

National Workshop on

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MONGOLIA

Executive Report

July 2023



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DEVELOPMENT IN MONGOLIA

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Organized by
National Academy of Governance (NAOG)
Mongolian National News Agency (MONTSAME)
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Mongolia

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

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The Workshop was based on [UN DESA's Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals](#). The Curriculum aims to promote a critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to achieving the SDGs.

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1. About the Report

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The Report highlights the key concepts and recommendations that emerged from the National Workshop on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development in Mongolia organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), the National Academy of Governance (NAOG) of the Government of Mongolia, and MONTSAME - Mongolian National News Agency, with the support of the UN Resident Coordinator Office in Mongolia.

1.2 Format

The workshop was composed of three parts, delivered over a period of 5 days. The first day of the workshop started with the Training of Trainers (ToT) on Effective National to Local Governance for SDG Implementation for the NAOG's trainers. Day 2 to 4 focused on the Effective Governance for Sustainable Development in Mongolia. The workshop concluded with the National Workshop for Media Officials on Risk-informed Communication for Reporting on Emergencies and Disaster Risk Reduction.

Participants undertook several offline activities (readings, preparation of presentations) individually and/or in teams for each session and between sessions. The workshop was conducted in a hybrid format where the participants from Mongolia attended in person and invited speakers virtually participated via the Zoom platform. The Workshop was attended by invited government officials from Mongolia, media officials drawn from government, ministries and media houses, UN officials, and other invited international experts and officials from participating institutions.

The workshop was based on the [Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs](#) – Toolkit on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation, Strengthening Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence, Transparency, Accountability and Ethics in Public Institutions and Risk-informed Governance and Innovative Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, developed by UN DESA. Additional content was provided by UN DESA, the Government of Mongolia, UNRCO Mongolia, NAOG, MONTSAME and external speakers. The format of the workshop included presentations from experts, presentations from participants, and a series of facilitated interactive discussions and exercises. All the workshop presentations are available [here](#).

1.3 Objectives of the Workshop

The workshop aimed to promote a critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in achieving the SDGs and Mongolia Vision-2050. The objective of the National Workshop for Media Officials was to strengthen the capacities of media officials to promote risk-informed communication for reporting on emergencies and disaster risk reduction.

1.4 Target Audience

The workshop was delivered between 7 to 13 June 2023. The ToT workshop was attended by ten officials from NAOG. Fifty seniors to mid-level public officials drawn from the Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and Units engaged in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and

Mongolian Vision-2050 attended the National workshop from 8 to 12 June 2023. The media workshop which was held on 13 June 2023 was composed of about 85 media officials drawn from government institutions which include spokespersons, journalists, communication officers, and reporters drawn from ministries and agencies, the office of the president and cabinet, Parliament, cities, municipalities, the Ministry of Digital Development and Communications, Mongolia National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and other key media institutions and stakeholders across Mongolia.

1.5 Expected Results

The workshop was specifically designed to enhance the capacities of the public officials of Mongolia for the institutional application of the 11 Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development to strengthen institutions for the implementation of the SDGs and Vision-2050 at all levels. The workshop was also expected to foster institutional arrangements for policy coherence by encouraging the alignment of institution-building efforts related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with the Vision-2050 objectives. It was expected that by the end of the Workshop, participants would have:

- A common understanding of the Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and their application in institutional arrangements at all levels to achieve the shared vision for the people and the planet as embodied in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Enhanced understanding of whole-of-government approaches for strengthening vertical coordination and aligning national to local planning to accelerate SDG progress.
- Gained an understanding of how to promote a whole-of-society approach for national to local planning to ensure effective stakeholder engagement in public governance and leave no one behind.
- Conducted an institutional needs assessment to identify the key gaps that would require strengthening to enhance institutional coherence at the national level.
- Gained insights into the different building blocks and indicators for policy coherence as entry points for improving the whole of government/integrated approaches.
- Developed an action plan for effective governance mechanisms to deliver SDGs.
- Gained insights into the need and policy relevance of promoting risk-informed governance and innovative technology for DRR and resilience, closing technology gaps, and establishing public governance frameworks for DRR and sustainable development in countries in special situations.

1.6 Participants' Feedback

Forty-two (42) evaluation responses from the participants were collected following the National workshop on Effective Governance. Notably, 100% of participants (69% expressing a strong likelihood and 31% indicating likelihood) have stated their intention to utilize the knowledge gained from this workshop. The workshop received an overall rating of 'Excellent' (48%) and 'Good' (52%). (See Annex 1 for the full survey results).

For the National Workshop for Media Officials, results from the post-workshop evaluation revealed that over 88% of the 32 respondents increased their understanding on risk-informed communication for reporting on emergencies and DRR as a result of their participation in the Workshop. Over 97% indicated they were overall satisfied with the workshop with over 91% indicating their likelihood to

apply the knowledge acquired from the workshop to their organization/community. (See Annex 1 for the full survey results).

2. Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop on Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation

Ten officials from NAOG attended the ToT workshop. Dr. Surenchimeg Dulamsuren, Rector, National Academy of Governance (NAOG), Government of Mongolia, opened the ToT workshop. She reiterated the importance of this training to equip NAOG trainers with the necessary skills and knowledge to promote effective governance practices for implementing the SDGs at the national and local levels. The TOT was an engaging and informative session focused on equipping trainers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively promote SDGs at the national and local levels.

The first session introduced the Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs and the toolkit on Toolkit on Effective National to Local Governance for SDG Implementation. The second session on ‘Governance Self-Assessment’ followed the introduction. The activity is designed to assist governments in identifying specific gaps and opportunities in their governance arrangement to implement the SDGs and the Mongolia Vision 2050. It offered practical learning to enable governments to establish or strengthen the necessary governance arrangements to effectively implement and mainstream the SDGs. The objective of the assessment includes identifying potential governance challenges and opportunities for effective implementation of the SDGs, informing both the design and delivery of the plan, developing priority or immediate actions that can be taken to address challenges or exploit opportunities, as well as longer-term actions for strengthening governance; and enabling a government to track its governance parameters over time.

The third session delved into vertical integration for SDG implementation using the Vertically Integrated Action Tool (VIA) to strengthen alignment between different levels of government. The Vertically Integrated Action Tool is a critical thinking tool that local government can use to evaluate the vertical integration status, barriers and enablers impacting their choice of SDG actions and ability to implement these. The tool’s analysis level produces a chart and table for trainers to view and interpret. The trainers learned about the specific vertical integration themes and types of vertical barriers that local governments should focus on in their engagements with other levels of government as part of implementing the SDGs. The trainers conducted the level of analysis for informing an appropriate response to the vertical integration challenges and opportunities that will affect the implementation of SDGs.

The fourth session focused on developing a Vertical Integration Response Strategy that addresses strategic/cross-cutting vertical integration needs. The trainers used the results charts from the VIA Tool Cross-cutting Analysis to identify which themes are associated with challenges in alignment between city and national government.

The fifth session concentrated on setting up a stakeholder engagement plan to frame the strategic purpose of consultations; setting up a process to identify stakeholders to be consulted; means; techniques, and consultation methods, and how the consultation process will be documented. Trainers explored different components of a stakeholder engagement strategy.

The last session delved into the Governance and Coordination for SDG Financing to identify which institutions and processes can best enhance the coherence of financing policymaking, building on what is already in place. Trainers learned a range of tools, including safeguards, screening tools, coherence checks, mainstreaming and incentives for inter-ministerial coordination to help facilitate the coherence of financing policies and support effective delivery.

To wrap up the ToT workshop, trainers engaged in a reflection and feedback session, where they had the opportunity to share their insights, ask questions, and provide suggestions for improvement. This session fostered a collaborative learning environment, enabling trainers to benefit from each other's experiences and expertise.

The ToT workshop provided a strong foundation for trainers to enhance their knowledge and skills in promoting effective governance practices and localizing the SDGs. The session successfully equipped trainers with practical tools and methodologies to create meaningful and impactful training sessions that would contribute to achieving the SDGs at the local level. The trainers appreciated UNPOG/UN DESA for the interactive workshops, which provided valuable training methodologies and facilitation techniques. Trainers assisted the UNPOG with the rest of the workshop.



3. Key Messages of the National Workshop on Effective Governance for Sustainable Development in Mongolia

3.1 Opening Session



Dr. Surenchimeg Dulamsuren, the Rector of the National Academy of Governance, emphasized that "While Mongolia has indeed implemented several projects and programmes in collaboration with the United Nations to address various challenges and promote development, it is evident that more efforts are required to ensure effective governance in Mongolia. The national workshop encompasses a wide range of discussions on how we can collaborate to achieve effective governance and the importance of aligning our efforts with governance."

