

'I WISH TO CONTINUE WORKING AT THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTRE TO DEVELOP MYSELF FURTHER'



Youth Development Centres are an important channel for UNFPA to support young people in reaching their full potential. The centres were handed over to the government's ownership after successful piloting by UNFPA from 2013 to 2017. Supported by UNFPA, the centres are run by the Government of Mongolia to deliver services for young people to build resilience, gain life skills, and realize their potential as shapers and leaders of Mongolia's future.

Two young people who engaged with and worked at Youth Development Centres shared how they were able to grow in their personal and professional endeavours thanks to the services provided at the centre.

My name is Ulaanaa Bayaraa. I live with my father in Tsogttsetsii soum of Umnugobi province.

I completed my secondary education in 2015 and started working at the Youth Development Centre of Tsogttsetsii soum in the same year.

Before working at the centre, I struggled to communicate with people and properly express myself to others. I also lacked teamwork skills.

However, working at the centre, I developed my skills in communicating and self-expression, which helped me to gain leadership skills.

I wish to continue working at the centre to develop myself further while providing necessary services to the youth.

In future, I think the Youth Development Centre should strengthen its work by closely coordinating with the government and non-government organizations.

This way, the centre can provide the necessary services to the youth and serve as a bridge between the local government and the youth to address the issues faced by the youth.

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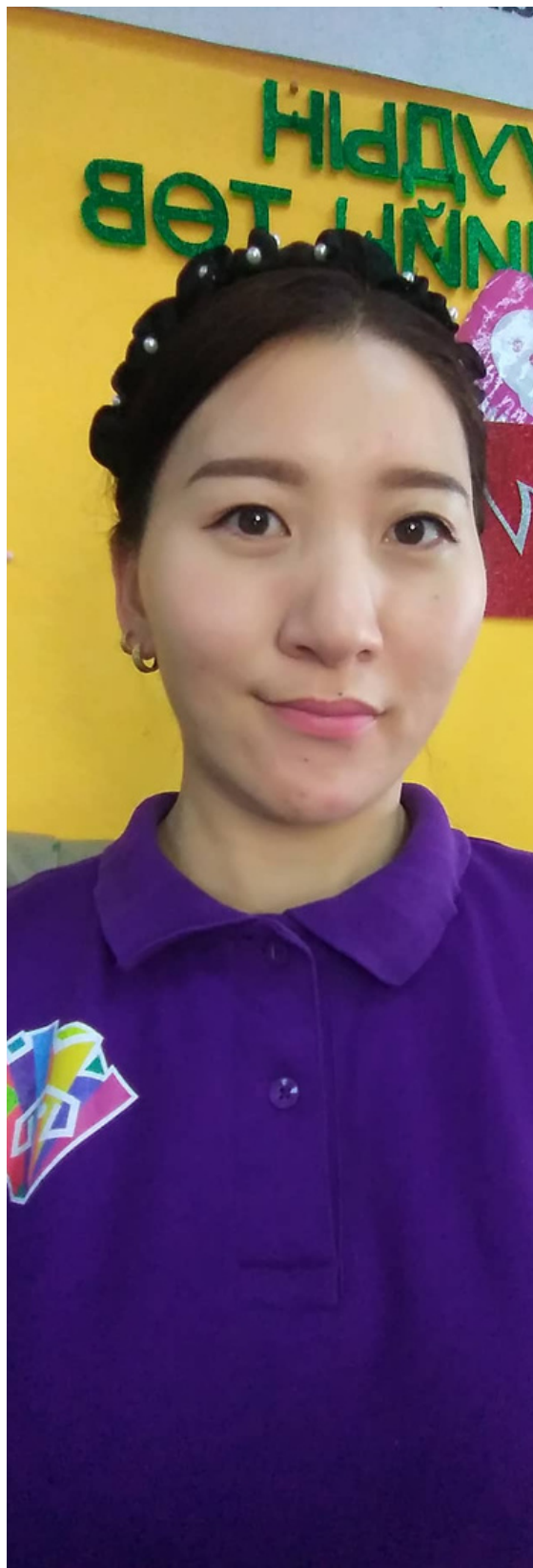
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'I BELIEVE THAT SETTING UP THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN THE SOUMS OF ALL 21 PROVINCES AND NURTURING THE YOUTH THROUGH THE CENTRES WILL HAVE A RIPPLE EFFECT IN CREATING A POSITIVE FUTURE FOR ALL'



My name is Nerzul Tsoodol. I live with my husband and daughter in Khanbogd soum of Umnugobi province.

