Mongolia

Principles and general objectives of education

The Mongolian Constitution, adopted in 1992, establishes in paragraph 7 of Article 16 the right to education. This paragraph further specifies that the “State shall provide basic general education free of charge. Citizens may establish and operate private school in conformity with the Government requirements.”

In the Education Law, revised in 1995 and amended in 2002, the articles of socialist ideology were deleted and new educational goals and principles, which enable the people to voluntarily participate in changing the society, were proclaimed. The fundamental assumptions of education stated in this law reflects the principle of equality in education: “every citizen has equal rights to his or her education, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, religion, social status, and economic condition”; “compulsory education is provided to everyone of school age free of charge.” Furthermore, “education shall be humanistic and democratic, universally available and continuing.” These provisions state that Mongolia must gear towards a public education system grounded upon equality in educational opportunities.

The Education Law (2002) defines the general goal of education as follows: “The purpose of education is to provide the citizen with appropriate intellectual, moral and physical skills, and develop respect to the principles of humanism and ability to learn, work and live independently.”

Current educational priorities and concerns

Mongolia is undergoing a transitional period from a centrally planned system to a free and market-oriented one. In early 1990s, the country chose to undertake the democratization of the political system and the transition to a market economy. This action was legally guaranteed by the new Constitution adopted at the beginning of 1992. Thus, a legal basis was created allowing a multiparty system, free election principles, pluralistic ideas and openness as well as respect for human rights and basic freedoms. The centrally controlled administrative structure has been changed into the decentralized local-initiated structure. The Constitution created a new democratic legislative system and executive and juridical powers.

However, since 1990 the growth rate of economic development has decreased and its efficiency has diminished. The process of transition faced lots of difficulties related to economic crisis and the decrease of production. However, according to the Asian Development Bank during 2000–2004 the economy began responding to macroeconomic stability and the private sector assumed a prominent role in the economy, even if cumulative growth has been insufficient to impact on the high level of poverty that emerged after the initial shocks.
In order to overcome the difficulties in the education sector, the government has been taking comprehensive measures. Various projects and programmes aiming at reforming primary, secondary and higher education are being implemented thanks to international financial assistance and co-operation. Some signs of stabilization in teachers’ flow and drop-out rate have been noticed in the last two years and recently the government increased teachers’ salaries. The school curriculum has been revised and there is an improved supply of textbooks at the primary and secondary levels. The number of students at all levels of education has also increased.

Under the Mid-term National Plan for Education for All (EFA) 2002-2005, the following main components were considered:

- Increase the enrolment rate of disadvantaged and vulnerable children in pre-school education;
- Establish a home-based system for developing pre-school age children from herder families;
- Decrease the percentage of school drop-outs;
- Provide remedial education to 40% of school children dropped out from basic education;
- Identify ways of preventing children from dropping out from schools, and organize and implement activities for out-of-school children to enroll them in schools;
- Revise and upgrade curriculum standards of primary and secondary education;
- Develop and distribute textbooks and learning/training materials according to the basic education equivalence curriculum;
- Renovate Vocational Training and Production Center (VTPC) school buildings and dormitories;
- Develop new/revised curriculum and standards for VTPC;
- Provide livelihood skills and life skills training to meet the market demands;

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**Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate during the transition period**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDP growth rate %</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-9.2</td>
<td>-9.5</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita (in comparative prices)</td>
<td>-2.5</td>
<td>-11.5</td>
<td>-11.5</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Strengthen non-formal education centres in terms of physical and human resources capacities;
- Establish a distance education training system.

The Education Sector Strategy 2000-2005 (ESS) emphasized universal access to education, including free basic education, and established the following priority areas: alleviation of deficiencies with educational facilities; teacher training and retraining; curriculum development, and provision of textbooks and learning materials. (ADB, 2002).

**Laws and other basic regulations concerning education**

Since Mongolia chose the democratic and market-oriented system in 1990, one of the most important tasks has been the development of a new legal basis for education.

To this end, several new legal acts, such as the State Education Policy, the Education Law, the Higher Education Law and the Primary and Secondary Education Law were adopted by the Parliament. These laws defined policies of democracy and openness in educational administrative structures; decentralized the administration and financing of all public schools; transferred the management of schools to local governments in the aimaks (provinces); increased the autonomy of colleges and universities; and enabled the establishment of private educational institutions.

