



Quarterly Newsletter July-September 2024

Mongolia



UNFPA team on a mission to Dalanzadgad, Umnugobi province, September 2024 . @UNFPA

Highlights

Strengthening partnerships for development: Mongolia welcomes UNFPA Regional Director



UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, and Regional Communication Adviser, Katie Elles, with UNFPA Mongolia staff at UN House

Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

UNFPA Asia-Pacific Regional Director (RD), Pio Smith, [visited Mongolia](#) to observe first-hand the impactful work being done to address the unique challenges faced by women and girls in urban and rural settings. In Umnugobi province, Mr Smith engaged with local communities, health workers, youth and government officials to discuss ongoing projects and explore new opportunities for collaboration, focusing on the specific needs of rural populations and ensuring that UNFPA programmes effectively meet those needs.

In the field: Understanding UNFPA's work at the grassroots



UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, visits a soum hospital in Umnugobi province, August 2024. @UNFPA



UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, and Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, visits a YDC in Umnugobi province, August 2024. @UNFPA

During the field mission to Umnugobi, Mr Smith [visited a health center, one-stop service centre \(OSSC\) and youth development centre \(YDC\)](#). Through conversations with local stakeholders, the RD learned about UNFPA's work in local settings and the challenges faced by local governments, communities and individuals. The RD acknowledged Mongolia's strong commitment to sustainable development and the close partnership between Umnugobi province and UNFPA, which has contributed to zero maternal mortality in the past five years and supported government leadership in expanding YDCs to all soums in the province.

Empowering Mongolia's youth in the Gobi desert and beyond



In the last year alone,

High-level political engagement with the new government and parliament officials



Minister of Family, Labour and Social Protection, L. Enkh-Amgalan, and UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, meet in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA



Minister of Health, T. Munkhsaikhan, and UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, meet in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA APRO

The RD's [meetings with high-level decision-makers](#) in the incoming government gave invaluable opportunities to inform and advocate for UNFPA's mandate. In particular, Mr Smith emphasized the importance of comprehensive sexuality education in promoting gender equality and addressing the root causes of gender-based violence (GBV), and advocated for a second round of the GBV prevalence study. His Mongolian counterparts expressed their satisfaction with the collaboration with UNFPA, particularly the success of joint efforts in GBV prevention and response, youth development, sexual and reproductive health and population studies. They affirmed their continued support for UNFPA's mandate in their new roles in Parliament and Government.

Meeting with the Country Office and UN Resident Coordinator



UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, and United Nations Resident Coordinator for Mongolia, Tapan Mishra, meet at UN House Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

On Humanitarian Day, the RD met with the CO staff and acknowledged how people are stripped of their dignity and personhood in humanitarian settings. He described UNFPA's work in the Asia-Pacific region, drawing attention to growing pushback against gender equality, and urged the CO to advocate strongly with the men in power to investing women and girls.

[World Women's Forum](#)