I started working as the officer in charge of inclusivity and collaboration at the Youth Development Centre in 2019, and this is my third year at the centre.

Now I work as a youth development officer at the centre. I am a Chinese language teacher by profession. In addition, I have a master's degree in family studies and am a professional career coach.

I pride myself on working at the Youth Development Centre and am inspired and energized by what I do at the centre. The centre has opened up many opportunities for my personal development and life and has made positive changes. For instance, I gained self-confidence and a sense of responsibility working at the centre, all of which inspired me to improve my social participation, lead the youth toward working and supporting each other, and become a bridge for their voices and do more for society. By doing so, I could clarify my position in society and learn and develop personally by gaining the necessary experience and motivating myself to work harder.

By being involved in all services provided at the centre, such as life skills training, clubs, support group activities, council activities, referral services, psychological counselling, and career choice counselling, I am continuously learning and gaining much experience. The knowledge and experiences acquired at the centre make it easier for me to cope with and overcome my challenges. They equip me with the ability to help my family, siblings, and relatives positively.

Beneficiaries of the centre's services will be able to have a positive impact not only on their own life but on their family, friends, relatives and acquaintances. Therefore, I believe that setting up the Youth Development Centre in the soums of all 21 provinces and nurturing the youth through the centres will have a ripple effect in creating a positive future for all.

To increase the efficiency of the Youth Development Centre, it is a priority to increase the staff working at the Youth Development Centre and to ensure that they have good living and working conditions.

It's not possible for two or three people to ensure the rights and development of all the young people aged 15-34 in their locale and tackle all social issues related to youth.

The work overload coupled with low salary might adversely impact the staff, leading them to lose interest in their job and eventually quit. This, unfortunately, is an everyday reality.

Although young people working in the Youth Development Centre are trained and developed as trainers in many areas, it is unfortunate that they are quitting their jobs due to high workload and low salary issues. This creates an unproductive cycle of doing the same with new employees by starting over and over again, compromising results that benefit the people we serve.

SERVICE PROVIDERS SHARE EXPERIENCES ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE



The local study tour to Darkhan and Khusvgul provinces was organized among service providers, who work in prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV). Service providers from all One Stop Service Centres (OSSC) and shelters in the country attended the experience-sharing tour from 4 to 10 August 2022.

The study tour provided the opportunity for service providers to discuss common challenges and share good practices that have already proven effective in the country context. As such, the participants focused on actionable and more immediately applicable practices rather than technical capacity-building activities.

The learning tour was organized with the support of the “Combating GBV in Mongolia” project Phase 2 funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and provided the opportunity to forge a relationship among participants, enabling further sharing of information and experiences.

In total, 50 service providers took part in the study tour and learned from the best practices and experiences from the OSSCs of Darkhan-uul, Khuvsgul and Zavkhan provinces. Sessions were provided on data management, including eGBV and eTuslamj databases, and supplementary sessions on key concepts of gender equality and GBV issues, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, referral pathways and collaboration with the multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs), and stress management for service providers.

INTRODUCING TOOLKIT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

UNFPA organized introduction sessions on the Social Behavior Change model for the UN Gender Theme Group and UNFPA's implementing partners on September 27.

On September 28, two online introductory sessions of the model were organized for gender focal points from 21 provinces and nine districts of Ulaanbaatar, as well as representatives of civil society.

In total, over 150 people participated in the introductory sessions of the Social Behavior Change model.

As part of Phase 2 of the “Combating GBV in Mongolia project” funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, UNFPA announced a call for proposals for the development and pilot testing of a comprehensive behaviour change communication (BCC) model at the community level in September 2021.

An NGO consortium comprised of People in Need Mongolia, MONFEMNET National Network NGO, and Men & Healthy Families NGO was selected to develop the Social Behavior Change model with three main components: School-based, Community-based and Media-based toolkits for social change.

The model was pilot tested at two selected sites – Arkhangai province and Bayanzurkh district of Ulaanbaatar city – between September 2021 and September 2022.