Noting the successful containment of the COVID-19 pandemic in Mongolia and the country's ongoing economic recovery, UN Resident Coordinator in Mongolia **Mr. Tapan Mishra** highlighted that "the recent special edition report of the Secretary-General of [UN on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals](#) demonstrated that just 12 percent of the assessable SDGs targets are on track." Achieving SDGs will require strong political leadership, institutions, processes, willingness to change, and good, outcomes-based governance. The Government needs to align national policies with the breadth and complexity of the SDGs and must involve stakeholders in policy design, implementation, and results monitoring and evaluation. The goals cannot be peripheral to the Government. They must be integrated into governments' national sustainability and development plans and approached from the top down and the bottom up. Good governance will help by fostering an environment for collective action, ensuring that the actors involved are held accountable and dealing with emerging complex trade-offs between the goals. Integrated thinking (designing and implementation) and integrated reporting are fundamental to achieving good governance and driving positive outcomes. Given its importance in driving the efforts to meet the goals, governance has been referred to as the fourth pillar of sustainable development with social, environmental, and economic factors.

Tapan also emphasized that SDGs cannot be achieved by the Government or the UN only. SDGs are everyone's business. Stakeholders can serve as a powerful force for making changes. The success of SDG achievement depends largely on leadership and coordination by the Government for leveraging and ensuring the whole of society's efforts for SDGs. The capacity of civil servants to deliver quality services is instrumental for the government's ability to perform its functions; therefore, the training workshop organized jointly by UNPOG and NOAG is timely and extremely relevant for Mongolia. The UN Mongolia co-signed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023-2027 of Mongolia with the Government on 20 May 2022. The UNSDCF has three strategic priority

areas, and one of the priorities is focusing on “People-centered governance, the rule of law and human rights”.

Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), underscored the collective endeavor's importance to achieving the 2030 Agenda and Mongolia's Long-term Development policy Vision-2050. It demands strong and committed actions from governments at all levels of development and from all sectors of society. To accelerate the SDG implementation, he emphasized that public institutions and political leaders must deliver change quickly and at a larger scale than ever before. Improving people's experiences with public institutions and basic services is crucial to building trust in government, a fundamental principle of the Common Agenda launched by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, in September 2021.

Mr. Zhu cited United Nations Secretary-General's report titled "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet"¹ and urged the participants:

- To advance concrete, integrated and targeted policies and actions to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and end the war on nature, with a particular focus on advancing the rights of women and girls and empowering the most vulnerable to leave no one behind
- To strengthen national and sub-national capacity, accountability and public institutions to deliver accelerated SDG progress
- To recognize the central role of local and subnational governments in implementing the SDGs, including by designing national enabling frameworks to allow subnational governments to meet their devolved responsibilities and by strengthening their capacities and resources to advance the SDGs while contributing to crisis mitigation, adaptation, preparedness and recovery, anchored on the principles of multilevel governance, multistakeholder and multisectoral collaboration.

3.2 Setting the Scene: Workshop Introduction

Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs

The Curriculum on Governance for Sustainable Development Goals addresses the 11 Principles of Effective Governance. The Curriculum aims to provide a holistic and integrated framework for capacity development in governance and public institutions. It aims to promote a critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to achieving the SDGs.

The Curriculum on Governance is a comprehensive set of Training for Trainers Capacity Development Toolkits, which contain ready-to-use and customizable training material on key governance dimensions needed to advance the implementation of the SDGs. The topics covered by the Curriculum are:

- Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Transparency, Accountability and Ethics in Public Institutions
- Strengthening Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence

¹ <https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/SDG%20Progress%20Report%20Special%20Edition.pdf>

- Effective National to Local Public Governance for SDG Implementation
- Government Innovation for Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups
- Risk-informed Governance and Innovative Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience
- Innovation and Digital Government for Public Service Delivery
- DiGIT4SD: Digital Government Implementation
- E-Government for Women's Empowerment
- Integrated Policies and Policy Coherence for the SDGs
- Integrated Recovery Planning and Policy Coherence towards the Sustainable Development Goals

The Curriculum toolkits are available on the UN Public Administration Network's (UNPAN) website at: <https://unpan.un.org/capacity-development/curriculum-on-governance-for-the-sdgs>.

3.3 Sustainable Development Goals in Mongolia

Regional SDG Progress

Implementing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development has faced challenges due to various crises and conflicts, highlighting the urgent need for action. Despite these obstacles, countries in the Asia-Pacific region have shown commitment to sustainable development and have used the SDGs as a framework to navigate and recover from crises. However, overall progress in the region has been slow, with only 14.4% of the necessary progress achieved by the midpoint towards the 2030 target year. Without intensified efforts, the region is projected to miss 90% of the measurable SDG targets by 2030. Data availability for monitoring the SDGs has improved, but significant gaps remain, particularly for Goal 5, Goal 11, and Goal 16. Governments must renew their commitment to producing timely and high-quality data to effectively monitor and review progress towards the SDGs in Mongolia and across the region.

In summary, while there is an ongoing commitment to sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region, overall progress toward the SDGs has been slow. Efforts need to be multiplied to accelerate progress and achieve the goals by 2030. Data availability remains challenging, with significant gaps in monitoring indicators, particularly for specific goals. Renewed government commitments and improved data production are necessary to effectively monitor and review SDG progress, especially in gender equality, sustainable cities, peace, justice, and strong institutions in Mongolia.

Voluntary National Review (VNR) Good Practices and SDG Implementation in Mongolia

The Voluntary National Review of Mongolia focuses on leaving no one behind and identifies key issues and recommendations for future measures to intensify the implementation of the SDGs, particularly for households and populations at risk. Mongolia has improved its development policy and legal framework by revising and approving the Law on Development Policy, Planning, and Its Management. The long-term development policy "Vision-2050" has been aligned with the SDGs, and national targets and indicators have been defined for 16 goals, 154 targets, and 253 indicators. Partnerships for sustainable development have expanded, with increased initiatives from the public and private sectors, active participation of civil society organizations, and strengthened multilateral cooperation.

Mongolia has aligned the 17 global sustainable development goals into 16 goals and 134 targets, with 191 defined indicators. Progress has been made on 15 goals, but poverty reduction was assessed as regressive. Despite the efforts and progress achieved, it is anticipated that Mongolia may require additional time beyond 2030 to fully accomplish the set goals. As the world faces economic, social, and environmental development challenges, achieving the SDGs becomes even more crucial, emphasizing the need for further action and intensification of implementation.

To accelerate the further implementation and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is crucial to ensure the fundamental principle of sustainable development through various efforts, including:²

- Improving the monitoring and reporting system and the quality of assessment to ensure the implementation of the SDGs in line with medium- and short-term policy priorities;
- Clarifying the financing and investment environment for the implementation of the SDGs and using it as a means to stimulate multi-stakeholder participation;
- Strengthening basic social and economic capacities, including expanding international partnerships and regional and local cooperation aimed at reducing the negative impacts of global conflicts, infectious diseases, natural disasters, and climate change, managing risks and adapting to change, and ensuring the availability of resources; and
- Reducing disparities between rural (regional and local) and urban development by upholding the principle of leaving no one behind, creating transport infrastructure and logistics networks to increase the production and export of mining and non-mining products, and ensuring equal access to basic social services for the entire population.

United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2023-2027) Mongolia³

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2023-2027) represents the joint strategic planning framework for collaboration between the United Nations and the Government of Mongolia in the next five years. This was formulated based on multiple consultations with the Government, Parliament, civil society, private sector, banking sector, development partners, and the UN system (represented by resident and non-resident entities). The consultations built a shared development vision for the country to guide the UN's work and contributed to the formulation of key national priorities for the UNSDCF following the theory of change approach. The UNSDCF is closely aligned with the national development agenda as articulated in Vision 2050 with nine overarching strategic priorities to be implemented in three phases, the country's international commitments under the 2030 Agenda and international human rights obligations.

Mongolia has shown a strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda and has adopted the UN Secretary General's call for the "Decade of Action" and has set up institutional mechanisms in the form of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) at the Government level and the Multistakeholder Council for Sustainable Development (MCSD) at the Parliament level to review the SDG progress and steer the alignment of national development with the SDGs. The country has made significant progress in all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and

² <https://hlpf.un.org/countries/mongolia/voluntary-national-reviews-2023>

³ <https://mongolia.un.org/en/190088-united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-2023-2027-mongolia>

environmental. It has made rapid economic growth and considerable progress in achieving the SDGs in health, education and social protection.

The vision was articulated through stakeholder consultations and is intricately linked with the national priorities under Vision-2050 and SDGs. The UN system in Mongolia will contribute to achieving these three strategic priorities and four outcomes through technical assistance, capacity building, innovative pilot initiatives, policy advice, leveraging partnerships, catalyzing development finance, and social mobilization, among others.

3.4 Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence

Functional Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence to implement the SDGs

Policy coherence “systematically reduces conflicts and promotes synergies between and within different policy areas to achieve the outcomes associated with jointly agreed policy objectives”⁴ Recognition of this interdependence and interaction is a key first step in ensuring that public policies are coherent and will achieve their intended results. Policy coherence aims to identify trade-offs between policies, reduce negative impacts between policies, foster synergies between policies and make policies that mutually reinforce each other.

Policy coherence involves systematically identifying relevant linkages across the policy domains and considering those linkages in the design of policies; consistency across scales (from local to national) of implementation and domains; involvement of relevant stakeholders in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and provision adequate resources for implementation at all levels and all scales. However, separate and disconnected institutional entities often do policy formulation and assessments in isolation.