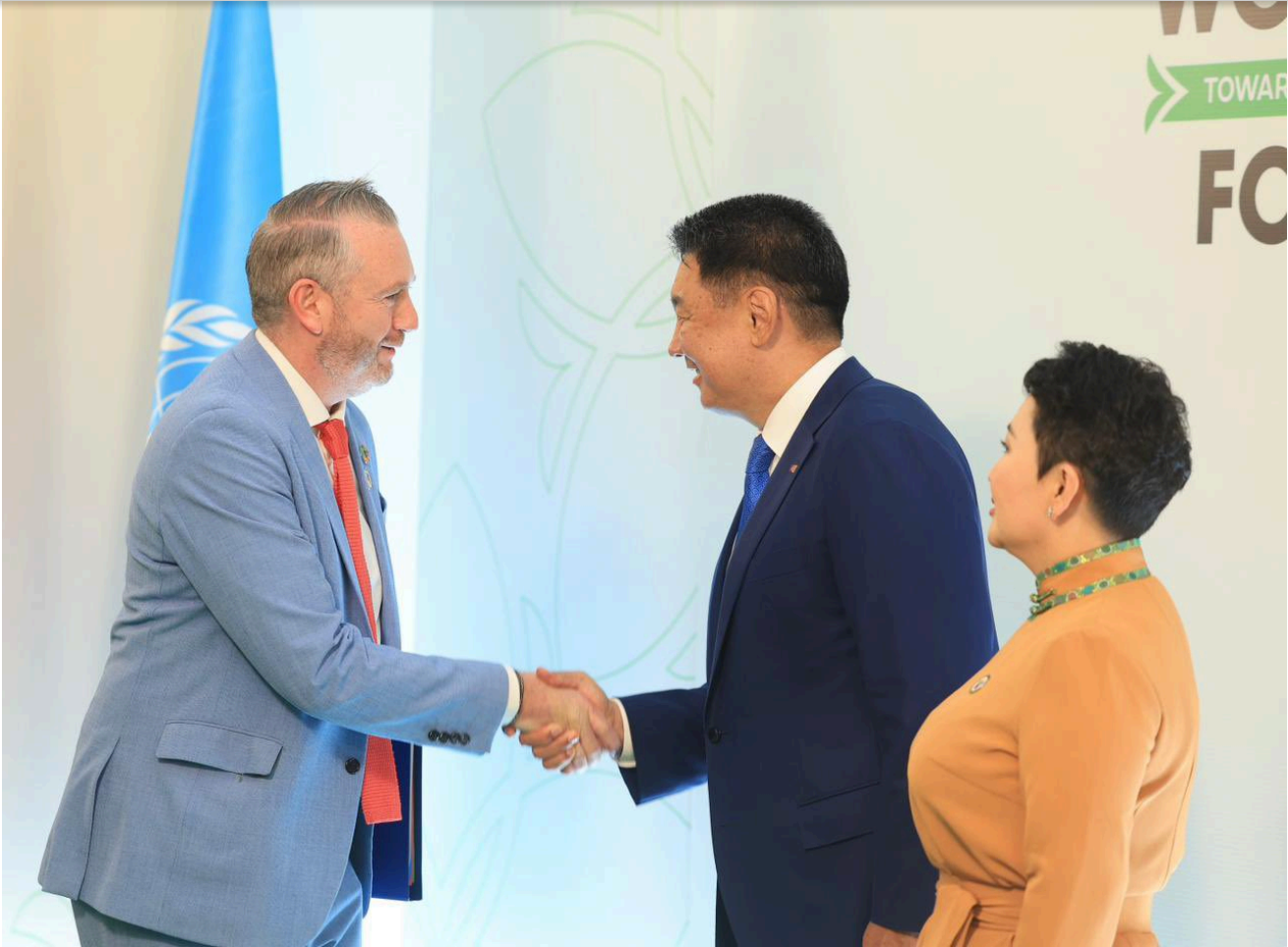


UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, speaks on education and women's empowerment at the World Women Forum in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

Committing to women's empowerment

Under the auspices of the President of Mongolia, the Government of Mongolia collaborated with the United Nations to host the [World Women's Forum](#) at the Government Palace of Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar on 22–23 August 2024. The forum was held ahead of the Summit of the Future in New York the following month.

The World Women's Forum focused on the critical role of women's empowerment and gender equality in building fair, inclusive, prosperous and peaceful societies, and to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. UNFPA was represented by the RD, who met inspiring female leaders from around the world.



The President of Mongolia, Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, the Foreign Minister, Battsetseg Batmunkh, and UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, at the World Women's Forum in Ulaanbaatar, August, 2024. @UNFPA APRO

The outcome of the forum was the Ulaanbaatar Declaration: an unshakeable commitment to empowering women globally by promoting their leadership and participation in peacebuilding, conflict resolution and decision-making in all sectors, including sustainable development and environmental policies. Forum participants pledged to advance gender equality through economic empowerment, education and by closing digital and financial gaps, while supporting sustainable, gender-sensitive solutions to global challenges such as climate change and food security.