INTEGRATING MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE INTO HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

To strengthen national emergency response and readiness efforts, UNFPA is continuously helping to build the capacity of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

On August 26, UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Office (APRO) organized an introductory session on Menstrual Health and Hygiene for over 30 health care instructors of NEMA.

Globally, over 26 million displaced girls and women are estimated to be of menstruating age. Yet menstrual health and hygiene remain a closed topic, leading to a lack of accurate information and education on menstruation and healthy menstrual hygiene practices.

During emergencies and humanitarian crises, girls and women face even greater barriers to managing menstruation due to loss of privacy and safety, often associated with living in emergency contexts.

To mitigate this issue, UNFPA organized the session for emergency front liners in Mongolia to raise awareness of the importance of addressing menstrual health and hygiene, understand how menstrual health and hygiene fits into the programmatic responsibilities of sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, and build the capacity to implement the programming.

GENDER EQUALITY TAKES CENTRE-STAGE AT SDG OPEN DAY



To advocate and promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to engage with and raise awareness of the public on the SDGs and sustainable development issues, the UN in Mongolia organized the SDG Open Day with key partners on 10 September 2022 at Sukhbaatar Square.

UNFPA led the promotion of SDG 5 - Gender equality in collaboration with other UN agencies. Through direct engagement with the public and promotional activities, UNFPA and partners spread awareness about the importance of gender equality and the need to eliminate gender-based violence in all forms and its harmful social and developmental impacts.

UNFPA also contributed to SDG 4 - Quality Education and SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-being by promoting modern family planning methods and comprehensive sexuality education, demonstration of maternal life-saving interventions, and by providing vital information on maternal, sexual and reproductive health issues.

UN SYSTEM ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORKS TO ADVANCE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

UNFPA Programme Specialist on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment attended the Asia-Pacific regional workshop organized by UN Women. The workshop introduced UNCT-System Wide Action Plan Scorecard Assessment and Gender Marker to support inter-agency collective action and coordination to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout the UN.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

3 LABORATORIES ESTABLISHED TO ENABLE EARLY DETECTION OF INFECTIONS AFFECTING MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH



Under the project “Safeguarding maternal, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights during the COVID-19 pandemic in Mongolia”, funded by the Government of Luxembourg, three molecular biology laboratories were opened at Urguu and Amgalan maternity hospitals, and the National Center for Maternal, Newborn and Women’s Health in Yarmag, Ulaanbaatar in September 2022.

The laboratories are fully equipped and supplied to conduct PCR testing not only for COVID-19 diagnosis, but also for a variety of infections, including sexually transmitted infections that affect the health of mothers and newborns as well sub-types of human papillomavirus infections, which can result in cervical cancer.

PROMOTING VACCINATION AGAINST COVID-19 AMONG PREGNANT AND NURSING MOTHERS

Although the fatality rate of COVID-19 has decreased substantially, there is a need for continued vaccination among specific groups, such as pregnant and nursing mothers.

To promote COVID-19 vaccination, UNFPA produced and disseminated promotional videos targeting pregnant and nursing mothers through popular national television networks, such as TV25 and Education TV, as well as web-based and social media.



LUXEMBOURG AND UNFPA EXPAND PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH CARE IN MONGOLIA



The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and UNFPA signed the project obligation form for the project “Accelerating the progress towards the elimination of preventable maternal and perinatal mortality” on 29 July. The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg will contribute 5 million EUR for a duration of five years, from 2022 to 2027, to the life-saving project. Building on the experience and expertise of the 12-year Telemedicine project which preceded it, the new project will contribute to ending preventable maternal deaths, unmet need for family planning, and gender-based violence using technological advances, and will promote family planning and comprehensive sexuality education in Mongolia.

The delegation from the Government of Luxembourg and Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency, led by Minister for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs of Luxembourg Franz Fayot, were accompanied by officials from the Ministry of Health of Mongolia and Shastin State General Hospital, and Head of Office of UNFPA Mongolia Dr. Khalid Sharifi during their visit to Khuvsgul province.

During the visit, the delegation got acquainted with key achievements made in the area of maternal and newborn health and cardiovascular health in Khuvsgul province, with the support of the Telemedicine Project for Maternal and Newborn Health in Mongolia, implemented with support of the Luxembourg Government and UNFPA. The delegation also learned about the current challenges faced by the local health sector, both at provincial and soum levels.