Improving coherence would require institutional collaboration across different dimensions:

- Horizontally - between policy areas/economic, social, governance and environmental aspects of policies and between ministries.
- Vertically – coherence between global goals to the national policy, which has implications with requires collaboration and cooperation between jurisdictions at national and local and national and international level.
- Transboundary considerations national policies need to be in line with international
- Institutionally – between goals, instruments and implementation

Yet, merely admitting that all SDGs are connected to each other is not a useful policy message. Addressing sustainability's social, economic, and ecological dimensions already faces resistance and antagonism among actors, each having conflicting interests, power relations and budgets.

In many organizations, there is still a discrepancy between the interconnectedness characteristic of the SDGs/ policies on the one hand and the silo character of ministries. Linear and siloed thinking is insufficient to tackle wicked problems and have a holistic approach to sustainable development. An overview of system maps that identifies the interaction with different actions and its type of connection (positive or negative) can be developed while engaging different stakeholders, which requires establishing institutional arrangements for collaboration, be they short-term or informal arrangements

⁴ Nilsson et al., 2012, p. 396 <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/eet.1589>

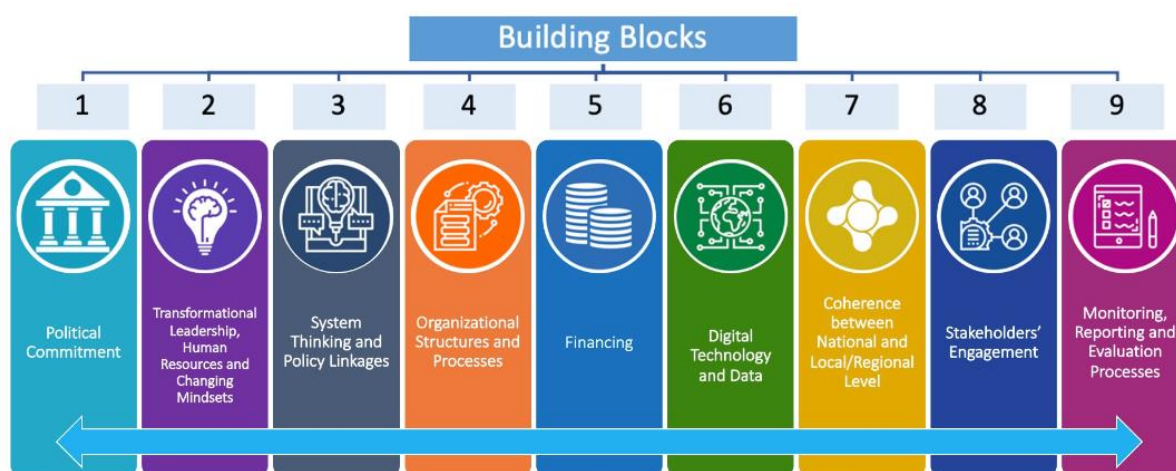
or structural institutional coordination mechanisms. However, the key is that these collaboration mechanisms are functional and not only procedural.

Readiness Assessment of Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence⁵⁶

UN DESA identified nine building blocks whereas the initial for ensuring coherent and effective implementation of the SDGs. The building blocks for policy coherence, as conceptualized by UN DESA for the Institutional Readiness Assessment for Policy Coherence, emphasize that not only structural elements are important (such as budgeting or organizational structures) but also political and behavioral elements. This broader conceptualization is crucial as changing formal structures and/or legislation does not necessarily result in the transformative change needed to move towards policy coherence for SDG implementation.

The Readiness assessment aims to assist Member States in strengthening their institutions for more integrated solutions. The assessment is based on UN DESA’s analytical work and the UN Environment Program’s draft methodology for Tier II Indicator 17.14.1. UN DESA/DPIDG is the custodian of the Program on Public Administration. This questionnaire aims to gather information from UN Member States in preparation for case studies on policy coherence to be included in a UN capacity development training toolkit. The questionnaire also supports government agencies in assessing their institutional readiness to support policy coherence. The questionnaire is a tool that contains questions to facilitate a participatory dialogue process among national ministries/agencies (and sub-national levels of government).

Building Blocks for Policy Coherence



Source: UN DESA

Access the [Readiness Assessment on Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) here.

⁵ Access the Readiness assessment via <https://unpan.un.org/node/708>

⁶ This outcome report will only cover building blocks 3, 4, and 6 which are discussed during the workshop.

Systems Thinking and Policy Coherence

Systems thinking and policy coherence are crucial for achieving the SDGs and effective policy implementation. Recognizing the interrelated nature of policies and systems is essential as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of their impact. However, many policies and programs fail to consider the systems required for accomplishing the goals. Countries can leverage policy coherence and align existing policies with the SDGs by using systems thinking tools. This approach involves envisioning a sustainable future, identifying priorities, mapping systems, formulating integrated policies, and developing implementation programs. Incorporating systems thinking into the policy cycle enhances policy effectiveness and supports sustainable development.

The systems thinking approach is most suitable to complex problems; it enables a bird's-eye view of the whole system by applying systems dynamics to the connections between the components of the system—in this situation, the environmental, social and economic or policy-related components—and understanding the behaviour or interests these connections generate. It also allows better engagement of stakeholders and their active participation in imagining plural and dynamic descriptions of pathways of societal change rather than a static vision of the future.

UN ESCAP (2017) elaborated on a methodology they had used with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) of the Government of Mongolia to describe, understand and measure relationships and interconnectivity among the SDGs and options for their application. It developed an analytical framework that applies the systems thinking approach to the analysis of the interlinkages among the targets of the 16 SDGs and separately with those of the eight targets for SDG 6 on water and sanitation. The framework describes how the many interlinkages and relationships are analyzed using the systems thinking approach of causal loop interactions combined with the theory of leverage points to identify effective and impactful interventions at the policy level. The systems thinking approach would allow the government to go beyond the linear analysis of the SDG interlinkages and describe the complex dynamics of natural and anthropogenic water cycles captured by SDG 6. It would also allow a closer look at the causal relationships and direction of the interlinkages for the modelling and then adjust with time and situation changes.

The 17 SDGs were analyzed as one indivisible system, with two layers of interaction between the goals. With SDG 6 at the core, water and sanitation were viewed as the means for the development and preservation of natural processes for the inner circle of SDGs (SDGs 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15), while the availability of water and sanitation was considered an enabler of sustainable development and human well-being for the outer circle (SDGs 1, 5, 4, 10, 16 and 17).

Using a comparative SDG targets matrix, the framework is based on a thorough initial analysis of the interlinkages between the eight targets of SDG 6 and the targets of the other 16 SDGs.⁷ That analysis focused on four questions:

- I. Is there a cause-and-effect relationship between the two intersecting targets within 1–2 degrees of causal influence?
- II. If there is a causal relationship within the criteria, is the relationship a direct causal relationship (immediate and direct causal influence) or an indirect causal relationship (not one-to-one, but must pass through other factors first)?
- III. What is the directional characteristic of the two related targets (parallel or inverse)?

⁷ See <https://sustdev.unescap.org/Files/resource/300add205ca64d4ee4b1c4d1116855ce.pdf>

IV. Is the water and sanitation target for each causal relationship being driven or influenced by the other target, or is the water target a driver or influencer of the other target?

The analysis then mapped out and visualized the direct linkages among all the targets identified in the relationship matrix using Kumu, the web-based diagram-mapping tool, resulting in an overall system causal diagram. Figure 11 shows a systems map of various causal interactions (linkages) among identified factors (elements) involved in Mongolia's water resources management system⁸.

This comprehensive methodology developed will assist policymakers in the following:

- reviewing existing institutional architecture and mandates to determine their relationship with the 17 SDGs;
- assessing the impacts of policies and identifying effective policy interventions (leverage points) for impactful investment and use of scarce resources; and
- stakeholder mapping and engagement in collectively developing the aspirational qualitative vision for societal change.

The systems thinking approach applied beyond the integration of SDG 6 on water and sanitation has proven particularly conducive to strengthening and enhancing the capacity of policymakers for adaptive governance to better address the complex challenges of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

Inter-ministerial Collaboration for National Development Planning and Priority Setting

The Voluntary National Reviews revealed a variety of national institutional arrangements for the implementation of the SDGs. This suggests that no single institutional model is intrinsically more appropriate than another but rather that countries choose the institutional structure that is best suited to their needs. In order to achieve progress on the SDGs, governments are required to work across multiple policy areas and implement whole-of-government approaches. In recognition of this fact, a substantial number of inter-ministerial committees and commissions have been created, demonstrating countries' interest in cross-sectoral collaboration. Many of these committees are chaired by the Head of State or Government. On the other hand, many countries have entrusted a specific ministry to spearhead implementation.

High-level national institutional arrangements for SDG implementation can be distinguished among four types of arrangements: type 1 arrangements are inter-ministerial entities under the Head of State or Government leadership; type 2 arrangements are inter-ministerial entities under the leadership of a specific ministry; type 3 arrangements refer to units in Head of State or Government office; type 4 arrangements refer to units located in a specific ministry. In addition, the figure distinguishes countries that created new institutions or mechanisms specifically for SDG implementation versus those that used pre-existing mechanisms.