[Learn more.....](#)

Empowering Futures: The Transformative Impact of Education for Women and Girls



UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, with fellow panel members during the World Women Forum's thematic session on education in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

On 22 August, the RD delivered a keynote speech at the World Women's Forum thematic session titled "The importance of education in empowering women and girls, and its impact". He highlighted the vital role played by comprehensive sexuality education and STEM education in achieving gender equality and fostering a just, inclusive future. Mr Smith called for addressing barriers such as GBV, biases in education and the gender digital divide to ensure women's full participation in decision-making and innovation. Hosted by UNFPA in partnership with UNICEF, the session brought together women political leaders from the United Kingdom and Cuba and members of parliament from Mongolia alongside policymakers, representatives from the public and private sectors, international organizations, civil society and the media. Participants engaged in a comprehensive discussion on challenges related to leadership and GBV, and the opportunities and challenges posed by technology.

UN Deputy Secretary-General commends UNFPA's work on GBV prevention and response



Resident Coordinator, Tapan Mishra, and UNFPA Mongolia Assistant Representative L. Oyun visit an OSSC and have a discussion with a GBV survivor in Bayanzurkh district, Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina J Mohammed, visited Mongolia from 22 to 23 August 2024, at the invitation of the President of Mongolia. During her tour of the UNFPA-supported OSSC for GBV survivors in Bayanzurkh district, Ulaanbaatar, she engaged in meaningful discussions with service providers and met a survivor who had benefited from essential services, gaining the confidence to rebuild her life. Ms Mohammed praised the centre's critical work in supporting survivors and ensuring their well-being, and expressed her best wishes for its continued success. Ms Mohammed also participated in the World Women's Forum, contributing to discussions on women's empowerment and gender equality.

Partnerships in Action: Delivering on UNFPA Commitments

Strengthened partnerships for better sexual and reproductive health outcomes: UNFPA meets Mongolia's Health minister



Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, meets the Minister of Health, Dr T.Munkhsaikhan, in Ulaanbaatar, July 2024.
@UNFPA

Dr Khalid Sharifi, Head of UNFPA Mongolia, conducted a courtesy meeting with Dr T. Munkhsaikhan and congratulated the Minister of Health on his election as a Member of Parliament and his reappointment as Health Minister. Dr Sharifi expressed appreciation for the long-standing strategic partnership between UNFPA and the Ministry of Health, which has contributed to reducing maternal mortality to below 30 per 100,000 live births. [Dr Sharifi outlined key priority areas for continued collaboration](#), emphasizing the need to further strengthen the health sector's GBV response, integrate youth-friendly health services into primary health care, address the adolescent birth rate and meeting the unmet need for family planning. The minister, in turn, expressed his gratitude for UNFPA's continued support and reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving the health of children, youth and pregnant women. He highlighted the importance of providing health education to expectant mothers and ensuring high-quality care for healthy childbirth outcomes.

collaboration to deliver accessible, high-quality health-care services to vulnerable populations.

Strengthening partnerships for child and youth health and education: UNFPA and UNICEF meet Mongolia's Education minister





Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, and UNICEF Country Representative, Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, meet the Minister of Education, P. Naranbayar, in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @MoE

The Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, and the UNICEF Country Representative, Evariste Kouassi-Komlan, held a courtesy meeting with the incoming Minister of Education, P. Naranbayar. Dr Sharifi congratulated the newly appointed minister on his election to parliament and his new role, expressing gratitude for the strong partnership between UNFPA and the ministry, which has significantly advanced adolescent and youth health through the integration of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE). Dr Sharifi reaffirmed UNFPA's commitment to strengthening this collaboration further, and prioritizing improvements to the quality of CSE and enhancing school health programmes. Mr Naranbayar expressed deep appreciation for UNFPA's role in advancing CSE and developing a health education programme for secondary schools. He highlighted the positive impact of this partnership in equipping teachers with the tools to address GBV and support the holistic development of adolescents. The meeting concluded with a commitment to further enhance the partnership, ensuring that Mongolian students receive comprehensive, relevant and impactful health education in the years to come.