The State Education Policy defines education as a priority sector of the society, as well as an important source of rapid growth of scientific, technical, economic and social development. In addition, for the first time the importance of non-formal continuing education for all is recognized.

According to current legislation, compulsory schooling covers primary and lower secondary education (eight years of study for pupils aged 8-16). Education is free of charge at the upper (general) secondary level (Grades IX and X).

**Administration and management of the education system**

The central education authority in Mongolia is the Ministry of Science, Technology, Education and Culture (MOSTEC, now the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science). The function of the Ministry is defined by law as the promotion and dissemination of education, science and culture.

Nearly all publicly financed education is subordinate to or under the supervision of the Ministry. The administrative fields of the Ministry include not only pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational and higher education and educational research, but also cultural and scientific affairs and non-formal education as well.

In accordance with the Education Law, the main functions of the Ministry of Education are as follows:

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to organize and ensure nationwide implementation of legal mandates for education;

to develop a comprehensive and suitable system of education for all, including non-formal education;

to co-ordinate the activities of those organizations offering various training programmes and providing professional help;

to organize and provide in-service training for all educational personnel, putting forward the issues related to social benefits for teachers.

The Ministry provides guidance and advice for the operation of local public and private educational institutions, as well as financial assistance. It defines policies with regard to education, science and culture and it is responsible for the implementation of these policies. In addition, the Ministry publishes and approves textbooks and curricula and provides support for the supervision of local educational centres and national universities.

The Ministry is headed by the Minister who is a member of the Prime Minister’s Cabinet. He is assisted by the State Secretary. The Ministry is divided into four main departments which are the main providers of policy and planning guidelines and public administration and civil service management, namely: the Department of Policy Development and Strategic Planning; the Department of Public Administration Management; the Department of Performance Co-ordination of Policy Development and Planning; and the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation.

In Mongolia there are twenty-one aimaks (provinces), each of them further divided into a number of sums (districts). In every aimak there is an Aimak Social Policy Department within the local government which serves as the central educational authority. These Departments are responsible for the administration and management of government services relating to formal and non-formal education.

The provincial governments are responsible for:

- co-ordinating activities in implementing the nationwide education policy at the aimak and sum levels;
- administering, managing and establishing kindergartens and general secondary schools;
- appointing or discharging school principals;
- financing kindergartens, primary and secondary schools;
- organizing actions for providing compulsory basic education for all children;
- issuing local acts, laws and regulations and implementing related monitoring and evaluation activities.
At all levels, from kindergarten to universities, there is self-governance. The management committee of the school (School Board), consisting of teachers, students, parents and representatives of the local community, is in charge of managing and monitoring all affairs related to the school.

The administrative authority on education has been transferred from the central government to each educational institution and to the local governments. This transfer of powers is even more pronounced at the higher education level, where universities now have more autonomy than ever and to the extent that they can equally participate in the decision-making process along with the Ministry of Education.

For example, a university can directly consult with the Ministry of Education regarding its own budget, and can secure its own fund sources out of: revenue from tuition fees; research grants from public organizations and business; and technical assistance from international organizations.

**Structure and organization of the education system**

The structure of the education system in Mongolia includes pre-school education (kindergarten and nursery school) and general secondary schools (primary, lower and upper secondary). Schools for the primary, lower and upper secondary levels generally do not exist separately. Schools up to Grade X are mainly found in the larger towns and cities. In principle, the amendment to the Education Law 2002 should introduce a fundamental change in the education system, with a move to an eleven-year system of basic education based on 5 years of compulsory primary education, 2 years of compulsory lower secondary, and 2 years of upper secondary, bringing down the starting age for primary school to 7. (See: ADB, 2002).
Pre-school education

Pre-school education (kindergarten and nursery school) is not compulsory and caters to children aged 3-7 years.

Primary education

Primary education covers a period of four years for pupils aged 8-12 and is compulsory. In 1999/2000, there were 128 schools offering only primary education (mainly found in remote rural districts or sums), 216 schools offering combined primary and lower secondary (eight years of education, which are seen as a whole and together comprise compulsory or basic education), and 324 schools offering the full
ten grades. At the end of primary education, pupils sit the common public examination.

**Secondary education**

Lower secondary education is the final stage of compulsory schooling and lasts four years (age group 12-16), followed by two years of upper secondary education. Graduates from Grades VIII, IX and X can join technical and vocational training schools.