The theory of change for policy coherence at the inter-ministerial level is based on the premise that improved access to knowledge and perspectives across government departments, better cooperation,

⁸ The capacity building project was initiated, developed and coordinated by the Government of Mongolia through the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in collaboration with the National Development Agency (NDA) [currently Ministry of Economy and Development] and the National Statistics Office (NSO) and with guidance and the technical assistance provided the UN ESCAP.

and more effective interfaces between domains will trigger insights and greater recognition of a broader set of priorities and interests. Improved access to knowledge can sometimes be achieved by getting the right people in the room, but it can also be important to incorporate scientific expertise and evidence in useable and accessible forms into the policymaking process. Including such expertise can lead to greater coordination and more effective policies, either at the goalsetting or sectoral instrument levels or through creating policies that embrace several domains.

Some policy recommendations:

- Participants are encouraged to continue filling out the readiness assessment within and across their ministries and potentially involve local government and/or non-government entities as it can help to trigger a dialogue about the needs and gaps related to institutional and policy coherence.
- Encourage participants to fill out the UNEP survey on policy coherence, which they can use to develop a baseline on the state of play in the different areas where improvements can be made. Progress can be measured and discussed annually and/or can be reflected in the country's next VNR. UN DESA can provide further support when or where needed.
- It is important to highlight that policy coherence has no end game. Depending on a country's institutional system, political structures and needs, it can prioritize single building blocks to move forward. The readiness assessment helps to identify strengths and weaknesses and demands.
- Prioritization of building blocks is a political decision.
- Add the slide on “two competing paradigms of national development planning” and add that “because national development planning is increasingly the result of negotiations and ongoing deliberation of goals, policies and actions to reach decisions that are technically desirable and politically feasible, national long term development planning – while applying a whole of government and a whole of society, the approach can trigger a focus on high impact policies to make better use of limited resources and systems thinking can help identify leverage policies or high impact policies that will accelerate the implementation of the SDGs.
- Participatory development of system maps based on qualitative approaches of systems thinking (like the causal loop diagram) can ensure an essential buy-in of stakeholders and can help develop a joint storyline for development and/or an entrance for a discussion on further diversification of economic growth.

Inter-ministerial Collaboration for Policy and Planning Development: Case of Mongolia

Mongolia is one of the first countries to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals. Constitution of Mongolia, Article 25.1.7 of the Constitution of Mongolia, states, " Development policy shall be sustainable." Law on Development Policy, Planning and its Management - Legal framework of the development policy coherence and comprehensiveness is formalized. By revising and approving the Law on Development Policy, Planning and its Management, Mongolia has improved its development policy, planning and its legal framework, and in this context, the long-term development policy "Vision-2050" has been approved by Parliament Resolution No. 52 (2020) in coordination with the SDGs.

Institutions for localizing the SDGs at the national level are being strengthened. Parliament's Subcommittee on the Sustainable Development Goals works under the Standing Committee on Economic Policy to incorporate the SDGs into government policies and decisions and ensure their implementation. The Multi-stakeholder Council for Sustainable Development was established in 2022 to support the work of the Subcommittee on Sustainable Development Goals and expand the multi-stakeholder cooperation and participation of Parliament, Cabinet, development partners, the private sector, CSOs and academics. It is responsible for intensifying the SDGs' planning, financing and implementation; strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system; providing expert recommendations for decision-making; and informing and disseminating information on the SDGs to the public.

The Ministry of Economy and Development (MED) incorporates the SDGs into the integrated national development policy and planning, ensuring its implementation, coordinating inter-sectoral coordination and evaluating implementation, and reporting. The ministry implements its functions through the development policy and planning process at the central, state and local administrative levels.

Data Governance and Data Management

National Data Governance Framework for Sustainable Development

The United Nations E-Government Survey, published by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, was prepared over two years following an established methodology. It examines how digital government can facilitate integrated policies and services across 193 UN Member States. The Survey supports countries' efforts to provide effective, accountable and inclusive digital services to all, bridge the digital divide and leave no one behind. In the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation report, the E-Government Survey is recognized as a key ranking, mapping and measuring tool supporting the digital transformation of countries.

Data are not evidence unless used to address specific questions in a given context.⁹ Decision makers seek evidence, but data are not evidence until they have been through an interpretive sieve.¹⁰ There is, by default, a unidirectional flow of logic from data to information to knowledge to evidence. Data are leveraged increasingly sophisticatedly (from aggregation to exploration and analytics) and can eventually be deployed for data-centric policymaking and decision-making. Data help decision-makers obtain the evidence they need, but data are not information unless structures or patterns can be detected in them, and information is not knowledge unless those patterns have been verified by statistical analysis and their implications understood; these processes are now better enabled through the increased availability of proven data technologies.

The need for data-centric insights to inform decision-making and policymaking is as evident today as when the notion was conceived decades ago. However, the lack of data, related technologies, and competencies has constituted a barrier to progress in this area. The situation has changed to a certain degree in recent years with the emergence of embedded analytics and self-service-analytics powered by evolved data technologies, including simplified data management, consolidated platforms that integrate

⁹ M. Buckland, "Information and society", The MIT Press Essential Knowledge series (2017).

¹⁰ I. Boyd, "The stuff and nonsense of open data in government", Scientific Data, vol. 4, No. 1 (2017).

critical capabilities, and new means of enabling analysis at scale.¹¹ With the availability of data and the application of data science, data-centric decisions can be made by policymakers who are non-technical analysts or specialists.

Data Governance Framework¹²

Effective data governance comprises a homogeneous set of principles and practices that guide the formal management of data assets within all public institutions (UN DESA, 2020). With the exponential increase in government data and the growing awareness of its enormous potential and attendant challenges and risks, the need for effective data governance and institutions has gained new urgency. All countries do not embrace the concept of a data governance framework.

Data governance is supported by the dynamic relationship between policies, institutions, people, processes, and enabling technologies. The first layer is the principles based on accountability, effectiveness, and inclusiveness, which are the core 16 principles of the SDG. The first and second pillars highlight the importance of legitimizing and institutionalizing policies for effective leadership. The third pillar—the data ecosystem—reflects the relationship between data processes and public engagement, and the fourth pillar highlights the adaptive application of technologies in supporting data use and governance.

The primary aim of good data governance is to ensure that all data and data-related processes are trustworthy and standardized. With appropriate data governance, decisions based on available data do not place the government or the public at risk because of low data quality, data falsification, data obsolescence, or security or privacy threats. Essentially, data governance provides a focal point—a single source of truth—that allows Governments to guide data use and policy development in a coordinated manner.

Asia-Pacific Digital Transformation

Asia and the Pacific region, particularly South-East Asia, experience significant digital division. The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the shift to a digital-first approach, resulting in substantial benefits. However, these advantages have not been distributed equally, leading to new development gaps and reinforcing socioeconomic inequalities within and between countries. The challenge lies in shaping a digital future that prioritizes inclusive development paradigms, policy frameworks, and collaboration while ensuring fair and equitable sharing of digital dividends.

ESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) has undertaken various initiatives and resolutions to address ICT and digital agendas, including connectivity, digital skills, and cooperation. The Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) initiative, guided by the AP-IS Action Plan 2022-2026, focuses on connectivity, digital technologies and applications, and

¹¹ Embedded analytics is the integration of analytic content and capabilities within applications (see <https://www.logianalytics.com/definitiveguidetoembedded/what-is-embedded-analytics/>); self-service analytics is defined as a simple form of business intelligence, where business users are empowered to access relevant data, perform queries and generate reports themselves with the help of easy-to-use self-service tools (see <https://www.kdnuggets.com/2016/04/advantages-risks-self-service-analytics.html>)

¹² Access the 2020 and 2022 UN E-government Survey. <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2020> and <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2022>

digital data. These efforts aim to facilitate digital transformation and monitor its regional and country-level progress to inform appropriate policies and regulatory frameworks.

ESCAP has developed a digital transformation framework consisting of three stages to support digital transformation: foundation, adoption, and acceleration. The framework encompasses five key actors: network infrastructure, government, business, people, and ecosystems. It serves as a basis for tracking the transformation process, identifying driving forces, and sharing good practices. Additionally, ESCAP's e-Resilience Monitoring Dashboard aids disaster risk management and adaptation by assessing e-resilience using ICT indicators concerning hazard and exposure indices.

Research Results on SDG - 16.7.2- Indicator: Measuring the Inclusiveness and Responsiveness of Public Decision-Making as Perceived by the General Population in Mongolia

According to a random survey conducted among 4,325 adults in Mongolia, 36.6 percent responded that government considers their opinions when making decisions. Fifty-one percent of the surveyors gave a negative answer, which is the same result as the previous pilot survey conducted by the research team in the Sukhbaatar district of the capital city. The survey, recommended by the United Nations and tested in many countries worldwide, was conducted nationwide by the NAOG and the National Statistics Office, connecting it with the 2021 Household Socio-Economic Survey data. This study conducted using the UN methodology has created an opportunity to define the basic level of indicators for Sustainable Development Goals in Mongolia and compare it with the world data.