Collaborating for sustainable menstrual health: UNFPA and Anungoo LLC visit Umnugobi province



Anungoo representatives and the UNFPA Mongolia team discuss menstrual hygiene with schoolgirls in Tsogttsetsii soum, Umnugobi province, September 2024. @UNFPA

UNFPA Mongolia, in collaboration with Anungoo LLC, explored potential opportunities to advance the “Empowering Girls: Sustainable Menstrual Health Initiative” [through a joint mission to Umnugobi province](#). During this mission, both parties identified key interventions to improve access to menstrual hygiene products and education for adolescent girls, particularly those in vulnerable situations. These efforts, once formalized, are expected to enhance educational outcomes, promote sustainable menstrual health practices, and contribute to the broader goal of empowering girls and addressing period poverty. This potential partnership highlights the promising collaboration between the private sector and UNFPA, with both parties actively working to formalize and materialize this impactful initiative.

Humanitarian Responses



Dignity kits are delivered to school dormitories in Umnugobi province, June 2024. @UNFPA



The UNFPA Mongolia team monitors the delivery of dignity kits to families affected by dzud in Zawkhan province, July 2024. @UNFPA

Delivering dignity and support: A comprehensive response to dzud

Dignity kits for women and girls: UNFPA distributed 8,724 dignity kits to women and girls across 106 soums in 20 provinces, ensuring their access to essential hygiene supplies. This initiative is critical in safeguarding the dignity and well-being of those affected by disaster.

Better access to health care: UNFPA facilitated access to vital health-care services, including maternal health, family planning and STI treatment, for communities affected by the dzud. These services are essential to maintain the health and welfare of affected populations.

Offering psychosocial support: UNFPA developed a comprehensive manual for frontline workers and trained 544 service providers in addressing the mental and emotional well-being of dzud affectees. Outreach counselling sessions enabled 576 households, with 2,164 individuals, to receive psychosocial support.

Raising awareness: To empower individuals and communities, UNFPA developed and disseminated brochures and information sheets on dignity kits, GBV prevention and response, awareness of the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), menstrual health and hygiene and mental health advice.



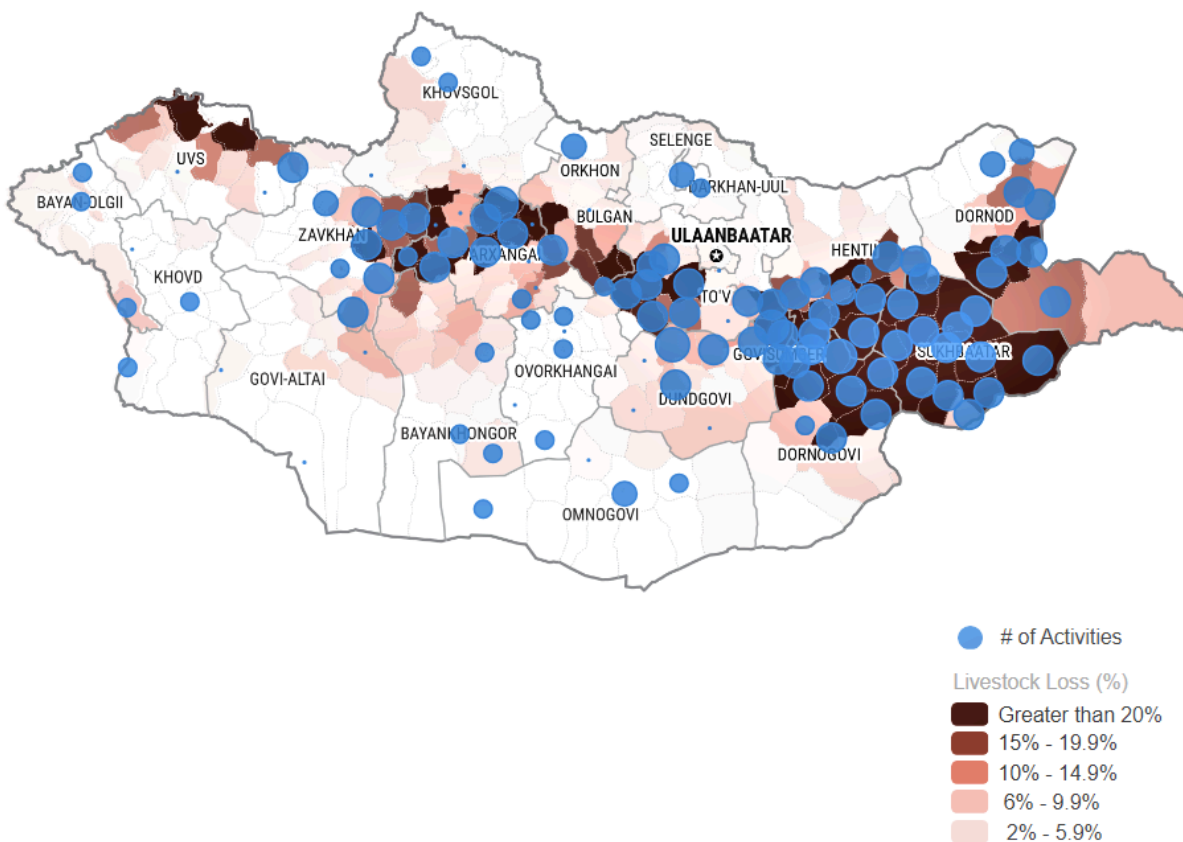
A dignity kits delivered to a school dormitory in Umnugobi province, June 2024. @UNFPA



