influence of drugs or alcohol, and provides for sentences of 1-20 years in prison or life imprisonment, depending on the circumstances. The law criminalizes spousal rape. Domestic violence is also a crime, for which perpetrators can be punished administratively or criminally, including by a maximum of two years in prison. The government maintains a nationwide database of domestic violence offenders, and those who commit a second domestic violence offense are automatically charged under criminal law.

The National Center against Violence (NCAV), an NGO, reported that police response to domestic violence complaints has improved in recent years. NCAV has reported increased reporting of domestic violence by third parties. Combating domestic violence is included in the accredited training curriculum of the police academy and in all police officer position descriptions.

One assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on gender-based violence conducted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the UN Population Fund revealed that social and economic stresses caused by the pandemic were major causes of domestic violence and violence against children. According to the NPA, there were 31,043 domestic violence complaints in the first nine months of 2020. NCAV reported a 1.4% increase in reported serious domestic violence crimes and a 36.8% increase in petty domestic violence offenses during the period. They attributed this rise to school closures and restrictions on movements in response to the pandemic. NCAV reported a 20% increase in demand for shelter services and a 36.8% in calls received by its hotline, compared with the same period in 2019. The Family, Child, and Youth Development Authority reported a 99% increase in domestic violence cases classified as petty offenses during the period of COVID-19-related restrictions on movements. NCAV expanded its activities to support domestic violence victims with disabilities by engaging sign language interpreters and renovating facilities to make them more accessible to persons who use wheelchairs or have other mobility difficulties.[391]

As part of the Mongolian government's and U.S. Army Pacific's (USARPAC) GOBI WOLF Exercise 2019, women participated in a mentoring and leadership program. To strengthen women's roles, USINDOPACOM and USARPAC brought together 23 women from across Mongolia for the Women's Mentorship Program (WMP) with U.S. military officers during the week of 16-20 September 2019. WMP participants collaborated to ensure that a gender perspective and consideration for vulnerable populations are included in Mongolian disaster response, mitigation, and management efforts. The theory is that when a society includes and invests in its entire population that society will be safer and more secure.[392]

CONCLUSION

In the three decades since Mongolia instituted its transition from a planned economy to a market one, it has made significant progress in terms of human development and economic and political stability. It has instituted free and compulsory primary and secondary education and a system of free primary health care across the country. Nonetheless, the country confronts challenges as it tries to reach all citizens with these services as at least one-third of the population practices semi-nomadic herding as a lifestyle and livelihood.

Only recently have improved roads connected all administrative centers, and poor road conditions can disrupt business. Rail transport does connect key areas of central and eastern Mongolia with China and Russia, but the rail network is suited mostly for bulk freight and suffers from long wait times for freight crossing into or out of China. Air transport provides a key means for small-scale business and personal travel throughout the country, but "last-mile" delivery of goods and services is still expensive and inefficient. A major boost to Mongolia's economy and socio-political integration has been the digital revolution. Mongolia has built a strong, modern communications network that reaches nearly 100% of people. The competitive mobile telephone and internet service market undergirds avid internet use that has not only proven to be a boon to connect some remote learners and entrepreneurs but also to bolster a mass media sphere that is in transition.

The overall low population density recorded for Mongolia belies a vast difference between urban and rural areas. While rural areas are minimally populated, an estimated 60% of the population lives in and around Ulaanbaatar. Many of the city's areas are informal ger settlements that are not connected to public power, water, or sanitation. In these areas, households commonly use soft coal as a fuel. Thus, among the environmental challenges creating risks for public health, long-term ecological sustainability, and economic stability are severe water and air pollution. Beyond urban Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia continues to confront the long-term sustainability of its reliance on the mining sector for economic growth because of that sector's contributions to destruction of land and rivers.

The national territory is susceptible to severe winter conditions that lead to livestock mortality (dzuds), strong winds and dust storms, drought, flooding, and earthquakes. After the destructive severe winter conditions of 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, the government shifted its methods to address disaster risk and response from a model wherein response was a priority to a model that prioritizes risk reduction and preparedness.

In 2004, the government established the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) through the integration of civil defense, fire-fighting, and other agencies, and NEMA was given responsibility for DRR and fire safety as well as coordination and assistance delivery during a disaster. NEMA oversees DRR and preparedness activities and builds capabilities at all levels of government, across all 21 aimags and Ulaanbaatar, and among communities, to ensure public awareness, instill risk-free habits, and arrange training, including for persons with disabilities, children, elderly citizens, and low-income persons. Moreover, NEMA maintains agreements with the armed forces, which can support local emergency management divisions and departments during emergencies.

Finally, in order to ensure that it remains at the forefront of thinking on DRR, DM, and climate change adaptation, Mongolia's NEMA and armed forces have also built partnerships internationally to ensure regular interaction and training. Annually, NEMA joins U.S. agencies and armed forces for the DM-focused exercise, GOBI WOLF. Mongolia also hosts representatives from other Asia-Pacific governments and militaries for rehearsal and expert exchanges on DRR and disaster response.

APPENDICES

DoD DMHA Engagements in the Past Five Years (FY 2017-2022)

The list below describes DMHA engagements that U.S. DoD commands and components have had with Mongolia in the last five years.

Airman-to-Airman Talks – November 2021

The Alaska National Guard participated in the second biennial Airman-to-Airman Talks (A2AT) with the Mongolian Air Force to plan for future training and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEE) together. Hosted by U.S. Pacific Air Forces, A2AT develop interoperability, foster military-to-military relations, and improve bilateral cooperation. This program has direct ties to the National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP), through which Alaska and Mongolia have been partners since 2003. Via the SPP, the National Guard participates with other militaries in support of defense security goals. It also leverages whole-of-society relationships and capabilities to facilitate broader interagency and corollary engagements spanning military, government, economic, and social spheres. The chief enlisted manager for the 176th Civil Engineer Squadron and a participant of the 2021 engagement said that working alongside the Mongolian Air Force for training on engineering and logistics skills goes a long way for country-to-country relations. U.S. and Mongolian military members participated in four working group topics for the 2021 A2AT, i.e., exercises and engagements, logistics, professionalization and education, and medical. During the working groups, the Mongolian Air Force and U.S. Air Force representatives worked side-by-side to develop a plan for future cooperation. The groups discussed common interests and developed a roadmap for activities and exercises, security assistance, and high-level visits. The logistics group discussed best practices, and offered and solidified SMEEs, airfield operations, security forces, and search and rescue. The Mongolian Air Force has a particular interest in rescue capabilities and looks to the Alaska Air National Guard's search and rescue assets for guidance. The Alaska National Guard and Mongolian Air Force agreed to conduct upcoming SMEEs and official visits.[393]

Khangai-21

From 14 to 23 September 2021, the Civil Military Support Element of the U.S. Embassy in Mongolia partnered with Mongolia's NEMA to organize the Khangai-21 Disaster Response Exercise in Arkhangai Province. Working together with Local Emergency Management Agencies from Arkhangai, Bayankhongor, Bulgan, Khuvsgul, Uvurkhangai, and Zavkhan Provinces, medical and rescue personnel from the U.S. Air Force led training exercises in confined spaces and high-angle rescue, along with support training in emergency medicine, crisis communications, and emergency management. In addition to the more than 180 Mongolian participants, the defense attachés of Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the Republic of Turkey attended as observers. Special focus was given to earthquake response to help Mongolian rescue personnel better prepare to provide assistance and relief to the people of Mongolia in the event of such a disaster. Training consisted of extensive classroom and field instruction on how to extract and evacuate disaster victims safely. At the same time, medical personnel received training on how to triage and treat patients during an emergency. Additionally, officials from emergency operations centers received classroom instruction on efficient management and resourcing of rescue and medical personnel; how to communicate effectively with the public during a crisis; and ways to work with international NGOs to provide humanitarian relief. At the end of the training, participants successfully engaged in a large-scale exercise

simulating a real-world natural disaster. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. and Mongolia were forced to cancel the GOBI WOLF multi-national disaster response exercise held annually in Mongolia, and Khangai-21 exercise allowed U.S. and Mongolian rescue personnel to solidify their productive partnership in the interim. Lessons learned from Khangai-21 will inform planning for GOBI WOLF exercises expected to resume in 2022.[394] Photo 3 shows U.S. Air Force instructors evaluating NEMA rescuers during Khangai-21.[395]

COVID-19 Aid

On 5 March 2021, the U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission and the Civil-Military Support Element handed over a donation of Personal Protective Equipment and Rapid Antigen Test Kits to Mongolia's Deputy Minister of Health. The Civil-Military Support Element has also donated equipment to the NEMA and the General Authority for Special Inspection. The total donation of 26,000 plastic face shields, 75,000 N95 masks, and 3,150 boxes of latex gloves in various sizes, as well as 30,000 rapid test kits, was purchased with funds from the DoD's Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster Assistance, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) program. The Civil-Military Support Element, staffed by four U.S. Army Civil Affairs soldiers, cooperates with the government of Mongolia and civilian organizations to boost disaster preparedness and provide assistance.[396]

GOBI WOLF 2019

GOBI WOLF 2019 took place in Dornogobi 9-21 September. For the eighth year since 2009, the international exercise was jointly organized by the NEMA, the Embassy of the United States, and USINDOPACOM. GOBI WOLF is aimed at enhancing abilities to respond and recover from emergency situations, disasters, and hazards that occur in Mongolia, training corresponding disaster and emergency personnel, and sharing experiences with experts of other countries. The exercise has attracted a large number of participants, including more than 500 representatives from 19 countries other than the U.S. and Mongolia. Participants represented Australia, Canada, France, Nepal, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tajikistan, and Vietnam as well as UN specialized agencies, international organizations of disaster risk management operating in Mongolia, Mongolia's National Security Council, government ministries, Inspection Agency, Ulaanbaatar Railways, National Auto Transportation Center, emergency commissions of several aimags, emergency departments and brigades, Emergency Management School, and local emergency management units. GOBI WOLF 2019 was given the theme "Local capacity and regional partnership." The exercise consisted of 21 types of training for various scenarios in four phases – academic training, a table top exercise, and a two-part field training exercise to replicate the demands of a disaster response situation and to test disaster preparedness plan.[397]



Photo 3: U.S. Air Force and NEMA Conduct KHANGAI-21 Culmination Exercise in Arkhangai

Pacific Angel 19-3

U.S. and Mongolian military leaders conducted airfield and emergency medical SMEEs to

share cultural expertise, technical competency, and vital training in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 22-26 July 2019. The air advisor and medical response exchanges were part of Pacific Angel 19-3, and combined humanitarian assistance engagement incorporated SMEEs with medical outreach and civic engineering projects, led by U.S. Pacific Air Forces. U.S. Air Force air advisors and Mongolian Air Force officers shared experiences and knowledge on an array of operational topics, to include humanitarian aid and disaster response procedures that incorporate the use of Mi-17 helicopters. Discussion topics also included runway and airfield maintenance, airspace classifications, ground-to-air signaling, and flight notification procedures. The Mongolian Air Force State Division Department commander noted some of the most valuable information the Mongolian officers gained included learning to identify and select landing zones and search and rescue methodology. Concurrently with the SMEEs, in Bayongol Soum, community doctors, nurses, and civilian volunteers took part in a trauma and mass casualty response training exercise. Mongolian Armed Forces and U.S. Air Force medical personnel equipped the participants with vital knowledge and experience for first responders, ending the week with hands-on exercises to employ procedures learned throughout the week. Initial injury assessment, burn treatment, and tourniquet application were some of the first-responder skills demonstrated by the U.S. and Mongolian medical personnel before involving the participants for practice. For rural areas surrounding Bayongol, equipping motivated citizens can save lives since formal medical care can sometimes be hours away.[398]