Some colleges at the tertiary level offer vocational training courses leading to the Higher Education Diploma (two to four years of study). Bachelor’s degree courses usually last four to five years (six years in the case of medicine). Master’s degree courses require one to two years of study after the bachelor’s degree. Doctoral degree courses take three to four years to complete.

The school year consists of thirty-four working weeks at the primary level, thirty-five weeks at the lower secondary, and thirty-six weeks at the upper secondary level.

**The financing of education**

Sources of financing mainly consist of government and local budgets and students’ tuition fees. The share of education in total government expenditure decreased from 26.2% in 1992 to 16.2% in 1994, despite the commitment of the government to maintain it at the level of 20% (as established in the Education Law of 1995). In 1995 the education share increased to 19.4%.

The criterion by which the government allocates funds to schools is the educational expenditure per student, although such a system of allocation puts rural small-scale schools in a disadvantageous situation. Kindergartens are financed by local budgets, tuition fees collected from parents and additional income gained from their profit-making activities.

All general secondary schools and universities are State-owned and funded through the State budget. However, there are some newly established small-scale higher education institutes which offer bachelor’s degree courses, subsidized by their owners and by tuition fees. In addition, tuition fees introduced since 1991 are the other major source of financing for public universities.

In 1996 the distribution of total government expenditure on education was as follows: kindergarten, 20%; basic and general secondary, 52.7%; vocational secondary, 9%; and higher education, 17.8%.

The geographic and environmental background of the country is reflected in educational expenditure. Winter in Mongolia is long and bitterly cold, so the heating and fuel costs are particularly high. The vast land, with relatively low population density, makes for the inevitability of school dormitories, requiring large expenditures on food and administration. Kindergartens spend more on meals, staff salaries and...
administrative costs, while secondary and primary schools spend more on students’ scholarships and heating.

To cope with the financial crisis, the government has lessened the financial burden on schools by increasing the parents’ accountability for: food expenses in the kindergartens; the dormitory charges for primary and secondary schools in rural settings; and charging tuition fees beyond secondary education. As a result of the crisis, enrolment dropped at all levels, particularly in remote rural areas. A number of schools have been closed down due to a shortage of electricity, lack of heating, or financial constraints. At the moment, the promotion of other sources of financing such as the private sector and community partnership shows limited results.

International financial assistance to support the development of education in the country is mainly provided by the Asian Development Bank, the government of Denmark and UNICEF.

According to the Asian Development Bank, State education expenditure amounted to 7.9% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000. Local governments, especially at the province level, play a dominant role in financing education, accounting for 68.7% of total public education expenditure (the remaining 31.3% is allocated from the central government budget). In 2000 the share of public funding among the sub-sectors was as follows: pre-school education, 17.6%; primary and secondary, 48.8%; vocational education, 2%; and higher education, 17.8%.

The educational process

Pre-primary education

All kindergartens are publicly subsidized and pre-school education is not compulsory. The Education Law states that kindergartens may admit pre-school children who have reached the age of 3. Actual places in kindergartens are not sufficient to cover existing needs and only 20% of children in the age group 3-7 years are attending.

The main objective at this level, as determined by the Law of Primary and Secondary Education of 1995, is to help children develop their minds, bodies and personalities by providing them with an appropriate educational environment, conducive to the development of their talents, abilities and life skills. In kindergartens children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, drawing, music and physical education. Children normally attend kindergarten six days per week, although Saturday is a part-time working day. By the end of the 1990s, only 25% of 6-7-year-olds attend kindergarten (MOSTEC, 1999).

The Education Law prescribes pre-school education to be included in the general educational structure. In accordance with the law, the nursery school is an organization designed to provide day-care for children less than 3 years of age, and it is to be of three types, namely ordinary, caring, and for orphaned children. Accordingly, nursery is viewed as a non-educational organization generally designed to provide child day-care and is under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. Since the 1990s it has been conceived that it is more appropriate to bring up young children

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aged 0-3 within the family, under parents’ care; therefore, a policy has been introduced to enable mothers take care of young children under 2-years-old, while receiving child home care allowance from a social pension fund. However, only child care centers for orphans and sanatoria are available and are financed by the state.

