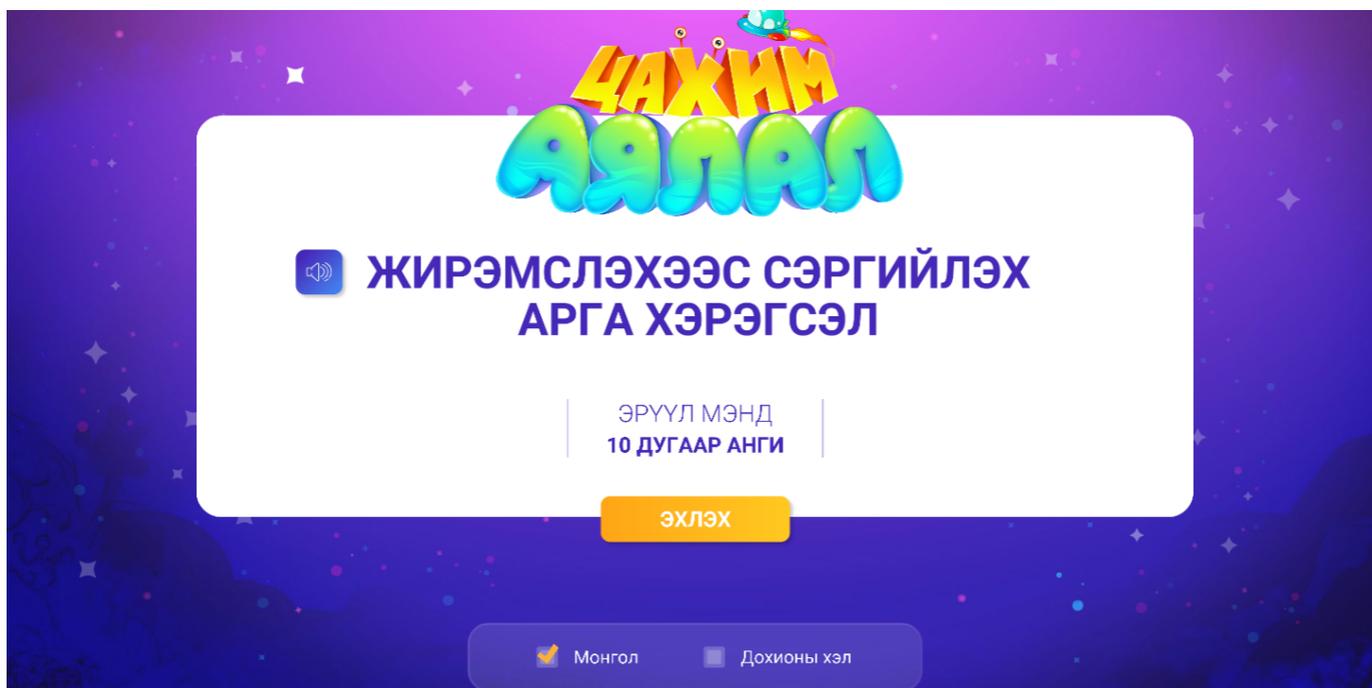


UNFPA MONGOLIA

Situation Report #9 on COVID-19 response



A total of 14 health education modules have been produced and are available on econtent.edu.mn