Khaan Quest 2018

The multinational peacekeeping exercise Khaan Quest 2018 ended on 28 June. The Mongolian Armed Forces hosted 17 other nations, including the U.S., with approximately 3,000 participants over three weeks of training. The 2018 iteration marked the 16th anniversary of the Khaan Quest training event. There were various training lanes throughout the exercise, including counter-improvised explosive device, patrolling, tactical combat casualty care, distribution, crowd control, riverine operations, and a Critical Enabler Capability Enhancement Exercise, all intended to train partner nations in peacekeeping capabilities while strengthening the bonds between partnering nations. The main objective of Khaan Quest is to increase positive military-to-military relationships with common interests related to humanitarian assistance and disaster response, maritime security, counterterrorism, defense trade, and security of the global commons.[399]

GOBI WOLF 2018

GOBI WOLF 2018 ran 28 May to 8 June in Khovd. The annual disaster response exercise and exchange between Mongolia's NEMA and USARPAC focused on inter-agency coordination. Ahead of the field exercise, classroom work included search-and-rescue train-the-trainer activities for 80 emergency workers from several aimags. USINDOPACOM trainers also provided material and experience on mountain and water search and rescue as well as operations in small spaces and ruined buildings. This year's exercise iteration was based on the theme "Organizing regional management and interaction." As with other years, the Alaska National Guard was a key participant.[400] For the first time in the exercise's history, the 902nd Contracting Battalion from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, sent troops forward in direct support of I Corps, the lead element for GOBI WOLF 2018.[401]

GOBI WOLF 2017

Exercise GOBI WOLF 2017 began on 1 May with an opening ceremony, academic training, a UN OCHA webinar, and a reception dinner. GOBI WOLF 17 was a five-day disaster response exercise and exchange between the government of Mongolia and USARPAC focused on interagency coordination. Mongolia's NEMA hosts the exercise with support from Mongolia's armed forces. The U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia said the exercise marked 30 years

of cooperation. The exercise's scenario featured a magnitude 7.5 earthquake in Umnugovi aimag along the border with China. The scenario and actions that followed tested disaster management plans including earthquake preparedness plans at the national and local levels, coordination of civil-military cooperation, and reception of international humanitarian assistance. Activities included a tabletop exercise focusing on functional-area expertise in an office environment, a field training exercise at several locations around Dalanzadgad, and an after-action review to capture lessons learned. The exercise was originally hosted from 2009 to 2012 and was reinstituted in 2015 as part of the Pacific Resilience series of humanitarian assistance and disaster response exercises hosted by USARPAC. Pacific Resilience tests host-nation defense support to civil authorities during disaster situations, the integration of foreign humanitarian assistance, and the strategic communication required to implement emergency management plans. Other countries that sent delegates were Bangladesh, Canada, Hungary, Japan, Nepal, New Zealand, and South Korea. In a departure from past exercises, GOBI WOLF 2017 moved away from Ulaanbaatar for a more realistic and challenging scenario owing to austere conditions and the added logistical demands of distance. U.S. military participants in the exercise included Army and Air Force service members, Army Reservists, and Alaska Army and Air National Guardsmen. USAID, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and numerous U.S. agencies also sent delegates.[402]

Disaster Management Leadership Seminar - 2016

A five-member team from the Alaska Air National Guard's 212th Rescue Squadron participated in a Disaster Management Leadership Seminar in Ulaanbaatar, 19-23 September. The Mongolia NEMA hosted the first of its kind exchange, partnering with service members from the 212th, U.S. Army's 97th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne), 5th Military Information Support Battalion, U.S. Air Force's 320th Special Tactics Squadron, and Special Operations Command, Pacific, in a leadership seminar. The seminar consisted of classroom SMEEs, hands-on training provided by both the NEMA and members of the Alaska National Guard, and a field training exercise.[403]

International/Foreign Relations

Mongolia maintains diplomatic relations with 150 countries in all regions of the world. As a small, developing state sandwiched between two major powers – the Russian Federation and China – the country tries to balance its relations between Moscow and Beijing without adopting the international positions of either of them. As part of this effort to maintain an independent set of global policies, Mongolia has constructed a "third neighbor" approach by which it strives to expand ties in the fields of trade, education, energy, and technology with Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, and the U.S.[404]

In addition to diversifying bilateral relationships, multilateral cooperation is one of Mongolia's critical policies to promote national security and interests. Having taken its seat at the UN in 1961, Mongolia has been active in peace and security, disarmament, protection and promotion of human rights, strengthening democracy and governance, and economic, social, and humanitarian issues. Moreover, 11 UN system organizations, funds, and programs have offices and branches in Mongolia. Of great import to Mongolia is its 1992 declaration, at the 47th Session of the General Assembly, that its territory is a single-state nuclear weapons free zone (SSNWFZ). Since 1998, the "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status" resolution has been renewed every two years, and the resolution invites other UN member-states to cooperate with Mongolia in strengthening its position. In 1999, the Government of Mongolia issued a resolution on participation in UN peacekeeping operations and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Concerning Contributions to the

UN Standby Arrangements. Since 2002, more than 18,139 Mongolian peacekeepers have served in UN missions around the world.[405] As of December 2021, some 900 military and police personnel were serving in ongoing peacekeeping operations.[406]

Since the 1980s, Mongolia has pursued a policy of creating dialogue mechanisms in Northeast Asia. These efforts yielded the "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security" initiative in 2013. The goal is to defuse tensions on the Korean Peninsula and promote confidence building and peacemaking in Northeast Asia. Within the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue Initiative, Mongolia has hosted events that promote confidence building among regional states on security, women parliamentarians, city mayors, energy connectivity, and youth. The International Conference "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security" has been held annually since 2014 and is evolving to cover a broader range of issues including security, energy, infrastructure, green development, and opportunities in humanitarian cooperation. Each Conference has included more than 200 international and national delegates and representatives of governments, the United Nations and other international organizations, and academia. The Government invitees to the conference include China, South Korea, North Korea, Japan, Russia, and Mongolia, and officials from Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, the European Union (EU), and others.[407]

Military Diplomacy

The country has striven to build diverse military relationships in the 100 years since the Mongolian Armed Forces formed. Mongolia's military maintains close ties with its two neighbors – Russia and China – and with their geopolitical competitors. Mongolia's small military tries to set an example for contributing to global peace and stability while investing in confidence building. In January 2021, the U.S. DoD conducted the 17th annual U.S.–Mongolia Bilateral Consultative Council, where officials reaffirmed their support for a free and open Indo-Pacific. The same month, the Deputy Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Mircea Geoana, alongside the Mongolian Ministry of Defense held a virtual opening ceremony of a center to strengthen Mongolia's cyber-defense capabilities. Mongolia has also become a contributor to U.S. and NATO military operations. From 2003 onward, Mongolia dispatched 1,200 military personnel to serve in Iraq and over 4,500 personnel to Afghanistan. The U.S. DoD has identified Mongolia as a "reliable, capable, and natural partner." The United States also supported Mongolia's initiative of converting its Soviet-style military base into a state-of-art regional peacekeeping center, the Five Hills Training Centre. Mongolia has experience working with the Belgian military in Afghanistan and Kosovo, with Polish units in Iraq, and with the German military in Afghanistan. Such deployments enabled Mongolia to receive military technical assistance and conduct joint training exercises in preparation. In 2005, NATO established a Partnership and Cooperation Program with Mongolia; in 2012, Mongolia became one of the nine NATO partners across the globe. Mongolia's delicate geopolitical context limits its cooperation with NATO members to training, education, and peace-support operations rather than acquiring military hardware. Mongolia's amicable military collaboration with NATO members contributed to its membership of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2012.

Despite its cultivation of diverse military relationships, Mongolia still pays special attention to its ties with Russia and China. In a strategic partnership treaty between Mongolia and Russia in 2019, defense cooperation became a crucial component in reviving military technical cooperation, assisting Mongolia in modernizing its weaponry. Since 2008, the joint Russia–Mongolia bilateral exercise Selenge has been organized annually. In February 2020, China's Ministry of National Defense delivered 100,000 vaccine doses, donated specifically to Mongolian military personnel as part of high-

level collaboration between the two militaries. Mongolia's military ties with China are centered on developmental assistance and confidence-building measures.[408]

Third Neighbors

The United States established diplomatic relations with Mongolia in 1987, and Mongolia describes the U.S. as its most important "third neighbor." In 2019, the two upgraded their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership. They have signed a cultural accord, a Peace Corps accord, and a consular convention. Since 2011, the Government of Mongolia has committed US$600,000 annually to co-fund the Fulbright masters' program, tripling the number of Mongolians who study in the U.S. under this initiative. In addition, more than 1,500 Mongolians study at U.S. colleges and universities, some via private scholarships. Approximately 120 Mongolians travel to the United States every year on U.S. government-funded educational, professional, and cultural exchange programs.

USAID maintains programs to facilitate small and medium enterprises' access to finance, develop young leaders, support Mongolia's transition to a self-reliant energy sector, and build resilience for those affected by climate change and natural disasters. USAID also provides significant resources to assist Mongolia's fight against COVID-19. The United States and Mongolia implemented important, long-lasting development projects through a Millennium Challenge Compact between 2008 and 2013. A second US$350 million Compact to build critical water infrastructure in Ulaanbaatar entered into force in March 2021. Targeted U.S. government assistance seeks to promote good governance and the rule of law, foster the next generation of democratic leaders, strengthen civil society, and support private sector-led growth, economic diversification, and long-term capital investment. Through the International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Program and U.S. federal and local law enforcement partners, the U.S. government combats transnational crime, gender-based violence, financial crime, and corruption by developing Mongolian law enforcement capacity and strengthening police-to-police ties.[409]

Another key "third neighbor" is the 27 member-state EU. The EU's political support and development cooperation partnership with Mongolia focus on increasing the country's resilience via green, socioeconomic development through sustainable diversification of its economy. The EU-Mongolia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement entered into force on 1 November 2017. It provides the legal framework for EU-Mongolia relations and covers political dialogue, trade, and cooperation on sustainable development, agriculture and rural development, energy, climate change, research and innovation, employment and social affairs, education and culture, justice, freedom, and security.[410]

Trade and Development

It is on the economic front that Mongolia casts its net widest. Global commodity prices and the Chinese economy affect Mongolia's economic growth rates, which have fluctuated widely in recent years. A balance of payments crisis prompted the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to implement a US$425 million Extended Fund Facility from 2017 to 2020. In June 2020, the IMF approved an additional US$99 million Rapid Financing Instrument disbursement to help Mongolia cope with the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mongolian economy contracted just more than 5% in 2020 due to the pandemic, but by 2021 was set for a recovery helped by higher prices for copper and coal, two of Mongolia's major exports.