UNFPA Country Office organized a training for WGSS staff in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

Through these initiatives, UNFPA Mongolia had made a significant impact on the lives of women and girls affected by the dzud.

UNFPA SUPPORT ACROSS MONGOLIA DURING THE 2024 DZUD



Safe Spaces for Mongolian Women and Girls



WGSS in Tuv and Dornogobi provinces, September 2024. @UNFPA

In response to the harsh winter of 2024, UNFPA led the establishment of women and girls safe spaces (WGSS) across eight provinces of Mongolia. These address the critical psychosocial support needs of vulnerable women and girls amongst herder communities. Funded by CERF and UNFPA, they provide essential psychosocial services in a supportive environment where women can express themselves, access necessary help and regain a sense of security. Following an in-depth needs assessment, strategic locations were selected based on vulnerability and local commitment.

The WGSS are not a temporary solution. They offer long-term hope for women and girls affected by emergencies. With continued support and community involvement, these safe spaces will provide critical services into the future, empowering vulnerable populations to rebuild their lives.

[Learn more...](#)

Voices from the field

A safe space for women in Gobisumber



Khorolgarav, a social worker at the Safe Space in Gobisumber province, is photographed outside her workplace, September 2024. @UNFPA

“During the chaos of the dzud, one thing I noticed was that women and girls need a space where they come to calm down, take a break and get equipped with the knowledge and awareness to overcome the challenges they face...”

In the heart of Gobisumber province, a small room has become a beacon of hope for women and girls. At the UNFPA-supported WGSS, Ms Khorolgarav, a dedicated social worker and state child rights inspector shows us around the space and tells us her hopes for its future.

[Read the Story](#)

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Spotlight: Gender equality and the SDGs



UN Resident Coordinator, Tapan Mishra, hosts resident ambassadors and UN Mongolia representatives at UN House Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, September 2024. @UN Mongolia

On September 13, the UN Resident Coordinator, Tapan Mishra, convened a high-level **breakfast meeting** with representatives from UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP, the ambassadors of the United States, Australia, Canada, the European Union and South Korea, and the Country Manager of the World Bank. The meeting focused on applying to Mongolia the global Spotlight 2.0 Initiative to advance gender equality and combat violence against women and girls. Mr Mishra led the discussion, during which UN agency leaders presented a concept note to tailor the Spotlight Programme for Mongolia and shared their insights on its implementation. UNFPA, which had spearheaded the development of the concept note, highlighted its ongoing efforts to strengthen GBV prevention and response in Mongolia.

The attendees universally acknowledged that ending violence against women and girls is not only a human rights imperative but also a foundational step toward achieving gender equality as an accelerator for the SDGs. Sustainable change, they highlighted, is only possible through a whole-of-society approach that engages government, civil society, local communities and the private sector. The Spotlight Initiative was recognized as a flagship example of coordinated efforts, with several countries voicing support for its holistic approach.