By Resolution No 46, of April 1995, the government established a National Programme on Preschool Strengthening. It set out, in some detail, the government’s intentions for development of pre-school education. The Resolution included an ambitious implementation plan for the period 1995 to 2000. This programme aimed at creating a favorable preschool education structure appropriate to both nomadic and sedentary populations; supporting nongovernmental preschool education institutions; improving curriculum, methodology, and provision of training facilities; supporting family education of preschool children; and strengthening skills of preschool educators to meet modern requirements. At that time, the key institutions providing pre-school education were nursery schools (ages 0-2) and kindergartens (ages 3-7). The main policy was “kindergarten-centered”, and the government fully financed kindergartens. With the start of transition to market economy in 1990, along with decrease of economic capacity of the country some difficulties have begun to occur in the educational sector. In the early 1990s, the number of day nursery schools for children aged 0–2 fell significantly due to local government budget deficits. The number of children in kindergartens fell substantially and about 2,000 kindergarten teachers lost their jobs

The National Policy on Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) has been adopted and endorsed by the Joint Order of the Ministers of Health, Education and Labor and Social Welfare in April, 2005. This policy aims at improving and strengthening the inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination in early childhood development. The objectives are to creating and developing an integrated management of ECD social services as well as the availability, accessibility and quality of services. The policy highlights the roles of everyone in the early childhood development including, specifically families, parents as well as public and private sectors. Within the framework of implementation of the policy different initiatives are coming up with grass root implementation, like early childhood outreach system with mobile teachers, family empowerment strategies, community-based action, etc. The policy also stresses the importance of better preparedness of children for schooling and gives the directions to strengthen this component of child development.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 there were 90,215 children enrolled at the pre-primary level and the gross enrolment ratio was 35%. The total number of teachers was 3,267 and the average teacher/children ratio was 1:28.

**Primary education**

Primary education lasts four years and all parents are required to have their children attend primary and lower secondary school. In principle, basic education (primary and lower secondary) is free.

The main objectives of primary education are: to teach children to speak and write their native language correctly; to develop basic numerical skills; and to develop an elementary understanding of social, natural and human sciences. Furthermore,
children are to be taught basic work and survival skills that are useful to themselves and to their environment. They are taught to respect humanity, adults, parents and teachers. The yearly lesson timetable for primary education is shown in the table below:

**Primary education: yearly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of yearly periods in each grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolian language</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental studies</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and social studies</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative works and basic drawing</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed alternating subjects</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects decided by the school</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total periods per year</strong></td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Nargui Merendoo, 2002

Note: Each teaching period lasts 40 minutes. The school year consists of thirty-four working weeks at the primary level, thirty-five weeks at the lower secondary, and thirty-six weeks at the upper secondary level. Prescribed (compulsory) alternating subjects include health education, environmental education, economics and law (the latter at the lower and upper secondary levels). School-based contents may include additional teaching in one of the subjects listed above, integrated subjects of natural sciences, techniques and technology, non-basic foreign languages, other subjects.

There is an automatic promotion from Grades I to IV, and also continuous school-based assessment. At the end of primary education, pupils sit the common public examination.

Pupils dropping out from the formal school system are a matter of concern. Although latest figures indicate a small reduction, more than 20% of the primary school children drop out of school. The following are the main reasons for school drop-out: moving of residence; high travel or meal costs; lack of interest in study; poor living standards; health.

In 1998/99, the average number of pupils per class was 30.8 and the average teacher/pupil ratio was 1:32.4. In 1998, 94.3% of all primary school pupils were promoted to the next level, 0.9% repeated and 4.7% dropped out. (MOSTEC, 1999).

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 there were 235,730 pupils enrolled at the primary level and the gross enrolment ratio was 104%. The total number of teachers was 7,172 and the average teacher/pupil ratio was 1:33. The transition rate to secondary education was estimated at 99%.

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Secondary education

The main objective of secondary education is to develop fundamentals of natural, social and human sciences based on primary school knowledge. At this level, students are encouraged to utilize their knowledge in practical life using technology of production programmes and to respect historical and cultural property, the environment and human beings.

Secondary education is divided into two cycles: lower secondary, which covers four years of schooling (Grades V-VIII), and upper secondary, which lasts two years (Grades IX and X). The yearly lesson timetable is as follows:

**Lower and upper secondary education: yearly lesson timetable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of yearly periods in each grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolian language</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolian literature</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign languages (English/Russian)</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informatics</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural sciences</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics, Astronomy</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and social studies</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine arts</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative works, technical drawing</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prescribed alternating subjects</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects decided by the school</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The upper secondary level is intended to give general and vocational technical education suited to students’ level of mental and physical development.