With 90% of Mongolia's exports going to or through its southern neighbor, China remains Mongolia's most significant economic partner. China also supplies one-third of Mongolia's imports, mostly in consumer and capital goods. About 60% of the government's bilateral debts and 82% of central bank debt are held by China. China is also Mongolia's second-largest source of foreign direct investment. Canada is the largest, primarily in the mining sector. The United States ranks seventh. Mongolia's trade with Russia is

primarily in energy, although the government has sought to expand trade through free-trade negotiations with the Eurasian Economic Union, the customs bloc comprising Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia. Approximately 20% of Mongolia's energy demand is met by imports from Russia and China. Russia supplies electricity for the Central and Western Grids, while Chinese-generated electricity supports mining projects in the South Gobi. To diversify away from its dependence upon China, the government has looked to Russia, as well as "third neighbors," especially the U.S., Japan, India, and the EU, as sources of investment and trade.[411]

Participation in International Organizations

Mongolia is a member of, participates in, or cooperates with the following international organizations and agreement frameworks either as a government or via a national NGO or other entity:

Asian Development Bank (ADB), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Conference on Disarmament, Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Colombo Plan, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI, compliant country), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Group of 77 (G-77), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Chamber of Conference (NGOs), International Criminal Court, Institute of Catastrophe Risk Management (ICRM), International Development Association (IDA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Maritime Organization, International Mobile Satellite Organization, International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL), International Olympic Committee, UN International Organization for Migration (IOM), Inter-Parliamentary Union, International Organization for Standardization, International Telecommunications Satellite Organization, International Telecommunications Union, International Trade Union Confederation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO-observer), United Nations (UN), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UN Industrial Development Organization, World Tourism Organization, Universal Postal Union, World Customs Organization, World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization, World Meteorological Organization, World Trade Organization (WTO).

UN peacekeeping missions that Mongolia is contributing personnel to, as of December 2021:[412]

- United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) – 3 experts
- United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) – 2 experts
- United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) – 3 experts, 1 police, 1 officer
- United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) – 1 expert
- United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) – 7 experts, 7 police, 15 officers, and 850 troops

Force Protection/Pre-Deployment Information

The following information is provided for pre-deployment planning and preparations. Visit www.travel.state.gov prior to deployments for further up-to-date information.[413] DoD personnel must review the Foreign Clearance Guide (FCG) for travel to Mongolia (www.fcg.pentagon.mil). All official travel and personal travel for active duty personnel must be submitted through an APACS request. Contact information for the Defense Attaché Office can be found in the FCG if you have additional questions.

Passport/Visa

Tourism & Business Travel: Visitors staying for fewer than 90 days do not need a visa, but passports must be valid for at least six months beyond date of arrival. Visitors staying more than 30 days must register with Mongolian Immigration within seven days of arrival. Failure to register will result in a fine of US$100-300 upon departure, and offenders will not be allowed to depart the country until the fine is paid in full to the Mongolian Immigration Agency. Visitors will also be fined for stays beyond the 90-day admission even if the stay is extended due to circumstances beyond one's control. This fine, which accumulates daily for every day beyond 90 days, must also be paid in full before Mongolian authorities will allow offenders to depart.

Work, Study, Reside: Visitors who plan to visit, work, study, or reside in Mongolia for more than 90 days must apply for a visa at the Mongolian Embassy in Washington, DC, the Mongolian Consulate General in San Francisco, or the Mongolian Mission to the United Nations in New York before departure from the United States.

Overland Travel to/from China or Russia: Only the Zamyn-Uud border crossing in the south with China and the Sukhbaatar/Altanbulag border crossing in the north with Russia, are always open to foreign travelers. Other overland ports of entry are open sporadically.

Minors traveling with guardians who are not their parents must travel with a signed, notarized letter from at least one parent authorizing the minor's travel. Minors traveling alone by air must present a signed, notarized letter from at least one parent attesting that the minor will utilize the services of the airline to ensure the child is accompanied throughout the trip.

Safety and Security

The phone number to report crimes to the local police is 102. The number to call an ambulance or fire truck in an emergency is 103. Note that local authorities, including the operators responding to these emergency numbers, do not commonly speak English.

Crime: Mongolia is a relatively safe country for foreigners. However, both street crime and violent crime are on the rise, especially in the larger towns and cities. Crime typically peaks during the Naadam summer festival in July and during the Tsagaan Sar (Lunar New Year) festival in January or February. Most street crime occurs late at night, often outside bars and nightclubs.

Theft: Pickpocketing and bag-snatching can occur at any time, especially in crowded places like markets, train stations, and popular tourist attractions. Take precautions to protect personal effects when in public. The Embassy has received reports of visitors' accommodations being burgled while occupied. These burglaries most often occurred when travelers were staying in yurt (ger) camps where locking the door to the accommodation may be impossible.

Robbery: The most common form of robbery experienced by visitors to Mongolia is mugging. Mugging is most likely when one is in unfamiliar urban neighborhoods after dark or in unregistered private vehicles operating as taxis. Stick to well-lit and well-established tourist areas and use registered taxis whenever possible.

Sexual assault: Though infrequent, the Embassy does receive reports of sexual assaults perpetrated against travelers. These reports indicate that perpetrators are most often familiar with the victim in some way such as tour guides or employees of locations frequented by tourists,

like ger camps and monasteries. Victim of sexual assault should contact the Mongolian police immediately and seek assistance from the Embassy by calling +976 7007-6001. Female travelers are encouraged to avoid traveling alone in Mongolia and all travelers should research and hire only reputable tour agencies with established safety and security records, especially when visiting remote areas far from the capital.

The police will instruct victims of sexual assault to obtain an examination at the criminal forensic institute, which is in Ulaanbaatar city or in provincial centers. A medical check from any other clinic/hospital will not be admitted into evidence at any judicial proceeding. The Embassy can assist in helping locate these centers.

Domestic Violence: U.S. citizen victims of domestic violence are encouraged to contact the U.S. Embassy for assistance.

Street harassment: Street harassment is especially prevalent at night and in areas outside the capital. The most common targets of street harassment are unaccompanied women and foreign men accompanying Mongolian or other Asian women. Street harassment may range from verbal abuse to physical assault. Certain nationalist groups also perpetrate premeditated attacks against foreigners. Most street harassment occurs in or near bars and nightclubs, and alcohol is often involved. All travelers should avoid walking alone after dark, avoid using unregistered taxi cabs, and moderate their use of alcohol to avoid becoming an easy target for harassment in public.

Drug offenses: Mongolian police are particularly keen on combatting the use of drugs, a problem they generally see as imported by foreigners. Penalties for drug possession and or trafficking in Mongolia range from one to twelve years imprisonment.

Smuggling of contraband goods, antiquities, and wildlife: Smuggling of these items is prevalent across both the Russian and Chinese borders. Travelers have been known to be duped into transporting contraband goods or controlled antiquities from Mongolia. Be wary of other passengers requesting help with their luggage, as it could contain illicit articles. Penalties for smuggling in Mongolia vary based on the items smuggled and range from one month of electronic monitoring to eight years imprisonment and fines from MNT 450,000-40,000,000 (US$160-14,000) as of September 2020.

Demonstrations: Demonstrations are common in many parts of Mongolia but are most prominent in the capital Ulaanbaatar. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can become confrontational and escalate into violence. Protesters may block traffic on roads, including major thoroughfares. U.S. citizens should avoid demonstration areas and exercise caution if near any protests. Some demonstrations by Mongolian ultra-nationalists take a xenophobic turn and may place foreigners at heightened risk should they encounter these events. U.S. citizens should avoid participating in demonstrations and other activities that might be deemed political by Mongolian authorities.

Alcohol: Visitors who choose to drink alcohol should do so in moderation and should stop and seek medical attention if they begin to feel ill. Alcohol is an important aspect of Mongolian social culture and strangers may offer to drink with travelers as a welcoming gesture. While most of these offers are innocuous and truly a friendly gesture, travelers should be wary of accepting beverages offered on the street by strangers who approach them late at night as these are often the precursor to a robbery. The prevalent use of alcohol is also connected to a high frequency of physical altercations sometimes resulting in injury. U.S. citizen travelers are known to have become wittingly or unwittingly involved in such altercations and injured.

Driving under the influence: Mongolian police take driving under the influence very seriously and enforcement is vigorous in urban areas. Penalties for driving under the influence in Mongolia include a one-year suspension of driving privileges and an MNT 400,000 (US$140) fine as of September 2020. Travelers should exercise the same precautions as they would in the United States, use of a designated driver or a taxi, to avoid operating a motor vehicle while

under the influence of alcohol.

Victims of Crime: Local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes. Victims of a crime should contact the local authorities to file a Mongolian police report and should also inform the U.S. Embassy. A crime may only be reported in person at the local police district having jurisdiction over the location where the crime occurred. Before reporting a crime, it may be wise to consult an attorney. The U.S. Embassy maintains a list of English-speaking lawyers. Visitors should have their passports or residency permits on hand.

Once a crime is reported to the police Mongolian law requires that plaintiffs remain in the country for the duration of both the investigation and any subsequent trial. In some instances, the law provides for a victim to appoint a legal representative to take their place.

The police will instruct victims of assault or sexual assault to undergo an examination by the criminal forensic institute in Ulaanbaatar or in provincial centers. No other medical examination will be accepted as evidence by Mongolian authorities. The Embassy can assist in helping locate these centers.

It is important to note that, if a victim does not file a complaint, police may refuse to investigate the crime even if they have probable cause to suspect that a crime took place.

Victims of a crime may seek the following assistance from the U.S. Embassy:

- help finding appropriate medical care, doctors, and hospitals
- assistance in reporting a crime to the police
- contacting relatives or friends with written consent
- explanations of the local criminal justice process in general terms
- providing a list of local attorneys
- providing information on victim's compensation programs in the U.S. as well as local resources
- providing an emergency loan for repatriation, which includes accommodation and flights back to the United States and/or limited medical support in cases of destitution
- replacing a stolen, lost, or damaged passport

Tourism: The tourism industry is unevenly regulated. Mongolia's vast area and limited road and communications infrastructure make emergency response challenging for local and national authorities. Mongolia's severe weather—desert conditions in the summer in many tourist areas and dangerously cold in the winter across the country—exacerbates the potential for urgent situations, especially in the event of injury or becoming lost or disoriented outside of city centers. The Embassy recommends travelers not drive outside of Ulaanbaatar or other city centers after sunset. In winter, visitors should always keep high-quality cold-weather clothing in vehicles, even for short trips, to protect oneself in the event of delay or becoming stranded. Routine safety inspections for emergency and medical equipment and facilities do not commonly occur. Hazardous areas/activities are not always identified with appropriate signage, and tour guides and tourist attraction staff may not be adequately trained or certified by the host government or recognized authorities in the field. In the event of an injury, basic medical treatment is typically available only in/near major cities, with significant limitations on the availability of medication and quality of health care. First responders are generally unable to quickly access areas outside of major cities to provide urgent medical treatment. U.S. citizens are encouraged to purchase medical evacuation insurance.