3.5 Effective National to Local Governance for SDG Implementation

The United Nations emphasizes strengthening public institutions and services at all levels to support sustainable development. Policy coherence, integration, and collaboration between governments, regional and local authorities, and various stakeholders are key to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Principles for Effective Governance highlight the importance of ongoing improvements in governance capabilities to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Implementing the Agenda requires coordination and cooperation between national and local governments, with the involvement of local communities. Local governments play a vital role in SDG achievement, as they are closest to the people and deliver essential services. Effective public governance, including streamlined stakeholder engagement and participatory decision-making processes, is crucial for responding to challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

Mainstreaming SDG into Local and Regional Development Planning: Trends and Emerging Issues

While the SDGs are global, their achievement will depend on our ability to make them a reality in our cities and regions. All of the SDGs have targets directly related to local and regional governments' responsibilities, particularly their role in delivering basic services. That's why local and regional governments must be at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

Importance of integrating the SDGs into Local and Regional Development Planning

- Alignment with Global Agendas
- Tailoring to Local Contexts
- Local Ownership and Participation
- Multi-Dimensional Approach

- Monitoring and Accountability

SDGs Principle for Planning: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has a set of fundamental principles that can orient the entire planning process. In this sense, the 2030 Agenda presents a framework that turns planning into a transformative and catalyst tool to change the development process of a territory. Likewise, the 2030 Agenda allows one to reflect on the policies and mechanisms in place in a territory, how they can be better aligned to sustainable development objectives and, finally, how they can better reach the people and their needs. In this context, planning, when linked to the principles of the SDGs, can potentially change the perception and the way things are done. Some principles of the 2030 Agenda are cross-cutting and interlinked with all local development planning tasks.

Below are some of the principles that are inherent to the planning process:

- Leave no one behind
- Integrated nature
- Partnership-based approach
- Multi-level governance
- Accountability

Current Trends in mainstreaming SDGs: Countries are integrating the SDGs into their national policies and development plans, aligning strategies, and establishing monitoring mechanisms. The private sector is recognizing the significance of the SDGs and integrating them into their operations, adopting sustainable practices, and engaging in responsible business models. Local governments are tailoring global goals to local contexts, setting localized targets, and developing action plans for implementation. Innovative financing mechanisms are being explored to supplement traditional funding sources for meeting the financing needs of the SDGs. Multi-stakeholder partnerships are being formed to leverage expertise, resources, and knowledge for SDG implementation. Efforts are being made to improve data collection, analysis, and reporting mechanisms to track progress toward the SDGs. Education and awareness campaigns are being conducted to increase public understanding and engagement, particularly among the youth.

Challenges in mainstreaming SDGs

- Lack of political will
- Limited resources
- Resistance to change
- Complex and interconnected issues
- Inadequate data and monitoring
- Limited capacity of city authorities
- Lack of continuity or interruptions following regular government reshuffles and/or resulting from the electoral cycle process

Strengthening Local and National Coordination for the SDGs – the role of VNRs and VLRs¹³

Local and regional governments increasingly engage in their own subnational reviews, so-called Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs), which have proven useful for cities and regions to foster SDG localization and demonstrate local governments' capacity and commitments. Unlike the VNRs, local reviews do not directly have an official basis in the 2030 Agenda or other intergovernmental agreements, even though the 2030 Agenda underlines in several places the importance of governments working closely with regional and local authorities on its implementation. However, the process of undertaking these subnational reviews provides multiple benefits to the entities engaging in them and has the potential to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. While subnational reviews of the 2030 Agenda implementation contribute to attaining the Goals in their own right and have intrinsic value as part of the implementation process, they can also contribute to the national-level Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and reinforce vertical coherence.

Growing numbers of local governments are carrying out VLRs. The practice of carrying out VLRs is being taken up by capital and large cities, smaller cities, provinces, and districts, including in rural areas. Member States are also increasingly benefiting from VLRs in their national-level reviews. While VLRs lack the official status of VNRs, there has been increased recognition at the international level, including at the High-level Political Forum.

Sustainable development goals localization progress in Mongolia: Challenges and Opportunities

To localize and implement the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Mongolia continues to make efforts and progress in development policies, planning and institutional systems.

Regional development policy and legal environment

Progress and Achievements

- Mongolian Law on Administrative and Territorial Units of Mongolia and their Governance
- Mongolian Law on Development Policy and Planning
- Local development policy documents

Challenges and Opportunities

- Development Vision - 2050, Main Guidelines for Five Years Development, New Revival Policy, Policy programs and actions targeted for local development in the National Government Development Program.
- Gaps in reflecting actions to coordinate intra-regional and key regional development issues in the above documents.
- Need to undertake actions aimed at resolving issues related to the regional economy, social development and environment, and factors affecting the concentration of people in UB city.

¹³ UN DESA maintains a repository of VLRs submitted to it by local governments on its website at: <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/voluntary-local-reviews>

Intra-sectoral and coordination issues limit regional and local development policy implementation.

- Increased regional and social disparities and lack of choices and opportunities in local and rural areas.
- Intensified migration from local areas to UB city and increased urbanization process at the national level.
- Insufficient legal and economic capabilities of local towns and unclarity of their contributions to local development.
- Unclear policy and planning environment for the integrated development of vertical and horizontal infrastructure, associated border crossings, free trade zones, and transport-logistical networks.
- Insufficient legal and policy environment and structures for materializing regional development policy.
- Lack of mechanisms and tools to attract relocation of people, entities and investment to regions and local areas.
- Insufficient policy for the food and manufacturing industry at regional and local levels.
- Weak resilience and adaptation of the livestock sector to climate change and overcoming vulnerability to risks and shocks.
- The existence of population and social groups is vulnerable to being left out of regional and local development.

Challenges and opportunities (at regional & local levels)

- Define the systems for regional development legal regulations, governance, implementation structures and financing;
- Define the processes and systems aligned with “town legal status” based on socio-economic needs, and improve accessibility to economic, social and cultural services in accordance with the designated urban or rural settlements;
- Intensify industrial production and export/ import turnover and strengthen planning for integrated vertical and horizontal infrastructure development, associated border crossings, free trade zones, and transport-logistical networks.
- Apply spatial distribution planning content principles and spatial management tools in defining the priority economic sectors and policy directions in social service sectors such as higher education, innovations, sciences, health, and culture;
- Define the inbound and outbound socio-economic integration cluster regions among the national level cities and large urban settlements, and create plans for a unified networking system for trade and service, industrial integration and specialization;
- Create spatial cluster connections for economic and infrastructure development at regional and local levels;
- Identify the legal, economic and investment tools to define the development of spatial distribution planning and geographical locations, which will promote the attraction of people and resources to the regions and announce an open tender to implement these actions among the entities and organizations.

Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and its Importance for SDG Implementation at the Local level

According to the UN DESA, achieving sustainable development at the sub-national level requires implementing and promoting 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development that include competence, sound policymaking, collaboration, integrity, transparency, independent oversight, non-discrimination, participation, subsidiarity, and equity. Implementing effective governance can empower governments to ensure no one or no place gets left behind. The principles are interconnected and reflect the relevance of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to achieving sustainable development that leaves no one behind.

The biggest challenges for many small locals, intermediary and regional governments remain a lack of technical capacity, access to resources and data, and limited competencies to advance global commitments while fulfilling routine government functions that improve the quality of life for all. The challenges of the sub-national governments can be classified into four dimensions¹⁴:

- a) Contextual conditions: the judicial and socioeconomic situation of the country, historical determinants, including those pertaining to colonization and its aftermath, and urbanization trends.
- b) Structural conditions: the position of the local government vis-à-vis the national government, for example, the degree of decentralization in terms of tasks that the local government is responsible for, but also in terms of its financial autonomy.
- c) Institutional conditions: the size of local government, its internal organization and budget situation, the availability of robust data on key economic variables, personnel, financial management and the quality of infrastructure.
- d) Human resource conditions: the quality of leadership, the availability of skills in economic and policy analysis, budgeting, financial management and procurement, well-trained staff for budgeting and personnel management and skills in monitoring, reporting, auditing, survey design and evaluation

According to the UN ECOSOC (E/C.16/2022/5), weaknesses in leadership, governance, management, and the quality of public services lead to a lack of trust in those institutions that still exist in the local and regional governments. However, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, local and regional governments have been on the front lines, demonstrating their capacity to innovate and manage this unprecedented crisis in recent history alongside other stakeholders. The 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development and associated with 62 strategies are well placed to support subnational governments in dealing with the myriad challenges they face, taking the SDGs forward at the subnational level.

Multi-level Governance and Subnational Finance in Asia and the Pacific

Asia and the Pacific are home to around two-thirds of the world's subnational governments and have many sub-municipal governments and asymmetric governance arrangements. The size of subnational governments varies significantly across countries regarding the number of inhabitants and the geographical area represented. Many countries across Asia and the Pacific have recently undergone decentralization and territorial reforms driven by diverse aims and objectives. Subnational governments

¹⁴ Michel S. de Vries, *Understanding Public Administration* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 68.

represent an important share of public expenditure and revenue, although there are large variations, and many SNGs have less fiscal autonomy.