EMERGENCY OBSTETRIC CARE TRAINING HELD

The National Centre for Maternal and Child Health, the lead national in-service training institution for maternal and newborn health, conducted a two-day training for national trainers on Emergency Obstetric Care on 7 and 8 September.

The two-day training, which saw 18 participants, was supported through the project “Safeguarding maternal, sexual and reproductive health and rights during the COVID-19 pandemic in Mongolia” funded by the Government of Luxembourg and implemented by UNFPA.

The training is part of a series of capacity-building efforts targeting service providers of Ulaanbaatar ambulances and maternity hospitals, as well as selected provinces of Mongolia.

GAUGING HEALTH SECTOR RESPONSE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

UNFPA initiated the Health Sector Readiness Assessment to Gender-based Violence in the 3rd quarter of 2022. The finding of the assessment will be utilized for the development of the next steps in addressing the capacity of the health care providers and facilities to provide client-centered and rights-based services to the victims of the GBV, including rape and intimate partner violence.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MONTH PROMOTES INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY



Commemorating National Youth Development Month and International Youth Day, UNFPA supported two official events targeting youth in August.

The official launch of the National Youth Development Month took place on International Youth Day, 12 August, under the theme “Intergenerational Solidarity: Creating a World for All Ages”.

During the launch, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection shared information on special events and expected results for Youth Month and encouraged youth participation. Deputy Minister for Labour and Social Protection S.Zulpkhar, UN Resident Coordinator Tapan Mishra, UNFPA Mongolia Head of Office Dr. Khalid Sharifi, and representatives of youth and stakeholders working in the field of youth development attended the event at the UN House in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

In line with the theme of this year's International Youth Day, the participation of young people in creating a world friendly to all ages by supporting youth employment and increasing their contribution to social and economic development was emphasized.

On 25 August 2022, the online National Forum on Youth Development was held under the theme "Inclusive Society: Youth Participation-Employment".

The forum raised awareness on the issue of youth employment, sparking discussion on the challenges, solutions, and ways to support youth employment.

Minister of Labour and Social Protection Ariunzaya Ayush, UN Resident Coordinator Tapan Mishra, and UNFPA Mongolia Head of Office Dr Khalid Sharifi delivered opening remarks addressing youth development issues in Mongolia. More than 600 representatives of government, provincial and capital city organizations, international organizations, and civil society participated in the forum online.

In addition, more than 1,700 young people and members of the public were reached through live broadcasting and online conference platforms.

Sub-discussions leading up to the forum were organized in all provinces and districts of Ulaanbaatar on August 17 across the country, which saw the participation of over 2,700 young people and over 700 recommendations were proposed to be discussed at the forum.

The recommendations were mainly on youth employment, development, and participation of young people in decision-making. The proposals and requests raised by young people at the forum and sub-discussions were summarized and categorized for submission to the Government of Mongolia and other stakeholders. These proposals and recommendations will ultimately be discussed and approved by the National Youth Development Council, chaired by the Prime Minister.

LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION AND SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH KNOWLEDGE OFFERED TO YOUTH IN DETENTION

With support of UNFPA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has developed the comprehensive “Pre-Release” programme for convicts and youth released from detention, which includes life skills education and sexual and reproductive health content.

The programme aims to provide better preparation for coping with new environments when they reenter society, reduce risks and vulnerabilities, and maximize the benefits of the new environment.

The programme was approved by the joint order of the Minister for Labour and Social protection and the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs on 30 August 2022. In addition, UNFPA plans to deliver training for social workers and psychologists working in detention centres.

HEALTH EDUCATION CABINETS ESTABLISHED AT SPECIAL NEEDS SCHOOLS



Health education cabinets were established and opened at special needs schools No. 29 and No. 116 with support of UNFPA.

The opening of the cabinets was held on 23 September with the attendance of representatives of the Ministry of Science and Education, UNFPA, the schools’ management, teachers and students.

By establishing the health education cabinets, teachers and students will benefit from a quality teaching environment, enabling the delivery of effective and inclusive health education, including comprehensive sexuality education.

NEW OCCUPATION OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OFFICER CREATED

UNFPA prioritizes the empowerment of youth, especially the marginalized youth in rural areas.

In this effort, UNFPA continues to support the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in strengthening the nationwide youth development system at the primary level.

With UNFPA’s support, the ministry recently adopted a resolution to officially enlist the Youth Development Officer of the Youth Development Centre as a new occupation under the broader occupational classification of a social worker.