Emergency Contact Information

U.S. Embassy Ulaanbaatar
Denver Street #3
11th Micro-District
Ulaanbaatar 14190
Mongolia
Tel: +976-7007-6001 (including for emergencies after-hours)
Fax: +976-7007-6016
E-mail: *UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov*
Web: *https://mn.usembassy.gov/*

Currency Information

Mongolia uses the tugrik or tögrög (MNT)
US$1.00 = MNT / ₮ 2,874
MNT / ₮ 10,000 = US$3.47986 (as of 20 February 2022)

Travel Health Information

The CDC provides guidance that all travelers to Mongolia should be up to date on routine vaccinations. The following are additional recommendations for travel to Mongolia. The information in Tables 4 and 5 are taken directly from the CDC website under the Travelers Health Section (https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/); they offer details on who should consider what prophylaxes for various vaccine-preventable and non-vaccine-preventable diseases.[414]

Health Alerts for Mongolia: At the time of writing this handbook (20 February 2022), there is one health risk alert for Mongolia. Mongolia is a Level 4 (very high) risk country for COVID-19. The CDC recommendations are the following:

- Avoid travel to Mongolia.
- If you must travel to Mongolia, make sure you are vaccinated and up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines before travel.
- Even if you are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines, you may still be at risk for getting and spreading COVID-19.
- Anyone 2 years or older should properly wear a well-fitting mask in indoor public spaces.
- Follow all requirements and recommendations in Mongolia.

The following actions you can take to stay healthy and safe on your trip include:

Eat and Drink Safely

Unclean food and water can cause travelers' diarrhea and other diseases. Reduce your risk by sticking to safe food and water habits.

Eat

- Food that is cooked and served hot
- Hard-cooked eggs
- Fruits and vegetables, you have washed in clean water or peeled yourself
- Pasteurized dairy products

Don't Eat

- Food served at room temperature
- Food from street vendors
- Raw or soft-cooked (runny) eggs
- Raw or undercooked (rare) meat or fish
- Unwashed or unpeeled raw fruits and vegetables
- Unpasteurized dairy products
- "Bushmeat" (monkeys, bats, or other wild game)

Drink

- Bottled water that is sealed
- Water that has been disinfected
- Ice made with bottled or disinfected water
- Carbonated drinks
- Hot coffee or tea
- Pasteurized milk

Don't Drink

- Tap or well water
- Ice made with tap or well water
- Drinks made with tap or well water (such as reconstituted juice)
- Unpasteurized milk

Take Medicine

Talk with your doctor about taking prescription or over-the-counter drugs with you on your trip in case you get sick.

Prevent Bug Bites

Bugs (like mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas) can spread a number of diseases in Mongolia. Many of these diseases cannot be prevented with a vaccine or medicine. You can reduce your risk by taking steps to prevent bug bites.

To prevent bug bites:

- Cover exposed skin by wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and hats.
- Use an appropriate insect repellent (see below).
- Use permethrin-treated clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents). Do not use permethrin directly on skin.

- Stay and sleep in air-conditioned or screened rooms.
- Use a bed net if the area where you are sleeping is exposed to the outdoors.

For protection against ticks and mosquitoes:
Use a repellent that contains 20% or more DEET for protection that lasts up to several hours.

For protection against mosquitoes only:
Products with one of the following active ingredients can also help prevent mosquito bites. Higher percentages of active ingredient provide longer protection.

- DEET
- Picaridin (also known as KBR 3023, Bayrepel, and Icaridin)
- Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-Menthane-3,8-diol (PMD)
- IR3535
- 2-undecanone

If you are bitten by bugs:

- Avoid scratching bug bites and apply hydrocortisone cream or calamine lotion to reduce the itching.
- Check your entire body for ticks after outdoor activity. Be sure to remove ticks properly.

Safety and Security

Note that conditions can change rapidly in a country at any time. To receive updated Travel Advisories and Alerts for the countries you choose, sign up at *step.state.gov*.

Routine vaccines	All travelers should be up-to-date on all routine vaccines before every trip. Some of these vaccines include: Chickenpox (Varicella), Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis, Flu (influenza), Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR), Polio, and Shingles
COVID-19	Everyone 5 years of age and older should get fully vaccinated for COVID-19 before travel.
Hepatitis A	Recommended for unvaccinated travelers one year old or older going to Mongolia. Travelers allergic to a vaccine component or who are younger than 6 months should receive a single dose of immune globulin, which provides effective protection for up to 2 months depending on dosage given. Unvaccinated travelers who are over 40 years old, immunocompromised, or have chronic medical conditions planning to depart to a risk area in less than 2 weeks should get the initial dose of vaccine and at the same appointment receive immune globulin.
Hepatitis B	Recommended for unvaccinated travelers of all ages to Mongolia.
Japanese Encephalitis (for some travelers)	Rabid dogs are commonly found in Mongolia. If you are bitten or scratched by a dog or other mammal while in Mongolia, there may be limited or no rabies treatment available. Consider rabies vaccination before your trip if your activities mean you will be around dogs or wildlife. Travelers more likely to encounter rabid animals include: • Campers, adventure travelers, or cave explorers (spelunkers) • Veterinarians, animal handlers, field biologists, or laboratory workers handling animal specimens • Visitors to rural areas Since children are more likely to be bitten or scratched by a dog or other animals, consider rabies vaccination for children traveling to Mongolia.
Typhoid	Recommended for most travelers, especially those staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities or rural areas.

Table 4: CDC Information for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases for Travelers to Mongolia

Hantavirus	Hantavirus can be contracted by breathing in air or accidentally eating food contaminated with the urine, droppings, or saliva of infected rodents, via a bite from an infected rodent, or, less commonly, being around someone sick with hantavirus. Avoid rodents and where they live and avoid sick people.
Leptospirosis	Leptospirosis can be contracted by touching urine or other body fluids from an animal infected with leptospirosis, swimming or wading in urine-contaminated fresh water, contact with urine-contaminated mud, or drinking water or eating food contaminated with animal urine. Avoid contaminated soil or water.
Tickborne Encephalitis	Tick bites can spread various diseases; in Mongolia, there is a risk of tick-borne encephalitis. Avoid bug bites.
Tuberculosis (TB)	TB spreads via TB bacteria that is in the air from an infected and contagious person coughing, speaking, or singing. Avoid sick people.

Table 5: CDC Information for Non-Vaccine-Preventable Diseases for Travelers to Mongolia

Sendai Framework

In 2017, Mongolia's Prime Minister pledged that his country was ready to support greater implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction across Asia by sharing its experience of managing extreme hazards.[415] Mongolia has a wealth of lessons learned in disaster prevention, reduction, and mitigation. Mongolia subsequently hosted the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Ulaanbaatar. In 2020, Mongolia was praised for its effort toward fulfillment of the Sendai Framework. As the keynote speaker at the "Making Cities Resilient 2030" forum, the Prime Minister emphasized that all Mongolian cities have a local disaster risk reduction strategy, and the country has fully fulfilled the goal of the Sendai Framework as a UN member state. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction Mizutori Mami stated, "Mongolia's efforts for strengthening coherence between national and local administrations, increasing awareness of all local authorities on having disaster risk reduction strategy by the end of 2020 as well as developing national program on making settled areas resilient are great example of world's best practices."[416]

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 is the global blueprint and fifteen-year plan to build the world's resilience to natural disasters.[417] The information in this section is sourced directly from the Sendai Framework. The Sendai Framework outlines seven clear targets and four priorities for action to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks:

The Seven Global Targets include:

- Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 global mortality rates in the decade 2020-2030 compared to the period 2005-2015.
- Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower average global figure per 100,000 in the decade 2020 -2030 compared to the period 2005-2015.
- Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030.
- Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030.
- Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020.
- Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this Framework by 2030.
- Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to the people by 2030.[418]

The Four Priorities of Action include:

- Understanding disaster risk
- Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk
- Investing in disaster reduction for resilience; and
- Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

The Sendai Framework aims to achieve the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods, and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural, and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities, and countries by 2030. It was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, in 2015.[419] The Sendai Framework is the successor instrument to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters.[420] Figure 22 shows the Sendai DRR Framework.[421]

Chart of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
2015-2030

Scope and purpose

The present framework will apply to the risk of small-scale and large-scale, frequent and infrequent, sudden and slow-onset disasters, caused by natural or manmade hazards as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks. It aims to guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk in development at all levels as well as within and across all sectors

Expected outcome

The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries

Goal

Prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience

Targets

Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 global mortality between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015	Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower the average global figure per 100,000 between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015	Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030	Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030	Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020	Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this framework by 2030	Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030

Figure 22: UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030)

HFA Country Progress Report

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) was adopted as a guideline to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards. The HFA assists participating countries to become more resilient and to better manage the hazards that threaten their development. The most recent levels of progress results published from Mongolia are from 2013-2015 and are represented in Figure 23 and Table 6. Table 7 provides an overview of the overall challenges and the future outlook statement from the HFA report. The 2015 Report is the most recent HFA report available for Mongolia. The information in this section is sourced directly from the HFA Country Progress Report.[422]

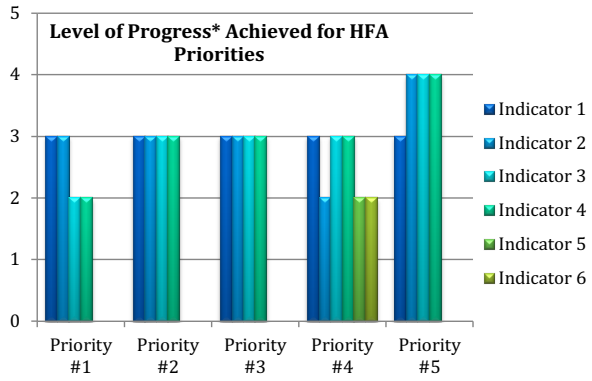


Figure 23: HFA Level of Progress Achieved

Core Indicator*	Indicator Description	Level of progress Achieved*
Priority for Action #1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation.		
1	National policy and legal framework for disaster risk reduction exists with decentralized responsibilities and capacities at all levels.	3
2	Dedicated and adequate resources are available to implement disaster risk reduction plans and activities at all administrative levels.	3
3	Community participation and decentralization is ensured through the delegation of authority and resources to local levels.	2
4	A national multi sectoral platform for disaster risk reduction is functioning.	2
Priority for Action #2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning.		
1	National and local risk assessments based on hazard data and vulnerability information are available and include risk assessments for key sectors.	3
2	Systems are in place to monitor, archive and disseminate data on key hazards and vulnerabilities.	3
3	Early warning systems are in place for all major hazards, with outreach to communities.	3
4	National and local risk assessments take account of regional / trans-boundary risks, with a view to regional cooperation on risk reduction.	3
Priority for Action #3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels		
1	Relevant information on disasters is available and accessible at all levels, to all stakeholders (through networks, development of information sharing systems, etc.).	3
2	School curricula, education material and relevant trainings include disaster risk reduction and recovery concepts and practices.	3
3	Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.	3
4	Research methods and tools for multi-risk assessments and cost benefit analysis are developed and strengthened.	3