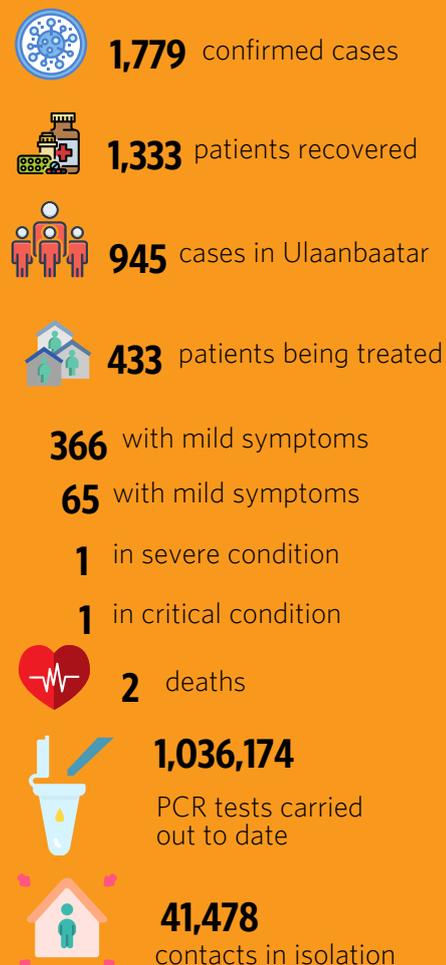
SITUATION OVERVIEW

January has seen successes and challenges in the on-going fight against the COVID-19 pandemic in Mongolia, as well as political turmoil with the resignation of Mongolian Prime Minister Khurelsukh Ukhnaa and his cabinet in January 2021, amid protests that started with anger over the handling of a specific COVID-19 patient and her baby and quickly turned into demands for press freedom and the right to assembly, along with overall dissatisfaction about the government's handling of COVID-19 - mainly the country's lockdown. On 27 January, Parliament appointed Mr. Oyun-Erdene as the 32nd Prime Minister of Mongolia and on 29 January, the Prime Minister formed his new Cabinet.

The Government has reported that it has full control over the spread of COVID-19 infections in the countryside, but there has been a rapid rise of cluster infections in Ulaanbaatar city, detected through contact tracing, testing and active surveillance. The clusters include state and private hospitals, bank branches, car dealers, persons living in apartment complexes, pharmacies, and other business settings, confirming there is community transmission in Ulaanbaatar city.

On 4 January, Mongolia reported the first COVID-19 death of a male patient who had underlying health conditions.

SITUATION IN NUMBERS



On 26 January, the Acting Minister of Finance, who chairs the working group in charge of COVID-19 vaccine procurement, reported to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Economy that “up to 60 percent of the population will be vaccinated” and Mongolia is ready to receive 1,847, 000 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, 2,358,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine and 2,516,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine. The vaccines will be procured through a USD 50.7 million soft loan from the International Development Association (IDA), a member of the World Bank Group.