Following the Ministerial Order, jointly with UNFPA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection developed the Standard Operation Procedures of the Youth Development Centre, which include the standard requirements of the newly created occupation.

The standards will serve as the minimum benchmark for the functionality and service delivery of Youth Development Centres nationwide, ensuring the coverage, accessibility and delivery of quality of services to youth.

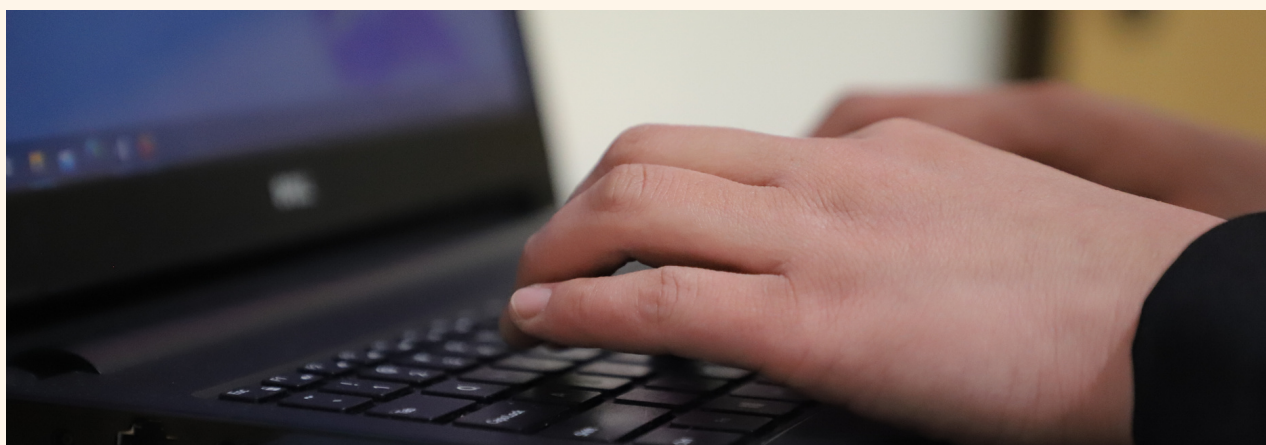
DATA FROM YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTRE SERVICES TO DRIVE EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMMING

With support of UNFPA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection reviewed and revised the primary data collection forms and the periodic data aggregation forms of the Youth Development Centres to enable evidence-based programming for centre.

Using the forms in their everyday operation will help Youth Development Centres across the country collect primary data on youth visiting the centres and aggregate the data periodically for submission to the relevant authorities, such as the Family, Children and Youth Development Agency and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, all of which will aid evidence-based programming and policymaking.

The primary data collection forms and the periodic data aggregation forms were approved by the National Statistical Office on 21 July 2022, and the guidelines to fill in the forms were approved on 8 September 2022 by the Head of the Family, Children and Youth Development Agency for use by all Youth Development Centres in the country.

SERIES OF VIRTUAL TRAINING OFFERED FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS



UNFPA Mongolia, as the lead agency of the UN Youth Working Group for 2022, developed the annual plan for capacity-building training of Youth Development Centre (YDC) staff.

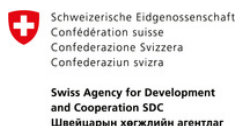
In addition, several UN agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) plan to deliver virtual training to YDC staff in 2022. The main objective of the training is to enrich YDC staff with up-to-date information and practical tools for quality service delivery to youth at YDCs.

As part of the training plan, in cooperation with IOM, UNFPA organised an online training to raise awareness about human trafficking and to provide information about the Resettlement Programme on 16 September. The training was attended by 38 staff of provincial and capital city Family, Children and Youth Development Departments and Youth Development Centres.

In addition, on 23 September, UNFPA organized an online training on family planning and its importance, which saw the participation of 30 staff of provincial and capital city Family, Children and Youth Development Departments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank our donors, implementing partners, and colleagues for their continued support in our efforts to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.



The State Great Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia



MINISTRY OF HEALTH



MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION AND
SCIENCE



MINISTRY OF LABOUR
AND SOCIAL
PROTECTION



NATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON GENDER EQUALITY



NATIONAL
STATISTICS OFFICE
OF MONGOLIA



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