Table 6: National Progress Report on the Implementation of the HFA

Priority for Action #4: Reduce the underlying risk factors.		
1	Disaster risk reduction is an integral objective of environment related policies and plans, including for land use natural resource management and adaptation to climate change.	3
2	Social development policies and plans are being implemented to reduce the vulnerability of populations most at risk.	2
3	Economic and productive sectorial policies and plans have been implemented to reduce the vulnerability of economic activities.	3
4	Planning and management of human settlements incorporate disaster risk reduction elements, including enforcement of building codes.	3
5	Disaster risk reduction measures are integrated into post disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.	2
6	Procedures are in place to assess the disaster risk impacts of major development projects, especially infrastructure.	2
Priority for Action #5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.		
1	Strong policy, technical and institutional capacities and mechanisms for disaster risk management, with a disaster risk reduction perspective are in place.	3
2	Disaster preparedness plans and contingency plans are in place at all administrative levels, and regular training drills and rehearsals are held to test and develop disaster response programs.	4
3	Financial reserves and contingency mechanisms are in place to support effective response and recovery when required.	4
4	Procedures are in place to exchange relevant information during hazard events and disasters, and to undertake post-event reviews.	4

Table Notes:
*Level of Progress:
1 – Minor progress with few signs of forward action in plans or policy
2 – Some progress, but without systematic policy and/ or institutional commitment
3 – Institutional commitment attained, but achievements are neither comprehensive nor substantial
4 – Substantial achievement attained but with recognized limitations in key aspects, such as financial resources and/ or operational capacities
5 – Comprehensive achievement with sustained commitment and capacities at all levels

Table 6: National Progress Report on the Implementation of the HFA (cont.)

Future Outlook Area 1: The more effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with a special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction.	
Challenges:	Due to the increase of negative impacts caused by disaster/hazards to the people's livelihoods, the small extant reserves and resources may run out soon. As a result, it is a challenge for the social and economic sustainable development of the country. Furthermore, it may influence national security. There is not a good legal environment for indemnity payments for disaster damage and loss, and there is a lack of economic potential to address disaster response. Disaster risks in the country are not greatly shared with multi-stakeholders because of weak collaboration between key sectors and weak participation in DRR activities.
Future Outlook Statement:	• To improve the legal environment for organizing disaster prevention, rescue, response, recovery, and humanitarian assistance effectively and timely • To develop a plan for measures on protecting human lives, properties, livestock, and animals from disaster, including disaster prevention, rescue, response, recovery, and reconstruction • To increase national budgets and investments for disaster protection activities, and address financial challenges by multi-stakeholder efforts • To consider DRR and prevention as the priority and integrate DRR into sustainable development and climate change adaptation • To introduce scientific findings and innovations into activities on disaster prevention, rescue, response, recovery, and reconstruction.
Future Outlook Area 2: The development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards.	
Challenges:	• Lack of required human and technical resources to implement DRR activities and build community resilience to disasters • Inadequate financial resources to enhance search and rescue technique, equipment, and protective garments • Weak partnership and multi-participation for DRR
Future Outlook Statement:	• Enhance disaster protection capacity of organization in charge of Emergency • Management and all units at all administrative levels. For example, build more fire fighting units, search and rescue branches, etc. • Improve technical capacity, particularly special-purposed engines, machines, search and rescue equipment to be used for earthquakes, floods, radio-active and chemical substances accidents, building fires, and forest and steppe fires, which negatively impact social, economic, and environmentally sustainable development of the country. Supply adequate resources for meeting standards • Address the preparation and re-education of the professional personnel of Emergency Management Service, particularly rescuers and fire fighters' educational process • Strengthen logistics for disaster protection activities • Ensure funding mechanisms are better aligned to build / strengthen disaster resilience and address community vulnerability

Table 7: HFA Country Progress Report Future Outlook Areas, Mongolia

Future Outlook Area 3: The systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities.	
Challenges:	• The current legislation documents, including Law on Disaster Protection (2003) and Law on Fire Safety, do not have any Articles or Chapters on sharing disaster risks and creating disaster indemnity fund. Therefore, we would face problems related to coordination of indemnity for disaster damages or loss in case of major disasters • Lack of financial recourse to support affected communities • Lack of systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into design and implementation of disaster response and recovery program in the reconstruction affected communities. However, NEMA has Department of State Reserve in Headquarters office, and state reserve branches in all provinces that are responsible for providing coordination and management to stocking state reserves items, storage, and emergency stockpiles for the disaster response and recovery. The state reserve storage and their equipment are out of date and have worsened, and do not meet the standard. Most of them were built during the 1960-1970s. • Understanding DRR, response and recovery knowledge is low.
Future Outlook Statement:	• Gain community awareness on DRR and preparedness • Need more attention for systematic incorporation of DRR into implementation of emergency preparedness, response, and recovery programs in the reconstruction of affected communities • Continue to work toward agreement on disaster risk assessments of priority hazards. • Improve devices and use technological advance to disseminate disaster warning and early warning to communities.

Table 7: HFA Country Progress Report Future Outlook Areas, Mongolia (cont.)

Country Profile

The information in the Country Profile section is sourced directly from the CIA World Fact book for Mongolia. Additional numbers on country comparison to the world can be found by going directly to the CIA website (https:/www.cia.gov). It discusses topics including geography, people and society, government, economy, energy, communications, military and security, transportation, terrorism, and transnational issues.[423]

Background

The peoples of Mongolia have a long history under a number of nomadic empires dating back to the period of the Xiongnu in the 4th century B.C. The name Mongol goes back to at least the 11th century A.D. The most famous Mongol, TEMÜÜJIN (aka Genghis Khan) emerged as the ruler of all Mongols in the early 1200s. By the time of his death in 1227, he had created through conquest a Mongol Empire that extended across much of Eurasia. His descendants, including ÖGÖDEI and KHUBILAI (aka Kublai Khan), continued military campaigns of conquest, taking control of Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and the rest of China where KHUBILAI established the Yuan Dynasty in the 1270s. The Mongols attempted to invade Japan and Java before their empire broke apart in the 14th century. In the 17th century, Mongolia fell under the rule of the Manchus of the Chinese Qing Dynasty. Following the collapse of the Manchus in 1911, Mongolia declared its independence, achieving it with help from the Soviet Union in 1921. Mongolia became a socialist state (the Mongolian People's Republic) in 1924. Following independence and until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, the country was a Soviet satellite state, and heavily reliant on economic, military, and political assistance from Moscow. The period also was marked by periods of purges, political repression, economic stagnation, and tensions with China.

Mongolia peacefully transitioned to an independent democracy in 1990. In 1992, it adopted a new constitution and established a free market economy. Since the country's transition, it has conducted eight presidential and nine legislative elections as of 2021. Throughout the period, the ex-communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) - which took the name Mongolian People's Party (MPP) in 2010 - has competed for political power with the Democratic Party (DP) and several other smaller parties, including a new party formed by former President ENKHBAYAR, which confusingly adopted for itself the MPRP name until it merged with MPP in 2021. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, the MPP won overwhelming control of the Parliament over the DP, which had overseen a sharp decline in Mongolia's economy during its control of the Parliament in the preceding years. Mongolians elected a DP member, Khaltmaa BATTULGA, as president in 2017. The June 2020 parliamentary elections left the MPP with continued dominant control of the parliament. Mongolians elected former prime minister and MPP member Ukhnaa KHURELSUKH as president in 2021. Mongolia maintains close cultural, political, and military ties with Russia while China is its largest economic partner. Mongolia's foreign relations are focused on preserving its autonomy by balancing relations with China and Russia, as well as its other major partners, Japan, South Korea, and the US.

Geography

Location
Northern Asia, between China and Russia

Geographic coordinates
46 00 N, 105 00 E

Map references
Asia

Area
total: 1,564,116 sq km
land: 1,553,556 sq km
water: 10,560 sq km
country comparison to the world: 20

Area - comparative
slightly smaller than Alaska; more than twice the size of Texas

Land boundaries
total: 8,082 km
border countries (2): China 4630 km, Russia 3452 km

Coastline
0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims
none (landlocked)

Climate
desert; continental (large daily and seasonal temperature ranges)

Terrain
vast semidesert and desert plains, grassy steppe, mountains in west and southwest; Gobi Desert in south-central

Elevation
highest point: Nayramadlin Orgil (Khuiten Peak) 4,374 m
lowest point: Hoh Nuur 560 m
mean elevation: 1,528 m

Natural resources
oil, coal, copper, molybdenum, tungsten, phosphates, tin, nickel, zinc, fluorspar, gold, silver, iron

Land use
agricultural land: 73% (2018 est.)
arable land: 0.4% (2018 est.)
permanent crops: 0% (2018 est.)
permanent pasture: 72.6% (2018 est.)
forest: 7% (2018 est.)
other: 20% (2018 est.)

Irrigated land
840 sq km (2012)

Major lakes (area sq km)
Fresh water lake(s): Hovsgol Nuur - 2,620 sq km; Har Us Nuur - 1,760 sq km
Saltwater lake(s): Uvs Nuur - 3,350 sq km; Hyargas Nuur - 1,360 sq km

Major rivers (by length in km)
Amur (shared with China [s] and Russia [m]) - 4,444 km
note – [s] after country name indicates river source; [m] after country name indicates river mouth

Population distribution
sparsely distributed population throughout the country; the capital of Ulaanbaatar and the northern city of Darhan support the highest population densities

Natural hazards
dust storms; grassland and forest fires; drought; "zud," which is harsh winter conditions

Geography - note
landlocked; strategic location between China and Russia

People and Society

Population
3,198,913 (July 2021 est.)
note: Mongolia is one of the least densely populated countries in the world (2 people per sq km); twice as many ethnic Mongols (some 6 million) live in Inner Mongolia (Nei Mongol) in neighboring China
country comparison to the world: 134

Nationality
noun: Mongolian(s)
adjective: Mongolian

Ethnic groups
Khalkh 83.8%, Kazak 3.8%, Durvud 2.6%, Bayad 2%, Buriad 1.4%, Zakhchin 1.2%, Dariganga 1.1%, other 4.1% (2020 est.)

Languages
Mongolian 90% (official) (Khalkha dialect is predominant), Turkic, Russian (1999)
major-language sample(s):
Дэлхийн баримтат ном, үндсэн мэдээллийн зайлшгүй эх сурвалж. (Mongolian)

Religions
Buddhist 51.7%, Muslim 3.2%, Shamanist 2.5%, Christian 1.3%, other 0.7%, none 40.6% (2020 est.)