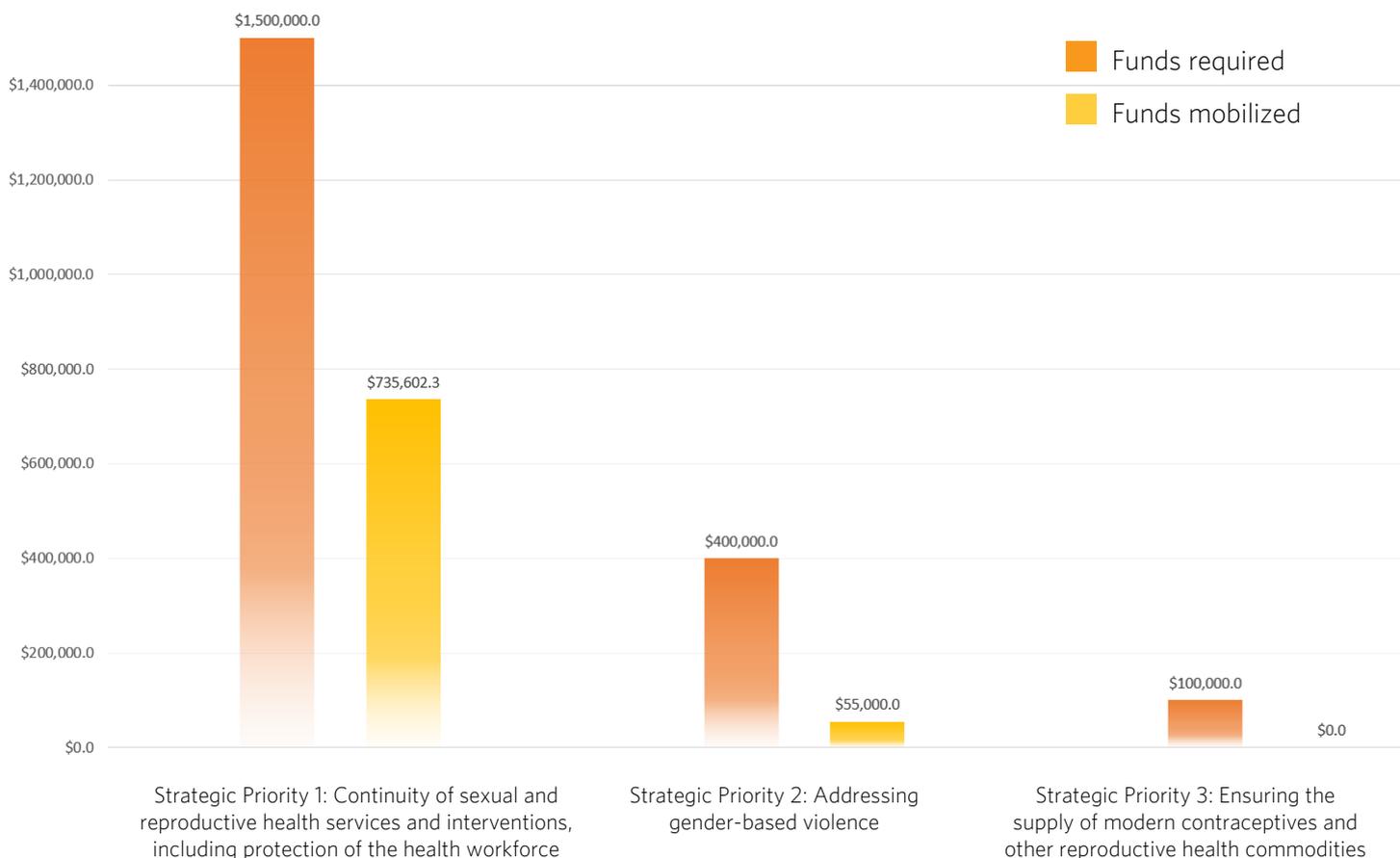
FUNDING OVERVIEW

Funds that need to be mobilized for 2021: \$2,000,000

Funding gap: \$1,209, 397.7

The Country Office estimates that a total of \$2,000,000 is required for COVID-19 response and relief efforts in 2021. To date, the CO has successfully mobilized non-core resources of \$790,602.3 from the Swiss Development Cooperation’s supported project addressing gender-based violence (GBV) as well as rollover funds from the Luxembourg Development Cooperation and the Rio Tinto Mongolia LLC.

UNFPA Mongolia Country Office funding needs and resource mobilization by priority areas



GOVERNMENT, UNITED NATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS’ RESPONSE

On 4 January, the Cabinet held its irregular meeting review of the control measures in place to tackle COVID-19 in Mongolia and noted that these measures had stopped the spread of infections at the provincial level but that there is an increase of cases in Ulaanbaatar city. The Cabinet decided to extend the lockdown in Ulaanbaatar city until 6am on 11 January. Celebrations for Tsagaan Sar – the Mongolian Lunar New Year in February – will not be held.

On 5 January, over 10,000 residents of Ulaanbaatar city took part in active surveillance testing, carried out by 261 health professionals at 25 testing centres.

On 10 January, the Minister for Health, Dr. Munkhsaikhan, reported that the National Committee for Immunization and Human Drug Council have registered three COVID-19 vaccines: Pfizer and BioNtech, AstraZeneca, and Moderna in the Mongolian drug registry.

On 11 January, the strict lockdown in Ulaanbaatar city was lifted and the city emergency level was downgraded to heightened state of readiness, allowing 18 types of businesses to reopen with infection prevention and control measures in place.

On 13 January, the Cabinet decided to extend the suspension of cross-border freight movement from the Russian Federation through the Altanbulag border check-point in Selenge province until February 1.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) has been working to establish PCR laboratories in Ulaanbaatar city's District General and State hospitals; to date six PCR labs have been set up in Chingiltei, Songinokhaikhan, Suknbaatar, Khan-Uul and Bayanzurkh districts, and at the First Central Hospital.

On 15 January, the Government organized a charter flight from Seoul to Ulaanbaatar to repatriate 164 Mongolian nationals; they were placed in isolation facilities upon arrival.

On 19 January, the Mongolian Government received a letter from the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, expressing the Indian Government's decision to supply the COVID-19 vaccine to Mongolia. Some 150 medical doctors have attended online training on COVID-19 vaccination.

UNFPA PROGRAMME RESPONSE

Continuity of sexual and reproductive health services and interventions, including protection of the health workforce

The distance antenatal care (ANC) guidelines that allow four out of eight required ANC check-ups to be conducted online are being finalized with the support of community health workers/family health centre nurses.

The CO completed its procurement of 85 primary health care worker kits for outreach services in Bayan-Ulgii province. Financial support for the procurement of these kits was provided through the Luxembourg Government Development project. A training module on MISP has been adapted for Dzud (extremely low winter temperatures and lack of grazing due to thick snow or poor pastures) and the COVID-19 context and is ready to be used by the relevant personnel.