Youth and Adolescent Development

Amplifying youth voices: Consultations for the United Nations Summit of the Future



Glimpses of the youth consultation held at UN House Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. @UNFPA

On International Youth Day, 12 August, UNFPA collaborated with the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Youth Group to [successfully engage 100 young Mongolians in a consultation meeting](#) that offered valuable insights for the government as it shapes Mongolia's commitments for the upcoming UN Summit of the Future. The participants identified key challenges in health, education, employment and civic and political participation, and provided actionable recommendations. These contributions highlighted the critical role of youth in promoting sustainable development and equality, underscoring the need for continued investment in youth services and social inclusion.

“Reaching every young person: How a Mongolian Province Supports Youth Across Diverse Communities”



Ms Uranchimeg, a YDC senior specialist, is in her office in Dalanzadgad, Umnugobi province, September 2024. @UNFPA

After their initial establishment in 2014, since 2020 Umnugobi province has expanded YDCs across all its soums, making it the only province with fully established YDCs in every soum. No wonder that Umnugobi is considered a model province across Mongolia.

Ms Uranchimeg has been a senior specialist at the Umnugobi YDC for the past seven years. She describes how these centres have evolved and benefited young people from diverse communities.

“This is how YDCs actually operate. Everybody participates and gains knowledge.”

[Read the story](#)

Enkh-Ujin’s journey: Finding hope at the Unitel Hub, Khuvsgul



UNFPA's facilitation of a public-private partnership between the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Protection and the Unitel Group led to the establishment of 12 Unitel Hubs that seek to bridge the digital divide and enhance access to education. Looking ahead, Unitel Hubs will be established in every province.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Protecting future generations: HPV vaccination introduction in Mongolia



prevented through vaccination. To protect future generations from this disease, Mongolia is now introducing and scaling up HPV immunization. UNFPA is part of a national effort along with the Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF and GAVI, that is committed to expanding access to the HPV vaccine.

UNFPA is partnering with UNICEF to implement the “HPV vaccine introduction in Mongolia” project (September 2024 to December 2025). This project aims to strengthen institutional capacities for equitable and sustainable immunization programmes, supporting broader primary health care delivery. Key initiatives include improving school-based vaccination monitoring and building the capacity of health-care providers and educators to enhance HPV vaccination delivery and communication. Targeted outreach through YDCs will ensure hard-to-reach adolescents are informed about the importance of HPV vaccination.

Strengthened medical care for GBV survivors



Medical staff attend a training on gender-based violence awareness and improving care for survivors in Ulaanbaatar, August 2024. Organized by UNFPA, the event aims to enhance the quality of services for survivors. @UNFPA

One in every three Mongolian women has experienced physical or sexual violence, and one in ten faces sexual violence before the age of 15. Recognizing that health facilities are often the first point of contact for survivors of violence, UNFPA and the Ministry of Health organized a five-day training to raise awareness among medical staff and improve the quality of care for GBV survivors. Sixty health workers from two districts in Ulaanbaatar and 20 soums across 10 provinces participated in the training, which was facilitated by the Mongolian Federation of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (MFOG). The participants gained a comprehensive understanding of

progress towards the elimination of preventable maternal and perinatal mortality” project, funded by the Government of Luxembourg.

Improved maternal and newborn survival



Service providers participate in EmONC training in Bulgan province, July 2024. @UNFPA

As part of the “Accelerating progress towards the elimination of preventable maternal and perinatal mortality” project, UNFPA and MFOG launched a simulation-based Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) training for health-care providers. Eighty participants from Bulgan, Khuvsgul, Bayankhongor, Zavkhan and Darkhan-Uul provinces, and key districts of Ulaanbaatar, strengthened their ability to manage pregnancy and childbirth complications, which is critical for saving the lives of mothers and newborns. Through this hands-on training, service providers gained life-saving skills to address emergencies, which will ultimately contribute to a reduction in preventable maternal and newborn deaths.

Surveillance and response to maternal and perinatal deaths



Participants receive training on maternal and perinatal surveillance and response in Khuvsgul province, July 2024. @UNFPA

Around the world, countries are moving away from maternal death reporting towards the Maternal and Perinatal Deaths Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) approach. This new approach enables countries to learn valuable lessons from incidents of maternal and neonatal death and implement them effectively to improve the quality of health care.