Age structure
0-14 years: 26.96% (male 435,596/female 418,524)
15-24 years: 14.93% (male 239,495/female 233,459)
25-54 years: 45.29% (male 694,481/female 740,334)
55-64 years: 8.04% (male 115,560/female 139,129)
65 years and over: 4.78% (male 60,966/female 90,482) (2020 est.)

Figure 24 is the population pyramid for Mongolia; it illustrates the age and sex structure of the population.

Dependency ratios
total dependency ratio: 54.8
youth dependency ratio: 48.1
elderly dependency ratio: 6.7
potential support ratio: 15 (2020 est.)

Median age
total: 29.8 years
male: 28.8 years
female: 30.7 years (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 126

Population growth rate
0.93% (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 107

Birth rate
16.32 births/1,000 population (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 103

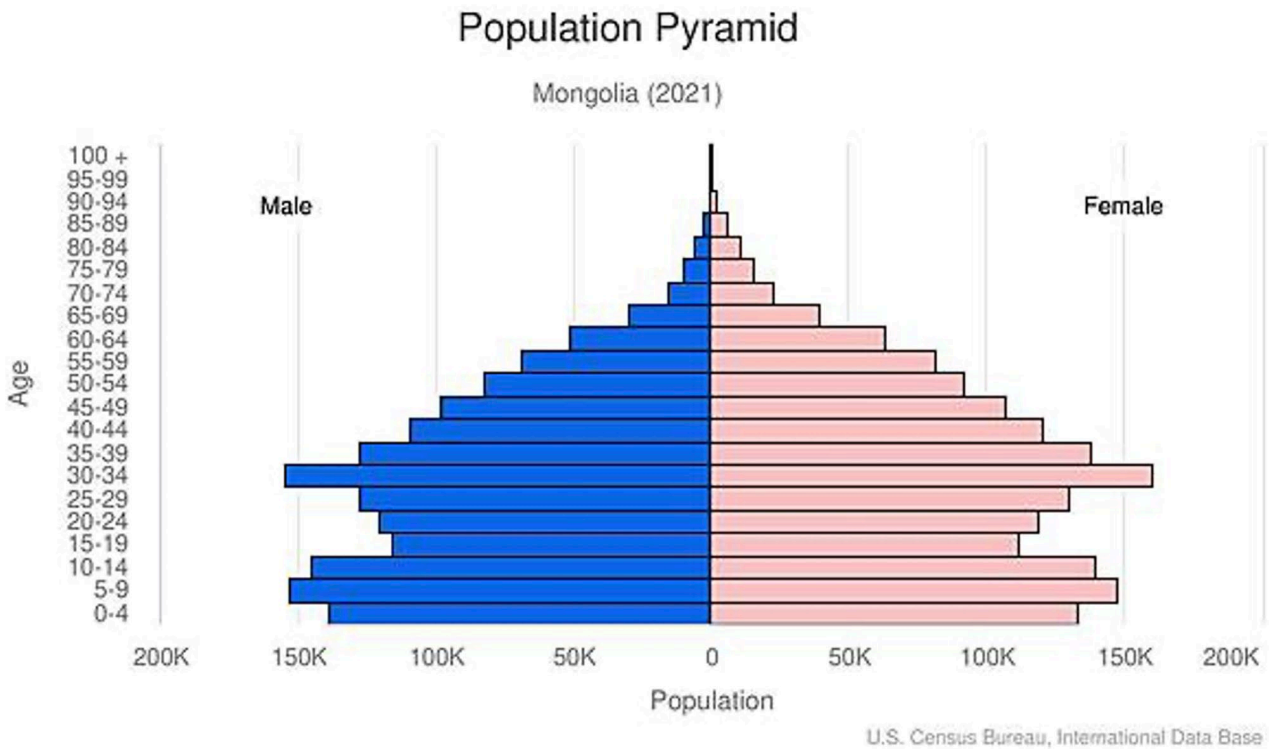


Figure 24: Population Pyramid, Mongolia (2021)

Death rate
6.28 deaths/1,000 population (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 146

Net migration rate
-0.78 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 137

Population distribution
sparsely distributed population throughout the country; the capital of Ulaanbaatar and the northern city of Darhan support the highest population densities

Urbanization
urban population: 68.9% of total population (2022)
rate of urbanization: 1.4% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)
total population growth rate v. urban population growth rate, 2000-2030

Major urban areas - population
1.645 million ULAANBAATAR (capital) (2022)

Sex ratio
at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female
0-14 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
15-24 years: 1.03 male(s)/female
25-54 years: 0.94 male(s)/female
55-64 years: 0.83 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.67 male(s)/female
total population: 0.95 male(s)/female (2020 est.)

Mother's mean age at first birth
20.5 years (2008 est.)
note: median age at first birth among women 20-24

Maternal mortality ratio
45 deaths/100,000 live births (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 97

Infant mortality rate
total: 20.6 deaths/1,000 live births
male: 23.73 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 17.32 deaths/1,000 live births (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 80

Life expectancy at birth
total population: 71.08 years
male: 66.88 years
female: 75.49 years (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 166

Total fertility rate
1.93 children born/woman (2021 est.)
country comparison to the world: 123

Contraceptive prevalence rate
48.1% (2018)

Drinking water source
improved: urban: 98.4% of population
rural: 64.2% of population
total: 87.6% of population
unimproved: urban: 1.6% of population
rural: 35.8% of population
total: 12.4% of population (2020 est.)

Current Health Expenditure
3.8% (2019)

Physicians density
2.86 physicians/1,000 population (2016)
Hospital bed density
8 beds/1,000 population (2017)

Sanitation facility access
improved: urban: 97.4% of population
rural: 69.9% of population
total: 88.8% of population
unimproved: urban: 2.6% of population
rural: 30.1% of population
total: 11.2% of population (2020 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate
<.1% (2020 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS
<1,000 (2020 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths
<100 (2020 est.)

Obesity - adult prevalence rate
20.6% (2016)
country comparison to the world: 96

Children under the age of 5 years underweight
1.8% (2018)
country comparison to the world: 113

Education expenditures
4.9% of GDP (2019)
country comparison to the world: 69

Literacy
definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 99.2%
male: 99.1%
female: 99.2% (2020)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education)
total: 15 years
male: 14 years
female: 16 years (2019)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24
total: 17.9%
male: 16.9%
female: 19.5% (2020 est.)

Environment

Environment - current issues
limited natural freshwater resources in some areas; the burning of soft coal in power plants and the lack of enforcement of environmental laws leads to air pollution in Ulaanbaatar; deforestation and overgrazing increase soil erosion from wind and rain; water pollution; desertification and mining activities have a deleterious effect on the environment

Environment - international agreements
party to: Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Climate Change-Paris Agreement, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Nuclear Test Ban, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands, Whaling

Air pollutants
particulate matter emissions: 40.42 micrograms per cubic meter (2016 est.)
carbon dioxide emissions: 25.37 megatons (2016 est.)
methane emissions: 13.72 megatons (2020 est.)

Climate
desert; continental (large daily and seasonal temperature ranges)

Land use
agricultural land: 73% (2018 est.)
arable land: 0.4% (2018 est.)
permanent crops: 0% (2018 est.)
permanent pasture: 72.6% (2018 est.)
forest: 7% (2018 est.)
other: 20% (2018 est.)

Urbanization
urban population: 68.9% of total population (2022)
rate of urbanization: 1.4% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)
total population growth rate v. urban population growth rate, 2000-2030
Revenue from forest resources

forest revenues: 0.14% of GDP (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 104

Revenue from coal
coal revenues: 8.62% of GDP (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 1

Waste and recycling
municipal solid waste generated annually: 2.9 million tons (2016 est.)

Major lakes (area sq km)
Fresh water lake(s): Hovsgol Nuur - 2,620 sq km; Har Us Nuur - 1,760 sq km
Saltwater lake(s): Uvs Nuur - 3,350 sq km; Hyargas Nuur - 1,360 sq km

Major rivers (by length in km)
Amur (shared with China [s] and Russia [m]) - 4,444 km
note – [s] after country name indicates river source; [m] after country name indicates river mouth

Total water withdrawal
municipal: 45.3 million cubic meters (2017 est.)
industrial: 166.2 million cubic meters (2017 est.)
agricultural: 250.9 million cubic meters (2017 est.)

Total renewable water resources
34.8 billion cubic meters (2017 est.)

Government

Country name
conventional long form: none
conventional short form: Mongolia
local long form: none
local short form: Mongol Uls
former: Outer Mongolia, Mongolian People's Republic
etymology: the name means "Land of the Mongols" in Latin; the Mongolian name Mongol Uls translates as "Mongol State"

Government type
semi-presidential republic

Capital
name: Ulaanbaatar
geographic coordinates: 47 55 N, 106 55 E
time difference: UTC+8 (13 hours ahead of Washington, DC, during Standard Time)
daylight saving time: +1hr, begins last Saturday in March; ends last Saturday in September
time zone note: Mongolia has two time zones - Ulaanbaatar Time (8 hours in advance of UTC) and Hovd Time (7 hours in advance of UTC)
etymology: the name means "red hero" in Mongolian and honors national hero Damdin Sukhbaatar, leader of the partisan army that with Soviet Red Army help, liberated Mongolia from Chinese occupation in the early 1920s

Administrative divisions
21 provinces (aymguud, singular - aymag) and 1 municipality* (singular - hot); Arhangay, Bayanhongor, Bayan-Olgiy, Bulgan, Darhan-Uul, Dornod, Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Dzavhan (Zavkhan), Govi-Altay, Govisumber, Hentiy, Hovd, Hovsgol, Omnogovi, Orhon, Ovorhangay, Selenge, Suhbaatar, Tov, Ulaanbaatar*, Uvs

Independence
29 December 1911 (independence declared from China; in actuality, autonomy attained); 11 July 1921 (from China)

National holiday
Naadam (games) holiday (commemorates independence from China in the 1921 Revolution), 11-15 July; Constitution Day (marks the date that the Mongolian People's Republic was created under a new constitution), 26 November (1924)

Constitution
history: several previous; latest adopted 13 January 1992, effective 12 February 1992
amendments: proposed by the State Great Hural, by the president of the republic, by the government, or by petition submitted to the State Great Hural by the Constitutional Court; conducting referenda on proposed amendments requires at least two-thirds majority vote of the State Great Hural; passage of amendments by the State Great Hural requires at least three-quarters majority vote; passage by referendum requires majority participation of qualified voters and a majority of votes; amended 1999, 2000, 2019

Legal system
civil law system influenced by Soviet and Romano-Germanic legal systems; constitution ambiguous on judicial review of legislative acts

International law organization participation
has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICCt jurisdiction

Citizenship
citizenship by birth: no
citizenship by descent only: both parents must be citizens of Mongolia; one parent if born within Mongolia
dual citizenship recognized: no
residency requirement for naturalization: 5 years