Improving multi-level governance frameworks and strengthening subnational government finances will help to achieve development objectives.

Preliminary Policy Opportunities¹⁵

- **Responsibilities:** Clearly define responsibilities across levels of government.
- **Co-ordination:** Enhance co-ordination mechanisms across levels of government (vertical) and support cross-jurisdictional co-operation (horizontal).
- **Transfers:** Make the most of inter-governmental transfer systems as a reliable source of revenue for subnational governments, including by carefully designing grants and equalization arrangements to address disparities and promote tax and development efforts of subnational governments (e.g., performance-based grants, fiscal equalization transfers).
- **Own-Source Revenues:** Secure a sufficient, stable and balanced basket of revenues by harnessing physical and financial assets and further expanding own-source revenues such as property taxes.
- **Expenditure:** Strengthen subnational expenditure autonomy to support the effective design and delivery of public services, enhance accountability and improve budget management, among other benefits.
- **Debt:** Support subnational governments' effective use of debt by adopting effective fiscal responsibility frameworks, building institutional capacity, exploring the use of financial intermediaries and ensuring sufficient and stable funding sources are available.
- **Capacity:** Build the institutional capacity of subnational governments alongside decentralizing responsibilities, including revenue collection, public expenditure, investment, asset management and debt management.
- **Financial Management:** Enhance public financial management and public investment management by strengthening the link between planning, investment programmes and budgets to help deliver a pipeline of investable projects.
- **Priority-Based Budgeting:** Support emerging priority-based (e.g., green budgeting) and participatory budgeting practices to enhance local accountability and support prioritization according to strategic objectives.
- **Transparency:** Improve collection and transparency of data on SNG finances to better support subnational governments' actions, particularly for data related to own-source revenue, assets and debt.

Korea's COVID-19 Response Framework and Practices

The Republic of Korea (ROK) successfully controlled the surge of COVID-19 cases by implementing effective measures and drawing on lessons learned from past experiences, particularly the MERS outbreak in 2015. Institutional and legal changes were made to enhance the authority and autonomy of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) and promote public-private partnerships. Risk communication and public trust were emphasized, while effective cooperation between central and local governments was recognized as crucial. ICTs played a vital role, enabling virtual meetings and

¹⁵ Source: OECD, Forthcoming, Multi-level governance and subnational finance in Asia and the Pacific: A regional analysis from the 3rd edition of the SNG-WOFI

reducing the need for physical contact. The response was based on principles of openness, transparency, civic engagement, and innovation and implemented through the K-quarantine approach, which included a comprehensive quarantine system, outreach campaigns, testing, and contact tracing.

Vertical Integration for SDG Implementation

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires coordination among different levels of government. This is necessary because many targets rely on aggregating sub-national outcomes, making coherent action essential. Issues such as pollution reduction, waste management, public transport, and inequality require cooperation across government levels. Local governments play a crucial role in specific SDG objectives, as they have been assigned responsibilities in areas like health, education, infrastructure, and environmental resilience. Considering the local context is vital for effective implementation and monitoring. Successful vertical integration involves multi-level governance, linking transnational, national, regional, and local institutions. This approach allows for stakeholder involvement, reduces implementation costs, and fosters policy ownership and innovation.

Effective Stakeholder Engagement for the 2030 Agenda

Stakeholder and community engagement aim to work across stakeholders, organizations, and communities of interest to shape the decisions or actions of community members, stakeholders or organizations concerning a problem, opportunity or outcome. The word ‘stakeholder’ defines individuals, groups, organizations or political entities with a specific stake in the outcome of a decision or impacted by a policy, project or proposition.¹⁶

The nature of the ‘core businesses’ of each type of stakeholder leads to quite different priorities, values and attributes. In addition to these general attributes, each stakeholder brings different resources, competencies, and aspirations that can potentially – through successful partnering – be brought together around a common vision. Stakeholder engagement focuses on building relationships. It influences various outcomes through consultation, communication, negotiation, compromise, and relationship building.¹⁷ Quality stakeholder engagement is critical to the fundamental principle of the 2030 Agenda, ensuring no one is left behind. Quality stakeholder engagement is recognized as Purposeful, Influential, Iterative and Collaborative.

Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Implement the 2030 Agenda in Asia and the Pacific

The Twinning Programme is a collaborative initiative that connects countries in the region preparing their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the same year. ESCAP provides financial, facilitation, and coordination support to link these countries during their VNR process. The Programme promotes peer learning through study tours, online workshops, and joint presentations at global and regional forums. Its goal is to strengthen VNR preparation by facilitating the exchange of good practices, lessons, and knowledge among partner countries. The Twinning Programme adopts a multi-stakeholder approach, involving not only government officials and statistical offices but also civil society organizations, the private sector, human rights institutions, and parliamentarians. This inclusive

¹⁶ UNESCAP & IAP2 (2018). [Effective Stakeholder Engagement for the 2030 Agenda](https://www.unescap.org/resources/training-reference-material-effective-stakeholder-engagement-2030-agenda).
<https://www.unescap.org/resources/training-reference-material-effective-stakeholder-engagement-2030-agenda>

¹⁷ www.apm.org.uk

approach aims to enhance SDG implementation, improve practices, and foster leadership in sustainable development beyond the VNR process.

Stakeholder Engagement for SDG Implementation in the Philippines

The Philippines has integrated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development plans, including the Philippine Development Plan (PDP), 2023-2028, and sectoral development plans. The Development Budget Coordination Committee (DBCC) has established a sub-committee to monitor SDG progress, review related programs and policies, and provide recommendations. The country has also created a Stakeholder's Chamber to facilitate partnerships and resource management for SDG achievement. The Philippine Congress has established SDG committees to ensure legislative responsiveness to sustainable development. At the sub-national level, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) have issued guidelines for local governments to create programs that contribute to SDG targets. Regional Development Plans (RDPs) are important for addressing regional disparities and aligning with the national development agenda. The Philippines emphasizes the need for localized implementation of the SDGs to account for its diverse localities and geographical realities.

Setting Up a Stakeholder Engagement Plan

A stakeholder engagement plan can be used, among other things, to frame the strategic purpose of consultations; set up a process to identify stakeholders to be consulted; means; techniques and methods for consultation (face-to-face workshops, online platforms, focus groups, written comments); and how the consultation process will be documented. Consideration could be given throughout the process as to how to support reporting by relevant stakeholders and how those contributions will be reflected in public policies for implementing and following up the 2030 Agenda at national and sub-national levels. Awareness-raising efforts encompass a range of activities, such as simplifying and translating the SDGs into local languages and including the SDGs in school and university teaching programmes. Participants were engaged in an activity on setting up a stakeholder engagement plan.

Governance and coordination for SDG financing

Governance and Coordination relate to the institutions and processes required for formulating and implementing financing policies. More specifically, it involves identifying which institutions and processes can best enhance the coherence of financing policymaking, building on what is already in place. Experience to date suggests that governance framework for financing' should strive to fulfill three functions: commitment and leadership (both at the political and technical level), access to knowledge and perspectives (of state and non-state actors), and coordination (both within government and beyond).

Importance of Governance and Coordination for Financing SDGs

- It is the driver of overall effectiveness, underpinning all stages of financing policy-making.
- Ensures country ownership and leadership.
- Strengthens intra-governmental collaboration.
- Facilitates multi-stakeholder participation. Enhances coordination with development partners.

- Helps overcome silos in existing approaches to estimating financing needs, identifying financing challenges and opportunities, and designing and implementing financing policies and reforms.

While the form of governance for financing will vary across countries, early experiences highlight that governance for financing should strive to enable the three key drivers of coherence that are the same across all contexts.

Commitment and leadership from the top (both at the political and technical level) provide the overall vision and direction around which increased coherence can be pursued and ensures ownership, broad-based buy-in and participation, sustained momentum over time (including across political cycles), and adequate resourcing of INFF-related efforts and activities.

Access to knowledge and perspectives ensures that policymakers have the information they need to make decisions on the suitability of different financing policy options and their impact on sustainable development; that finance providers (public, private, national, international) can be held to account; and that the broad set of needs, priorities and interests that affect the success of INFFs are recognized and addressed.

Coordination among different stakeholders (both within and beyond government) maximizes synergies, reduces duplication, enables the management of tradeoffs, and minimizes contradictions or inconsistencies in formulating and implementing financing policies in different areas. Coordination among stakeholders is also critical to facilitate a coherent approach to financing that reduces risk across economic, social, and environmental systems and ensures that financing priorities and policies in one area do not create risk in another.

Financing Mechanisms for SDGs in Mongolia

Mongolia's National Committee for Sustainable Development (NCSD) has endorsed the draft Integrated National Financing Strategy (INFS), positioning the country as an early adopter of this strategy. The INFS aims to mobilize and align resources for sustainable development, addressing the financing gap of MNT 126 trillion (USD 43 billion) by 2030. The strategy recognizes the importance of diverse funding sources, including private sector investments, to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sectors such as mining, agriculture, and the environment are critical, while areas like industry, innovation, renewable energy, health, education, and climate change require additional financial support. The strategy outlines 30 policy areas, including budgeting, debt management, public-private partnerships, and sustainable finance, to facilitate the implementation of SDGs in Mongolia.