There are a number of technical and vocational schools (TVESs) which admit lower and upper secondary school graduates. These schools provide secondary education programmes focused on certain vocational skills and prepare skilled workers and technicians. However, in recent years due to the financial crisis some of the TVESs have been closed as they were subsidized by the government. The number of TVESs was forty-six in 1990, but in 1996 their number was thirty-three. The total number of students enrolled was 11,308.
In order to improve secondary education, special attention is paid to curriculum development issues and the elaboration of teaching materials, giving priority to the design, printing, distribution and use of textbooks and other instructional materials.

The Education Law (1995) establishes that the academic achievement of students should be assessed according to the following marks: (5) “excellent”; (4) “good”; (3) “satisfactory”; (2) “not satisfactory”. There is a system of examinations at each grade of secondary school. At the end of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, students take state examinations. According to the results of examinations held in June 1996, 10% of students passed with an “excellent” mark; 30% passed with “good”; 55% with “satisfactory”; and 5% were found “not satisfactory.”

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 the total enrolment at the secondary level (all programmes) was 333,193 students and the gross enrolment ratio was 90% (95% at the lower and 78% at the upper secondary level). The total number of teachers was 14,662 (9,719 at the lower and 4,943 at the upper secondary level) and the average teacher/student ratio was 1:23 (1:24 at the lower and 1:20 at the upper secondary level).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

There are no national programmes for assessing and monitoring pupils’ and students’ learning achievement. Public examinations are administered at the end of Grades IV, VIII and X. At the end of primary education (Grade IV), examinations are given in Mongolian language and mathematics. In the 1998/99 school year, the pass rate was 89.3%, with 54.8% rated as outstanding; the pass rate of Mongolian language was 93.0%, with 61% rated as outstanding (MOSTEC, 1999).

Higher education

With the urgent need for highly trained manpower for national development, the government pays significant attention to the reform of higher education. Higher education in Mongolia reflects the prevailing conditions of a rapidly changing society, which is moving into a market economy and attempting to become more open and democratic.

Higher education institutions include universities, colleges and institutes. Some colleges at the tertiary level offer vocational training courses leading to the Higher Education Diploma (two to four years of study). Higher education institutions offer over one hundred specializations at the bachelor’s degree level. An increased emphasis is being placed on specializations such as management, commerce, economics and foreign languages, in accordance with the new market requirements.

Students spend more than thirty hours per week in instructional settings. The majority of courses average about 1,000 hours of instruction per year, with the longest bachelor’s degree programmes averaging more than 5,000 hours of instruction and

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taking five years to complete. Universities have recently shifted to the credit hour system.

Until 1990, there was only one university, the Mongolian State University. Since 1991, with the reform of higher education, the following have been reclassified as universities: the former Polytechnic Institute, the Russian Language Institute, the State Pedagogical Institute, the Pedagogical Institute, the Agricultural Institute, the Medical Institute, the Management Institute and the Military Institute.

In 1992, the degree structure was drastically changed and the B.A, M.A and Ph.D. degrees were introduced. Bachelor’s degree programmes usually last four to five years (six years in the case of medicine). Master’s degree courses require one to two years of study after the bachelor’s degree. Doctoral degree courses take three to four years to complete. Because of the reduction of State funding, since the 1993/94 academic year all students pay tuition fees. For admission universities require the completion of upper secondary education.

In recent years the higher education sector has changed from an essentially single, multipurpose university, into a decentralized set of specialized universities. They enjoy more academic freedom, appoint their own teachers and decide their admission policies.

Public or private higher education institutes offer bachelor’s and master’s degree courses. They also conduct research and teaching in specialized subjects. Theses institutes mainly prepare specialists in over one hundred different professions, such as physicians, veterinarians, secondary school teachers, engineers, researchers, etc.

The average age of students in higher education institutes is 25 years and the duration of courses ranges from three to six years. Teachers and professors in higher education institutes teach as many as five hundred or more hours per year.

Colleges offering vocational training courses are mainly State-owned. They are: the College of Commerce and Business; the College of Pedagogy; the Railway College; the Economic College; the College of Agriculture; the College of Art; and the College of Light Industry.