Suffrage
18 years of age; universal

Executive branch
chief of state: President Ukhnaa KHURELSUKH (since 25 June 2021)
head of government: Prime Minister Luvsannamsrai OYUN-ERDENE (since 27 January 2021); Deputy Prime Minister Ulziisaikhan ENKHTUVSHIN (since 18 October 2017)

cabinet: directly appointed by the prime minister following a constitutional amendment ratified in November 2019; prior to the amendment, the cabinet was nominated by the prime minister in consultation with the president and confirmed by the State Great Hural (parliament)
elections/appointments: presidential candidates nominated by political parties represented in the State Great Hural and directly elected by simple majority popular vote for one 6-year term; election last held on 9 June 2021; following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or majority coalition is usually elected prime minister by the State Great Hural
election results: Ukhnaa KHURELSUKH elected president in first round; percent of vote - Ukhnaa KHURELSUKH (Mongolian People's Party) 67.7%, Dangaasuren ENKHBAT (HUN Coalition) 20.31%, Sodnomzundui ERDENE (Democratic Party) 5.99%

Legislative branch
description: unicameral State Great Hural or Ulsyn Ikh Khural (76 seats; members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote; each constituency requires at least 50% voter participation for the poll to be valid; members serve 4-year terms)
elections: last held on 24 June 2020 (next to be held in 2024)
election results: percent of vote by party - MPP 44.9%, DP 24.5%, Our Coalition 8.1%, independent 8.7%, Right Person Electorate Coalition 5.2%, other 8.5%; seats by party - MPP 62, DP 11, Our Coalition 1, Right Person Electorate Coalition 1; independent 1; composition - 63 men, 13 women; percent of women 17.1%; note - the MPRP, Civil Will-Green Party, and Mongolian Traditionally United Party formed Our Coalition for the 2020 election; the Right Person Electorate Coalition was established in 2020 by the National Labor Party, Mongolian Social Democratic Party, and Justice Party

Judicial branch
highest courts: Supreme Court (consists of the Chief Justice and 24 judges organized into civil, criminal, and administrative chambers); Constitutional Court or Tsets (consists of the chairman and 8 members)
judge selection and term of office: Supreme Court chief justice and judges appointed by the president upon recommendation by the General Council of Courts - a 14-member body of judges and judicial officials - to the State Great Hural; appointment is for life; chairman of the Constitutional Court elected from among its members; members appointed from nominations by the State Great Hural - 3 each by the president, the State Great Hural, and the Supreme Court; appointment is 6 years; chairmanship limited to a single renewable 3-year term
subordinate courts: aimag (provincial) and capital city appellate courts; soum, inter-soum, and district courts; Administrative Cases Courts

Political parties and leaders
Democratic Party or DP [disputed]
Mongolian National Democratic Party or MNDP [Bayanjargal TSOGTGEREL]
Mongolian People's Party or MPP [Luvsannamsrai OYUN-ERDENE]
Civil Will-Green Party or CWGP [Tserendorj GANKHUYAG]

Mongolian Traditionally United Party or MTUP [Batdelgeriin BATBOLD]
National Labor Party or HUN [Togmid Dorhkhand]
Mongolian Social Democratic Party or MSDP [Adiya GANBAATAR]
Justice Party [Batbayar NASANBILEG]
note: there are 35 total registered parties as of December 2021

International organization participation
ADB, ARF, CD, CICA, CP, EBRD, EITI (compliant country), FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (NGOs), ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, MINURSO, MONUSCO, NAM, OPCW, OSCE, SCO (observer), UN, UNAMID, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNISFA, UNMISS, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US
chief of mission: Ambassador Ulziidelger BATBAYAR (since 8 November 2021)
chancery: 2833 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20007
telephone: [1] (202) 333-7117
FAX: [1] (202) 298-9227
email address and website:
washington@mfa.gov.mn
http://mongolianembassy.us/
consulate(s) general: New York, San Francisco

Diplomatic representation from the US
chief of mission: Ambassador Michael S. KLECHESKI (since 22 February 2019)
embassy: Denver Street #3, 11th Micro-District, Ulaanbaatar 14190
mailing address: 4410 Ulaanbaatar Place, Washington DC 20521-4410
telephone: [976] 7007-6001
FAX: [976] 7007-6174
email address and website: UlaanbaatarACS@state.gov
https://mn.usembassy.gov/

Flag description
three, equal vertical bands of red (hoist side), blue, and red; centered on the hoist-side red band in yellow is the national emblem ("soyombo" - a columnar arrangement of abstract and geometric representation for fire, sun, moon, earth, water, and the yin-yang symbol); blue represents the sky, red symbolizes progress and prosperity

National symbol(s)
soyombo emblem; national colors: red, blue, yellow

National anthem
name: "Mongol ulsyn toriin duulal" (National Anthem of Mongolia)
lyrics/music: Tsendiin DAMDINSUREN/Bilegiin DAMDINSUREN and Luvsanjamts MURJORJ
note: music adopted 1950, lyrics adopted 2006; lyrics altered on numerous occasions

National heritage
total World Heritage Sites: 5 (3 cultural, 2 natural)
selected World Heritage Site locales: Uvs Nuur Basin (n); Orkhon Valley Cultural Landscape (c); Petroglyphic Complexes of the Mongolian Altai (c); Great Burkhan Khaldun Mountain and surrounding sacred landscape (c); Landscapes of Dauria (n)

Economy

Economic overview
Foreign direct investment in Mongolia's extractive industries – which are based on extensive deposits of copper, gold, coal, molybdenum, fluorspar, uranium, tin, and tungsten - has transformed Mongolia's landlocked economy from its traditional dependence on herding and agriculture. Exports now account for more than 40% of GDP. Mongolia depends on China for more than 60% of its external trade - China receives some 90% of Mongolia's exports and supplies Mongolia with more than one-third of its imports. Mongolia also relies on Russia for 90% of its energy

supplies, leaving it vulnerable to price increases. Remittances from Mongolians working abroad, particularly in South Korea, are significant. Soviet assistance, at its height one-third of GDP, disappeared almost overnight in 1990 and 1991 at the time of the dismantlement of the USSR. The following decade saw Mongolia endure both deep recession, because of political inaction, and natural disasters, as well as strong economic growth, because of market reforms and extensive privatization of the formerly state-run economy. The country opened a fledgling stock exchange in 1991. Mongolia joined the WTO in 1997 and seeks to expand its participation in regional economic and trade regimes.

Growth averaged nearly 9% per year in 2004-08 largely because of high copper prices globally and new gold production. By late 2008, Mongolia was hit by the global financial crisis and Mongolia's real economy contracted 1.3% in 2009. In early 2009, the IMF reached a $236 million Stand-by Arrangement with Mongolia and it emerged from the crisis with a stronger banking sector and better fiscal management. In October 2009, Mongolia passed long-awaited legislation on an investment agreement to develop the Oyu Tolgoi (OT) mine, among the world's largest untapped copper-gold deposits. However, a dispute with foreign investors developing OT called into question the attractiveness of Mongolia as a destination for foreign investment. This caused a severe drop in FDI, and a slowing economy, leading to the dismissal of Prime Minister Norovyn ALTANKHUYAG in November 2014. The economy had grown more than 10% per year between 2011 and 2013 - largely on the strength of commodity exports and high government spending - before slowing to 7.8% in 2014, and falling to the 2% level in 2015. Growth rebounded from a brief 1.6% contraction in the third quarter of 2016 to 5.8% during the first three quarters of 2017, largely due to rising commodity prices.

The May 2015 agreement with Rio Tinto to restart the OT mine and the subsequent $4.4 billion finance package signing in December 2015 stemmed the loss of investor confidence. The current government has made restoring investor trust and reviving the economy its top priority, but has failed to invigorate the economy in the face of the large drop-off in foreign direct investment, mounting external debt, and a sizeable budget deficit. Mongolia secured a $5.5 billion financial assistance package from the IMF and a host of international creditors in May 2017, which is expected to improve Mongolia's long-term fiscal and economic stability as long as Ulaanbaatar can advance the agreement's difficult contingent reforms, such as consolidating the government's off-balance sheet liabilities and rehabilitating the Mongolian banking sector.

Real GDP (purchasing power parity)
$37.6 billion note: data are in 2017 dollars (2020 est.)
$39.72 billion note: data are in 2017 dollars (2019 est.)
$37.77 billion note: data are in 2017 dollars (2018 est.)
note: data are in 2017 dollars
country comparison to the world: 124

Real GDP growth rate
5.1% (2017 est.)
1.2% (2016 est.)
2.4% (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 44

Real GDP per capita
$11,500 note: data are in 2017 dollars (2020 est.)
$12,300 note: data are in 2017 dollars (2019 est.)
$11,900 note: data are in 2017 dollars (2018 est.)
note: data are in 2017 dollars
country comparison to the world: 130

GDP (official exchange rate)
$11.14 billion (2017 est.)

Inflation rate (consumer prices)
4.6% (2017 est.)
0.5% (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 178

Credit ratings
Fitch rating: B (2018)
Moody's rating: B3 (2018)
Standard & Poor's rating: B (2018)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin
agriculture: 12.1% (2017 est.)
industry: 38.2% (2017 est.)
services: 49.7% (2017 est.)

GDP - composition, by end use
household consumption: 49.2% (2017 est.)
government consumption: 12.3% (2017 est.)
investment in fixed capital: 23.8% (2017 est.)
investment in inventories: 12.4% (2017 est.)
exports of goods and services: 59.5% (2017 est.)
imports of goods and services: -57.1% (2017 est.)

Agricultural products
milk, wheat, goat milk, potatoes, mutton, sheep milk, beef, goat meat, horse meat, carrots/turnips

Industries
construction and construction materials; mining (coal, copper, molybdenum, fluorspar, tin, tungsten, gold); oil; food and beverages; processing of animal products, cashmere and natural fiber manufacturing

Industrial production growth rate
-1% (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 176

Labor force
1.241 million (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 132

Labor force - by occupation
agriculture: 31.1%
industry: 18.5%
services: 50.5% (2016)

Unemployment rate
8% (2017 est.)
7.9% (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 125

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24
total: 17.9%
male: 16.9%
female: 19.5% (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 91

Population below poverty line
28.4% (2018 est.)

Gini Index coefficient - distribution of family income
32.7 (2018 est.)
36.5 (2008)
country comparison to the world: 135

Household income or consumption by percentage share
lowest 10%: 13.7%
highest 10%: 5.7% (2017)

Budget
revenues: 2.967 billion (2017 est.)
expenditures: 3.681 billion (2017 est.)

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-)
-6.4% (of GDP) (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 187

Public debt
91.4% of GDP (2017 est.)
90% of GDP (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 24

Taxes and other revenues
26.6% (of GDP) (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 106

Fiscal year
calendar year
Current account balance
-$1.155 billion (2017 est.)
-$700 million (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 149

Exports
$7.65 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2020 est.)
$8.42 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2019 est.)
$7.71 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 108

Exports - partners
China 81%, Switzerland 9% (2019)

Exports - commodities
coal, copper, gold, iron, crude petroleum (2019)

Imports
$7.34 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2020 est.)
$9.25 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2019 est.)
$8.48 billion note: data are in current year dollars (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 124

Imports - partners
China 31%, Russia 29%, Japan 10%, South Korea 5% (2019)

Imports - commodities
refined petroleum, cars, delivery trucks, construction vehicles, aircraft (2019)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold
$3.016 billion (31 December 2017 est.)
$1.296 billion (31 December 2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 109

Debt - external
$29.945 billion (2019 est.)
$28.046 billion (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 84

Exchange rates
togrog/tugriks (MNT) per US dollar -
2,378.1 (2017 est.)
2,140.3 (2016 est.)
2,140.3 (2015 est.)
1,970.3 (2014 est.)
1,817.9 (2013 est.)