3.6 Transparency, Accountability and Ethics in Public Institutions to Achieve the SDGs

Integrity is a value to strive for and a principle by which a public servant consistently aligns their actions with his role in serving the public. Another key difference between public and private organizations is that the former is funded largely by obligatory contributions from people, namely, taxes and fees. This means that individuals have no choice but to finance the services instead of free choice based on consumer decisions in the private sector. Therefore, the legitimacy of the public service depends on people's trust. The fundamental principle is that governments should serve the people, and the people should be the beneficiaries of governing. Integrity, Transparency and Independent Oversight principles

are associated with Accountability¹⁸ and can contribute to strengthening the accountability of institutions.

Strengthening policies, Laws and Strategies in line with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) takes a comprehensive approach to combating corruption by emphasizing prevention and enforcement measures. The Convention criminalizes corrupt behaviors, such as bribery, embezzlement, and money laundering, in the public and private sectors. It also focuses on international cooperation, including recovering stolen assets and mutual legal assistance among states. UNCAC guides law enforcement methods, including the freezing and confiscating of corrupt proceeds, witness protection, and cooperation with national authorities and the private sector. Prevention measures outlined in the Convention include transparency in political funding, codes of conduct for public officials, and the prevention of conflicts of interest. The recovery of stolen assets is also crucial, with provisions to detect and prevent the transfer of corrupt proceeds and facilitate their return. Overall, the Convention aims to eliminate safe havens for corrupt individuals and reduce the impact of corruption through prevention and enforcement efforts.

National Anti-Corruption Strategy and the Role of Ethics in the Fight Against Corruption

Mongolia has implemented the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and its Action Plan, developed with stakeholder consultations by the Independent Authority Against Corruption (IAAC). The strategy aligns with Vision 2050, focusing on smart and sustainable governance, human development, and cooperation between the government, private sector, and civil society. It includes 10 goals, 45 objectives, and 224 targeted activities to combat corruption, enhance public service integrity, promote citizen participation, and strengthen state institutions. Existing laws support the strategy and complement the government's "5-Sh" anti-corruption initiative, with additional laws proposed for whistleblowing protection, campaign finance reform, and transparency in state-owned companies. The aim is to prevent corruption at all levels and foster Mongolia's open, transparent, and responsible society.

Good Practices and Tools for Accountable Ethical, Transparent, and Inclusive Societies

Corruption is the abuse of power for personal gain and has significant global implications. Transparency International estimates that trillion dollars are lost to corruption yearly, amounting to 5% of global GDP. SDG16 recognizes the importance of combating corruption, and a multi-pronged approach involving prevention, detection, and sanctions is necessary. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, hinders economic development, and creates instability. The fight against corruption requires the collective efforts of individuals, the public sector, the private sector, civil society, the media, and communities. While various tools and instruments exist, sustained and effective reforms are limited, and there is a growing emphasis on public integrity and leveraging technology for innovative solutions. Mainstreaming anti-corruption efforts within national development plans and SDG sectors is crucial, but implementation experiences vary.

¹⁸ United Nations Economic and Social Council (2018). Principles of effective governance for sustainable development. Official Records, 2018 Supplement No. 24. Retrieved from https://publicadministration.un.org/Portals/1/Images/CEPA/Principles_of_effective_governance_english.pdf (last accessed on September 23, 2020).

4. Action Plan for Accelerating Change

Throughout the workshop, participants were engaged in the following exercises facilitated by DESA colleagues.

Readiness Assessment on Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Participants worked together using the Readiness Assessment on Institutional Arrangement for Policy Coherence tool, which is a comprehensive evaluation of a country's readiness and capacity to align its institutional arrangements with the goals of the 2030 Agenda. This assessment aims to identify strengths, gaps and areas for improvement in the country's governance structure, policy coordination mechanisms and decision-making processes. It assesses the level of integration and coherence across different sectors and levels of government to effectively implement and monitor the SDGs. By conducting this assessment, participants can identify priority areas for policy reforms, enhance coordination mechanisms and strengthen institutional capacities to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to sustainable development. Participants focused on the following building blocks:

- Building Block 1: Political Commitment
- Building Block 3: System Thinking and Policy Linkages
- Building Block 4: Organizational Structures and Processes

Effective National to Local Governance for SDG Implementation: Participants were engaged in the following activities to strengthen the effective governance mechanisms to deliver SDGs.

- Activity on Governance Self-Assessment: It offered practical learning to enable governments to establish or strengthen the necessary governance arrangements to effectively implement and mainstream the SDGs. The objective of the assessment includes identifying potential governance challenges and opportunities for effective implementation of the SDGs, informing both the design and delivery of the plan, developing priority or immediate actions that can be taken to address challenges or exploit opportunities, as well as longer-term actions for strengthening governance; and enabling a government to track its governance parameters over time.
- Activity on Vertical Integration for SDG Implementation using Cross-cutting Analysis: It mapped out levels of alignment between local and national governments on SDG implementation. The results can inform the development of ambitious, implementation-focused SDG implementation.
- Activity on Setting up a Stakeholder Engagement Plan: It is used, among other things, to frame the strategic purpose of consultations; set up a process to identify stakeholders to be consulted; means; techniques and methods for consultation; and how the consultation process will be documented.
- Activity on Promoting Transparency, Accountability and Ethical Behaviour in Public Institutions

Developing an Action Plan

Participants actively developed action plans based on their various work-related departments/agencies. Participants will continue to develop and finalize their draft action plans with approval from their various organizations' heads to be cleared for implementation. UN DESA, NAOG and UNRCO Mongolia continue to follow up and provide the needed guidance to participants in the finalization and approval process.

NAOG will create a panel dedicated to the presentation and evaluation of action plans developed by participants. This panel will provide a platform for showcasing the proposed strategies and initiatives, allowing for constructive feedback, peer learning and recommendations for further improvement.



5. Insights, Takeaways, Way Forward and Evaluation

Insights from the workshop

The workshop has provided a crucial platform for government officials, NAOG trainers, and other stakeholders to come together and exchange ideas on effective governance practices for sustainable development. The challenges faced by Mongolia in achieving sustainable development are significant, and it is through collaborative efforts like this workshop that Mongolia can address these challenges more effectively. Participants were excited about the diverse topics covered during the workshop, including institutional arrangements for policy coherence, effective national-to-local governance, and transparency, accountability, and ethics in public institutions to achieve the SDGs.

Takeaways for Participants' Organizations

As part of the key takeaways, participants further reiterated that having discovered more about the SDGs, they will try and continue to:

- Practice the Systems thinking approach in work.
- Coordinate SDG goals with policy planning.
- Developing national plans, using systems thinking and a dynamic systems model, considering institutional and policy coherence, and engaging stakeholders.
- Contribute to implementing the sector's long, and mid-term development planning.
- Engage multi-stakeholders and collaborate with them in future activities.
- Apply the principle of leaving no one behind in everything.
- Prepared action plan /Cabinet Secretariat of the Government/. Implement it.
- Use the toolkits and training materials when analyzing the policy documents.
- Elaborate on the development programme to align with the SDG goals and get approved at the Government and parliament levels.
- Share the knowledge with colleagues at work.
- Reflect on the SDG-related activities in work.
- Collaborate with UNPOG to organize further in-depth training, work on developing indicators for Vision 2050, and apply exercises and tools to my classes: the kind of exercises such as Vertical integration.