**Number of higher education institutions, teaching staff and enrolment (1996/97)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of institution</th>
<th>Number of institutions</th>
<th>Teaching staff</th>
<th>Students enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MF</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,343</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education institutes and colleges</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2,148</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4,491</td>
<td>1,611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: MOSTEC, 1997.*
According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in 2004 the total enrolment at the tertiary level was 108,738 students (of whom 62% women). In 2003, the total number of lecturers was 5,366.

**Special education**

There are five ten-year secondary special schools in Ulaanbaatar. The total number of pupils with impairments requiring special education include: 10,000 visual (of whom 6,515 are women); 2,056 mental; 6,563 hearing; and 1,280 various physical. The secondary school “No. 29” is the leading key school which is entitled to develop the curriculum and instructional materials for other schools. The total number of teachers is 200. They were mainly trained in the former Soviet Union. In 1994, the Teacher Training College opened one faculty for special education teachers.

**Private education**

One important result of the 1990s education reform was the approval of legislation enabling the establishment of private higher education institutions. The Education Law of 1995 states that education in Mongolia shall be based on different properties, public or private.

The first of these institutions was founded in 1991. Since then, forty-six private higher education institutions offering sixty specializations were established. They enrol around 11,800 students, that is 27% of the total number of students enrolled in higher education institutions. By 1996, 490 full-time teachers and 671 part-time teachers worked at these institutions. Most private higher education institutions are located in Ulaanbaatar, the capital.

The MOSTEC gives operating approval to these institutions, sets the standard of private higher education, evaluates students’ achievement and also deals with different activities to improve teachers’ professional background and teaching methods. The Ministry provides support to find or rent school facilities. Students in private higher education institutions have also been involved in various aid programmes granted by the government.

However, clear-cut government policy, guidelines and legal provisions on the private education sector and mechanisms to evaluate their academic programmes and progress are urgently needed.

**Means of instruction, equipment and infrastructure**

Textbooks and other instructional materials are published and printed with MOSTEC approval, according to the national policy on education. The printing of all textbooks for primary and secondary schools is financed from the government budget. The total number of textbooks used in primary and secondary schools is 107. Every year the government allocates around 100 million tugrics for textbooks.

Compiled by UNESCO-IBE (http://www.ibe.unesco.org/)
Textbooks are prepared by subject matter specialists from the National Institute of Educational Research, universities, the Academy of Sciences and experienced teachers contracted by the MOSTEC.

Education facilities in secondary and primary schools are outdated, often in disrepair, and budgets for maintenance and renovation are totally inadequate. Improved facilities, better instructional materials and teaching resources, better scientific equipment and considerably improved libraries are urgently needed.

Teaching and learning materials are not satisfactorily distributed, due to financial difficulties. The Danish Government co-operation agency (DANIDA) has been helping in publishing and printing some textbooks. New principles for sharing of textbooks by students were introduced in 1997. Textbooks are kept at the school library and loaned to students free of charge.

**Adult and non-formal education**

In the former socialist system, the concept and practice of adult and continuing education did not exist. Due to the transition to a market economy, people must be re-oriented and trained according to new ideas and a new political, social and economic system. The new setting requires people with new skills and a continuous development of their educational level.

Therefore, the government for the first time in 1991 started to provide learning opportunities for those who are outside the school system and whose skills are no longer appropriate for daily life or the labour market. This is being achieved through the establishment of a non-formal education structure. Although the Education Law of 1995 stressed the need to provide education through formal and non-formal means, little has been done until now to organize and develop the non-formal education sector.

In 1995, the Programme for the Promotion of Non-formal Education started and recently the Non-Formal Education Centre was created under the MOSTEC to take charge of the national co-ordination of activities related to non-formal education development.

Two sources of experience exist for these new efforts in the field of non-formal education. First, the Gobi Women’s Non-Formal Education Project has accumulated valuable experience in meeting diverse learning needs in several rural settings. It is the first experience aimed at providing adult education programmes using radio and print materials in combination with visiting teachers. This project has been implemented since 1992 under a UNESCO/DANIDA sponsorship. The target group has reacted favourably and has shown great enthusiasm for taking part in the learning activities.