Energy

Electricity access
electrification - total population: 91% (2019)
electrification - urban areas: 99% (2019)
electrification - rural areas: 73% (2019)

Electricity - production
5.339 billion kWh (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 120

Electricity - consumption
5.932 billion kWh (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 115

Electricity - exports
51 million kWh (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 87

Electricity - imports
1.446 billion kWh (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 62

Electricity - installed generating capacity
1.134 million kW (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 125

Electricity - from fossil fuels
87% of total installed capacity (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 63

Electricity - from nuclear fuels
0% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 145

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants
2% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 140

Electricity - from other renewable sources
11% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 78

Crude oil - production
20,000 bbl/day (2018 est.)
country comparison to the world: 66

Crude oil - exports
14,360 bbl/day (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 56

Crude oil - imports
0 bbl/day (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 168

Crude oil - proved reserves
NA bbl (1 January 2017)

Refined petroleum products - production
0 bbl/day (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 179

Refined petroleum products - consumption
27,000 bbl/day (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 124

Refined petroleum products - exports
0 bbl/day (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 183

Refined petroleum products - imports
24,190 bbl/day (2015 est.)
country comparison to the world: 109

Natural gas - production
0 cu m (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 172

Natural gas - consumption
0 cu m (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 176

Natural gas - exports
0 cu m (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 153

Natural gas - imports
0 cu m (2017 est.)
country comparison to the world: 158

Natural gas - proved reserves
0 cu m (1 January 2014 est.)
country comparison to the world: 171

Communications

Telephones - fixed lines
total subscriptions: 160,153 (2020)
subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 4.89 (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 123

Telephones - mobile cellular
total subscriptions: 4,363,919 (2020)
subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 133.1 (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 126

Telecommunication systems
general assessment: liberalized and competitive telecom market; steady growth in mobile broadband, but fixed-line broadband is still an economical option; installation of a fiber-optic network improved broadband and communication services between major urban centers; compared to other Asian countries, Mongolia's growth in telecom is moderate; mobile broadband rate is growing through competition among operators with reasonable tariffs; launch of 4G LTE services by all major operators; South Korean investment in landline and cellular services; partner in China's economic corridor project; import of broadcasting equipment from China (2020)
domestic: very low fixed-line teledensity of less than 5 per 100; there are four mobile-cellular providers and subscribership is roughly 133 per 100 persons (2020)
international: country code - 976; satellite earth stations - 7 (2016)

Broadcast media
following a law passed in 2005, Mongolia's state-run radio and TV provider converted to a public service provider; also available are 68 radio and 160 TV stations, including multi-channel satellite and cable TV providers; transmissions of multiple international broadcasters are available (2019)

Internet country code
.mn

Internet users
total: 2.01 million (2021 est.)
percent of population: 62.5% (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 129

Broadband - fixed subscriptions
total: 307,166 (2020)
subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 9.37 (2020 est.)
country comparison to the world: 106

Transportation

National air transport system
number of registered air carriers: 4 (2020)
inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 12
annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 670,360 (2018)
annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 7.82 million mt-km (2018)

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix
JU

Airports
total: 44 (2013)
country comparison to the world: 98

Airports - with paved runways
total: 15
over 3,047 m: 2
2,438 to 3,047 m: 10
1,524 to 2,437 m: 3 (2017)

Airports - with unpaved runways
total: 29
over 3,047 m: 2
2,438 to 3,047 m: 2
1,524 to 2,437 m: 24
under 914 m: 1 (2013)

Heliports
1 (2013)

Railways
total: 1,815 km (2017)
broad gauge: 1,815 km 1.520-m gauge (2017)
note: national operator Ulaanbaatar Railway is jointly owned by the Mongolian Government and by the Russian State Railway
country comparison to the world: 78

Roadways
total: 113,200 km (2017)
paved: 10,600 km (2017)
unpaved: 102,600 km (2017)
country comparison to the world: 44

Waterways
580 km (the only waterway in operation is Lake Hovsgol) (135 km); Selenge River (270 km) and Orhon River (175 km) are navigable but carry little traffic; lakes and rivers ice free from May to September) (2010)
country comparison to the world: 81

Merchant marine
total: 302
by type: bulk carrier 4, container ship 7, general cargo 131, oil tanker 64, other 96 (2021)
country comparison to the world: 55

Military and Security

Military and security forces
Mongolian Armed Forces (Mongol ulsyn zevsegt huchin): General Purpose Troops (Mongolian Army), Air/Air Defense Force, Cyber Security, Special Forces, Civil Engineering, Civil Defense Forces; Border Troops; Internal Security Troops
Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs: National

Police Agency, General Authority for Border Protection (2021)

Military expenditures
0.8% of GDP (2020 est.)
0.7% of GDP (2019 est.)
0.7% of GDP (2018 est.)
0.8% of GDP (2017 est.)
0.9% of GDP (2016 est.)
country comparison to the world: 143

Military and security service personnel strengths
estimates vary; approximately 9,000 active duty troops (2021)

Military equipment inventories and acquisitions
the MAF are armed with Soviet-era equipment supplemented by deliveries of second-hand Russian weapons (2021)

Military deployments
870 South Sudan (UNMISS) (Oct 2021)
note(s) - from 2003 to July 2021, some 3,300 Mongolian troops served in Afghanistan, including about 1,300 since 2015 under the NATO-led mission Resolute Support Mission; since 2002, Mongolia has deployed more than 19,000 peacekeepers and observers to UN operations in more than a dozen countries

Military service age and obligation
18-27 years of age for compulsory and voluntary military service; 1-year conscript service obligation in army or air forces or police for males only (can be exchanged for a 24-month stint in the civil service or a tax voucher); after conscription, soldiers can contract into military service for 2 or 4 years; citizens can also voluntarily join the armed forces (2021)

Military - note
Mongolia has been engaged in dialogue and cooperation with NATO since 2005 and is considered by NATO to be a global partner; Mongolia supported the NATO-led Kosovo Force from 2005-2007 and contributed troops to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan from 2009-2014, as well as to the follow-on Resolute Support Mission that provided training, advice, and other assistance to the Afghan security forces (2015-2021)

Transnational Issues

Disputes - international
none

Refugees and internally displaced persons
stateless persons: 17 (mid-year 2021)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

°C / °F	Degrees Celsius / Fahrenheit
₮	Mongolian Tugrik
$	U.S. Dollar
A2AT	Airman-to-Airman Talks
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Center
APAN	All Partners Access Network
API	application programming interface
APRO	Asia Pacific Regional Office (of IFRC)
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
BCE	Before Common Era (formerly “BC,” Before Christ”)
BCP	border crossing point
BDRT	Branch Disaster Response Teams
BESS	battery energy storage system
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (of USAID)
CAAM	Civil Aviation Authority of Mongolia
CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CBDRM	community-based disaster risk management
CBDRR	Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction
CDC	U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CE	Common Era (formerly “AD,” “Anno Domini”)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CES	Central Energy System
CFE-DM	Center for Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia
cm	centimeter(s)
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CRI	Climate Risk Index
CRC	Communications Regulatory Commission
CzDA	Czech Development Agency
DALY	disability-adjusted-life-years
DKI-APCSS	Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies
DM	Disaster Management
DMHA	Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance
DoD	Department of Defense (United States)
DRR	disaster risk reduction
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

ECHO	European Union's Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EDWS	Earthquake Disaster Warning System
EES	Eastern Energy System
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EMOPS	Emergency Operations
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning Systems
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCG	Foreign Clearance Guide
FHC	family health centers
GDACS	Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	greenhouse gas
GoM	Government of Mongolia
GW	Gigawatts
HADR	humanitarian assistance and disaster response
HBV	Hepatitis B
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HCV	Hepatitis C
HDI	Human Development Index
HDX	Humanitarian Data Exchange
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
HSDP	Health Sector Development Programs
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRM	Institute of Catastrophe Risk Management
ICS	Incident Command System
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDA	International Development Association
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INFORM	Index for Risk Management
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration (of the UN)

IRIMHE	Information and Research Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology, and Environment
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSC	Joint Stock Company
JTWC	Joint Typhoon Warning Center
km / km2	kilometer(s) / square kilometers
LGBTI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex
LTT4R	Leveraging Technology and Tradition for Resilience in Rural Mongolia
m / m2	meter(s) / square meters
m/s	meters per second
Mbps	megabits per second
MEDS	Ministry of Education and Science
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MLSP	Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
mm	millimeter(s)
MNB	Mongolian National Broadcaster
MNT	Mongolian Tugrik
mph	miles per hour
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MRCS	Mongolian Red Cross Society
MRTD	Ministry of Road and Transport Development
mtCO2	million tons of carbon dioxide
MW	Megawatts
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NAMEM	National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring
NAPCC	National Action Program on Climate Change
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCAV	National Center against Violence
NCD	non-communicable diseases
NCEDR	National Center for Emergency and Disaster Relief
NCGE	National Committee on Gender Equality
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	non-government organization
NPA	National Police Agency
NRSC	National Remote Sensing Centre
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (of the UN)
OHDACA	Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster Assistance, and Civic Aid
OPCW	Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDC	Pacific Disaster Center Global
PHC	primary health care

PIN	People in Need
PRISM	Platform for Real-time Impact and Situation Monitoring
PWD	persons with disabilities
RADI	Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SEC	State Emergency Committee
SHC	soum health centers
SMEE	subject matter expert exchange
SMS	short message service
SPP	State Partnership Program
SSNWFP	single-state nuclear weapons free zone
TB	Tuberculosis
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMHA	United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNSCR	Non-Communicable Disease
U.S.	National Council for Disaster Management
USAID	Non-conventional renewable energy
USAR	National Community Water Trust
USARPAC	Nationally Determined Contributions (to reducing climate change)
USINDOPACOM	National Disaster Management Committee
USSR	National Emergency Operation Plan
WASH	Non-Government Organization
WES	National Institute of Education
WFP	National Institute of Mental Health
WHO	National Multisectoral Action Plan (for non-communicable diseases)
WMP	National STD/AIDS Control Programme
WPS	National Water Supply and Drainage Board
WTO	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

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APPENDICES



Center for Excellence in Disaster Management & Humanitarian Assistance
456 Hornet Avenue, Building 76, Joint Base Pearl Harbor - Hickam, Hawaii 96860-3503
Telephone: 808.472.0518 | DSN: 315.472.0518
https://www.cfe-dmha.org
@cfedmha