To accelerate its implementation in Mongolia, UNFPA organized capacity building on MPDSR in Khuvsgul and Bulgan provinces under the “Accelerating progress towards the elimination of preventable maternal and perinatal mortality” project funded by the Government of Luxembourg. Forty participants from the provincial health department and general hospitals learned MPDSR methods and developed SMART action plans to improve the quality of care based on the analysis of causes and contributing factors to poor outcomes in their provinces.

Data for Development

Partnership to reduce preventable maternal and child morbidity and mortality

and UNICEF to host its 35th Annual Research Conference on “Reducing preventable maternal and childhood morbidity and mortality through partnership”. The hybrid event brought together over 300 participants from local and international institutions.



Participants of the 35th Annual Conference on Reducing Preventable Maternal and Child Mortality, Ulaanbaatar, September 2024. @UNFPA

In his opening remarks, the Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, emphasized the need for a multi sectoral approach to reducing preventable maternal and childhood mortality, highlighting the critical role of high-quality healthcare, addressing social determinants, and promoting gender equality. He stressed the importance of combining descriptive and qualitative research to better understand and address gaps in maternal and reproductive health services, such as adolescent birth rates and unmet family planning needs. Dr Sharifi reaffirmed UNFPA’s commitment to supporting targeted research, strengthening midwifery services, and using data to improve health outcomes, and called for the conference discussions to be translated into concrete actions to prevent maternal and child deaths in Mongolia.

Driving evidence-based decisions: Key findings from the Social Indicator Sample Survey 2023



Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi, specialists and participants attend the MICS2023 meeting in Ulaanbaatar, July 2024. @UNICEF @NSO

findings from the [Social Indicator Sample Survey 2023 \(SISS\)](#), offering valuable insights into Mongolia's progress on 44 SDG indicators. These include crucial areas related to UNFPA's mandate, such as the total fertility rate, adolescent birth rate, peri- and post-natal care, contraceptive prevalence and unmet need for family planning. The survey also provides critical insights into HIV knowledge among youth, and women's empowerment in making decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. The data are disaggregated by age, gender, education, disability and urban/rural residence, providing a comprehensive view of health disparities that can inform targeted interventions.

The findings reveal progress in key areas, such as greater access to family planning services, while also underscoring the need for urgent policy attention to adolescent pregnancy, maternal mortality, and GBV. This evidence will be instrumental in shaping national strategies to improve health outcomes for women and girls.



NATIONAL
STATISTICS OFFICE
OF MONGOLIA

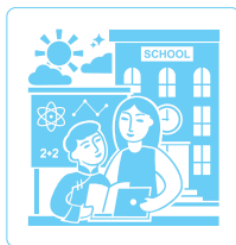


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for every child

MONGOLIA

Social Indicator Sample Survey-2023

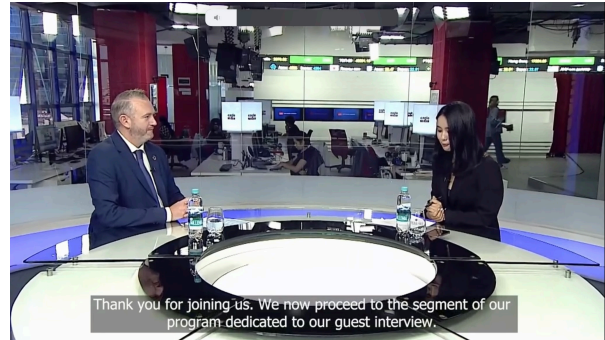
KEY INDICATORS REPORT



 MICS

UNFPA in the Media

UNFPA Asia-Pacific RD, Pio Smith, was interviewed by major national media outlets including Eagle TV and TenGer TV.



[TenGer TV Interview](#)

The National Mongolian Agency issued a news package on the launch of Safe Space in Tuv province, which included an interview with the Head of UNFPA Mongolia, Dr Khalid Sharifi.

[Montsame Agency News Package](#)



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