Second, the research team at the National Institute for Educational Research has been conducting research activities in this field and elaborating recommendations and learning manuals for practitioners. The Institute is working closely with the UNESCO Office in Bangkok in the framework of the Asia-Pacific Programme of

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Education for All (APPEAL). Some training manuals for the region of Asia and the Pacific have been translated and adapted through national workshops with the assistance of the UNESCO Bangkok Office.

However, there are diverse target groups who have no access to education, such as school drop-outs, unemployed youth, street children, rural isolated nomads and so on. As of 1990, Mongolia was considered a country with a relatively high literacy rate, but the number of illiterates has increased.

**Teaching staff**

Teacher education is provided at the State Pedagogical University, higher schools and teacher training colleges. Teachers of general secondary education are trained at the State Pedagogical University, while kindergarten and elementary school teachers are trained at teacher training colleges.

Primary and secondary education teachers are recruited by the principal of the school where the teacher wishes to work. The State Pedagogical University offers 14 specializations. After graduation, students are awarded the Bachelor’s degree in Education.

There are two semesters in a year. At the end of each semester, students have three examinations and five tests. In order to graduate, students must pass two or three state examinations at the end of the last term of study. The academic programme consists of main subjects related to the specialty and required subjects for the teacher profession, such as history, foreign language, law, political science, physical education, pedagogy, etc.

The salary scales, types and amounts of allowances for teachers are determined by the Salary Scheme for Governmental Service Servants, approved by the government. Presently, the government intends to increase salaries due to the inflation rate. Besides the main salary, teachers get rewards or additional pay according to their quality of work. Salaries of private school teachers are determined by the owners of respective private schools.

There are some benefits, such as medical care expenses, illness allowance and annual leave (forty-eight days). On retirement teachers who have worked during twenty-five years have an additional pay equivalent to their one-year salary amount. In addition, the tuition fee of one child to study at a higher education institution is paid by the government.

Primary school teachers are mainly female. Higher education teachers are typically male, over 40 years of age, and trained under the previous socialist system.

In-service teacher training strives to: help improve educational expertise; enhance the quality of teaching; establish a desirable view of the teaching profession; introduce new changes in teaching policy and school curriculum; and encourage the sense of commitment to the teaching profession. In-service teacher training is funded

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from the State budget. There are special plans for the organization of in-service training activities through short- and long-term courses.

The curriculum for in-service training is developed by the State Pedagogical University and the National Institute for Educational Research. In addition, many teachers undergo in-service training abroad within the framework of international projects and assistance.

The majority of kindergarten and primary school teachers are assigned to a single class and they are responsible for teaching all or most subjects. At the primary level, there is a small number of teachers specialized in practical subjects, such as music, handicrafts, physical education and home economics.

Instruction at the lower and upper secondary levels is departmentalized to a large extent, and the majority of teachers are specialists in one or two subject areas for several classes. In some rural isolated district schools, there are not enough teachers and, therefore, sometimes one teacher has to teach two or more subjects.

The maximum number of pupils per class should not exceed 30-35 as defined by law. The teachers’ weekly workload is nineteen hours.

In 1998, 41.8% of all teachers were primary school teachers (Grades I-IV) and 21.4% of these were master’s or bachelor’s degree holders, 72.5% had a diploma, and 6.1% had completed upper secondary education (without teacher training). (MOSTEC, 1999).

Policies focusing on teacher development are directed to: improving the physical facilities of teacher training institutions and upgrading teachers’ qualifications; strengthening the capacity of rural teachers; improving the social benefits for teachers; and organizing in-service training according to the new revised curriculum.

**Educational research and information**

The National Institute for Educational Research under the Ministry of Education, created in 1951, is the main educational research agency carrying out research for educational innovation and reform. This Institute has the following functions:

- to undertake comprehensive scientific research on educational ideas, aims, contents, methods;
- to develop the primary and secondary school curriculum;
- to develop teaching methods;
- to provide in-service training for primary and secondary school teachers;
- to disseminate research findings and information.
The status and functions of this Institute are determined by the Education Law. The Institute implements several research projects funded by the Ministry in the field of educational management, theory of education, educational standards, continuing education and secondary school curriculum development. The Institute has a Degree Granting Committee in the field of education. It co-operates with many international organizations and sister institutes abroad.

References


ASPBAE. *Education in Mongolia, with special focus on literacy and adult education*. Ulaanbaatar, 1996.


Web resources