Supporting youth development and youth engagement

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science, the UNFPA CO has supported the development of engaging, interactive content on health education, which is supported by TV-based learning. A total of 14 health education modules have been produced and are available on econtent.edu.mn, which is the main platform the MoES uses to deliver TV lessons. To ensure equitable access to education, and to support parents and children with continued learning, 38 pre-primary and primary education online modules, which include health education content, have been developed including in ethnic minority languages (Kazakh and Tuva) and sign language.

Online content transforms traditional classroom-based learning objectives into a 2D cartoon animation. Sessions start with a unique plot-driven story and lead to a problem-solving activity which learners must complete. The approach is proving highly effective for its target audience of general education children, as shown by the initial reactions and feedback from users. According to a rapid assessment undertaken by the MoES, more than 94 percent of 268 teachers surveyed evaluated that interactive content is age-appropriate and interesting, supports creativity and meets the learning needs of children. Since its launch on 25 November 2020, interactive learning content has reached a cumulative total of more than 149,161 children, parents, and teachers and the capacity of 147 teachers and government representative has been strengthened in e-learning.

During the reporting period, the necessary preparation work to establish a laboratory Health Education Cabinet at the Institute of Teachers' Professional Development of Mongolia (ITPD) has been completed.

UNFPA CO has supported continued access to adolescent and youth-friendly health services and information through e-counseling during lockdown. During the reporting period, adolescent cabinets provided online counselling on issues related to sexual and reproductive health, family planning and mental health to 171 young people.

On 20 January, the UNFPA CO handed over personal protection equipment (PPE) worth 30,800,000 MNT to the Khanbogd soum hospital in Umnugobi province. The PPE was procured with financial support from the Integrated Support Programme, jointly implemented by Oyu Tolgoi LLC, Umnugobi provincial Governor's office, Gobi Oyu Development Fund and UNFPA CO.

Addressing gender-based violence

According to the eGBV database at the National Police Authority, which registers the number of domestic violence calls and releases monthly, quarterly and annual analysis, calls about crimes related to domestic violence have increased by 30.4 percent (120 cases) compared to the same period last year. The total number of cases of misconduct due to domestic violence registered by the police data system at 651, however, has decreased by 31.4 percent over the same period.

In April, 2020 the CO, together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, conducted "The Rapid Assessment on the Impact of COVID-19 on the GBV/DV Situation and Survivor Protection Services in Mongolia" with financial support from the Swiss Development Cooperation. The assessment revealed that due to the closure of public places such as bars, restaurants, entertainment facilities, fitness clubs etc. alcohol consumption has moved to domestic settings and, due to lockdown and restrictions on movement, the stress levels of people have increased, which may have led to an increase in domestic violence. The assessment also showed that survivors of domestic violence have limited opportunities to seek support from protection services or report the incident during lockdown because they are living with the perpetrator at home, and are therefore under his/her direct control all the time. Hence, a decline in the number of domestic violence registered by the police data system.

UNFPA CO has continued social media postings with messages to promote DV prevention, encouraging the reporting of incidents of domestic violence and sharing details of online psychological and legal advice services as well as phone counselling services that are available for the public. In addition, the hotline service at the National Center Against Violence has been continually operating for 24/7.

Coordination

- Participating in inter-agency coordination mechanisms.
- Leading inter-agency GBV coordination mechanisms.
- UNFPA co-chairs the UN PSEA network with the RC.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY

The Equipment of the new PCR laboratories have arrived in Mongolia - <https://gogo.mn/r/xjq6v>.

The first batch of equipment of the four new PCR labs which will be established in Ulaanbaatar, Dornogobi and Umnugobi arrives - <http://www.mnb.mn/i/227236>.

The Equipment of the new PCR labs arrives in Ulaanbaatar - <https://ikon.mn/n/23n9>.

Four new PCR labs are to be established - <https://news.mn/r/2392673/>.

Four new PCR labs are to be established - <http://eagle.mn/r/82093>.

UNFPA, with support from Rio Tinto, will establish 4 PCR laboratories - <https://montsame.mn/mn/read/250289>.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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FOR UPDATES OF COVID-19 IN MONGOLIA, PLEASE VISIT:

The Ministry of Health's Daily reporting
<https://covid19.mohs.mn/p/cat/post/57/?page=2>

The State Emergency Committee's decision
<https://nema.gov.mn/c/resolution>