Way Forward and Replication of the Workshop

NAOG Roadmap

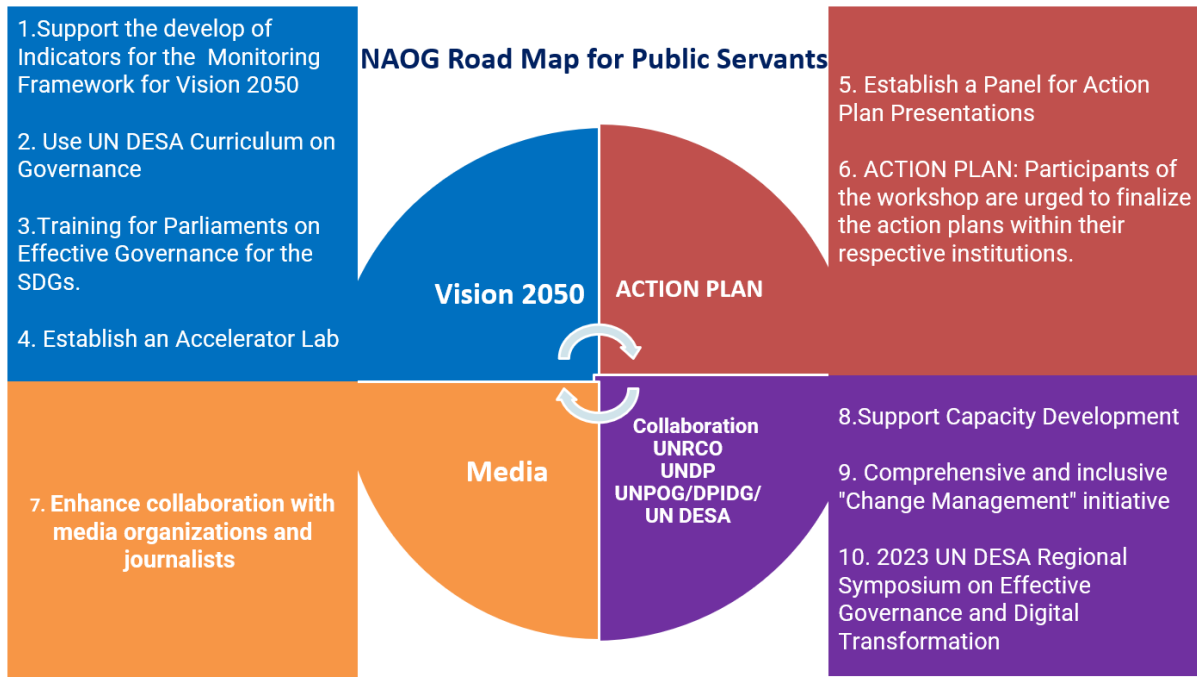
VISION 2050	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Support the development of Indicators for the Monitoring Framework for Vision 2050 Indicators: Work towards developing indicators and establishing a comprehensive monitoring framework to track progress towards implementing Mongolia Vision 2050.2. Review and Customize UN DESA Curriculum on Governance: Thoroughly assess the UN DESA Curriculum on Governance and identify specific topics of particular interest and relevance to the workshop in 2023.
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	<p>The selected topics will serve as the basis for a tailored training program to enhance participants' knowledge and skills in governance practices.</p> <p>3. Conduct a Training Session for Parliaments on Effective Governance for the SDGs: Organize a dedicated training session for parliamentary representatives focusing on Vision 2050 and the application of changing mindsets and strategic foresight in policy planning. This session will equip parliamentarians with the necessary understanding and tools to effectively contribute to the realization of Vision 2050 through informed decision-making and legislative actions.</p> <p>4. Establish an accelerator Lab: Learn from UNDP Accelerator Lab to support capacity development for Vision of 2050.</p>
Action Plan	<p>5. Establish a Panel for Action Plan Presentations: Create a panel dedicated to presenting and evaluating action plans developed by participants. This panel will provide a platform for showcasing the proposed strategies and initiatives, allowing for constructive feedback, peer learning and recommendations for further improvement.</p> <p>6. Finalize the Action Plans: The workshop participants are urged to finalize the action plans within their respective institutions. These plans will serve as important roadmaps for implementing Vision 2050 and should be comprehensive, realistic and aligned with the identified indicators and goals.</p>
MEDIA	<p>7. Enhance collaboration with media organizations and journalists to ensure efficient reporting and enhance public awareness of disaster preparedness and mitigation and the overall implementation of SDGs.</p>
Collaboration with UN IN MONGOLIA, UNPOG/DPIDG/ UN DESA	<p>8. Continue collaborating with United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO), UNDP and UN DESA/DPIDG/UNPOG to support public servants' capacity development in Vision 2050 implementation. By playing a crucial role in developing indicators, offering assistance in designing and implementing the training program for parliaments and supporting the design of the session for the presentation of action plans to the panel.</p> <p>9. Support the development of a comprehensive and inclusive "Change Management" initiative that seeks to transform the operations of the government, enhancing its efficiency, effectiveness and transparency. This initiative will focus on streamlining processes, improving service delivery, and fostering a culture of accountability and innovation within the public sector.</p> <p>10. Participate in the 2023 UN DESA Regional Symposium on Effective Governance and Digital Transformation: Invite government officials from Mongolia to come to NAOG and attend the Regional Symposium online. UN DESA Regional Symposium centered around the accelerators for the 2030 Agenda. This symposium will foster a deeper understanding of the interplay between governance and digital advancements enabling more effective and inclusive governance practices.</p>

Some considerations for support from the UN in Mongolia and UN DESA on Governance

- Provide advisory services and resource persons for Capacity Development on Governance for Government Officials/Parliamentarians in Mongolia.
- Connecting with other UN entities/partners for developing indicators for Vision 2050
- Support the comprehensive and inclusive "Change Management" initiative.
- Share Mongolia's experience at the upcoming Regional Symposium on Effective Governance and Digital Transformation (17-19 October 2023)

NAOG Roadmap for Public Servants



6. National Workshop for Media Officials on Risk-informed Communication for Reporting on Emergencies and Disaster Risk Reduction

6.1 Introduction

Background

The National Workshop for Media Officials on Risk-informed Communication for Reporting on Emergencies and Disaster Risk Reduction was successfully organized on 13 June in response to the expressed capacity development request from MONTSAME - Mongolian National News Agency. MONTSAME, with over a hundred years of impactful history, is known worldwide as the prime source of information and knowledge on Mongolia and the only media organization with a presence in all 21 provinces of Mongolia. As a national powerhouse for information, MONTSAME is known as a patron and initiator of numerous development projects for Mongolian media personnel.

Objective of the Workshop

The Workshop aimed to strengthen the capacities of media officials and reporters to promote risk-informed communication for reporting on emergencies and disaster risk reduction to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Mongolia is expected to experience an annual increase in the risk of drought, flood, earthquake, fire, and infectious illnesses. Therefore, the media workshop sort to strengthen media officials' knowledge of emergency and disaster information and publicity, including running information-based campaigns to raise awareness of the emergency situation and to lower the risk of disasters.

Context of the Workshop

Mongolia is a land-locked developing country (LLDC) with great aspirations and a strong commitment to sustainable development, yet with numerous challenges, including environmental constraints and climate impact. Mongolia is prone to harsh climatic conditions and snow blizzards in winter, which cause a disaster known as “Dzud”, and is hit by droughts in summer, especially in remote rural areas in the western and eastern parts of the country. To ensure a nationwide better understanding and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs, capacity is needed for media officials for effective communication on the SDGs action, risk-informed communication, prevention, preparedness, and mitigation against disasters. It is therefore important to introduce risk-informed communication strategies, disaster risk reduction and local resilience tools in a broader context of effective public governance, which is an important issue for reporters.

Risk-informed communication is fundamental to the effective management of crises and plays a critical role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disaster situations. In an increasingly interconnected world where rumors, hearsay, and fake news are propagated quicker than the truth, ensuring that people have access to accurate and reliable information has become a big challenge. Emerging risks and other global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic as an unparalleled public health emergency in recent times, have particularly heightened the need for strengthening risk-informed communication in times of disasters and public health emergencies. Ineffective risk communication in times of public emergencies and disasters has the potential for citizens to receive misinterpreted messages, false information, fake news, rumors, inconsistent information, and sensationalism, which has the tendency to generate panic resulting in grave impact. Ensuring effective communication on

disaster risk is fundamental to strengthening resilient communities, and the media have a critical role to play in promoting public awareness and advocating for DRR solutions through constructive and evidence-based reporting systems.

Participants

The media workshop was well attended by over 85 media officials drawn from MONTSAME, government institutions which include spokespersons, journalists, communication officers and reporters from the office of the president and cabinet, municipalities, the Ministry of Digital Development and Communications, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Ulaanbaatar Railway, Mongolia National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and other key media institutions and stakeholders across Mongolia. Participants for the media session residing in Ulaanbataar mainly participated in person while those from the local provinces joined online.

6.2 Opening Session

Participants of National Workshop for Media Officials in Mongolia



Source: MONTSAMEImages

Ms. Sodontogos Erdenetsogt, Director General, MONTSAME – Mongolian National News Agency in her remarks stated that “The people who have knowledge, information, and education, and possess information about disaster risk to deliver to the public are the journalists. Therefore, it is critical to sort out disaster risk information, which one to report to the public first, which information to suspend, and to properly manage own psychological state.” She emphasized that earthquakes, droughts, heavy snowfalls "Dzud", and epidemics are likely to increase in the future, and the United Nations keep warning humanity to be on constant alert. The successive governments of Mongolia have focused on the direction of disaster risk reduction within the goal of sustainable development and reflected it in the President's policy.

Mr. U. Zolbayar, Spokesperson and Head of the Media Department of the Office of the President, Mongolia in his speech reiterated that "In order to reduce yellow dust storms, the participation of the media is important in mobilizing the general public in the implementation of the ‘One Billion Tree’ National Program initiated by the President of Mongolia. At this time, Mongolia's oldest media organization MONTSAME News Agency took the initiative and organized this training to focus on

preventing the public from relevant risks." Mr. Zolbayar pointed out the exceptional significance of enhancing the competencies of journalists.

Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head of Office, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA in his remarks indicated that, the world is currently witnessing an increasing frequency and intensity in crises, such as pandemics, disasters, climate change, and geopolitical tensions. These crises have far-reaching consequences and have made it imperative to enhance risk-informed communication strategies to help mitigate their impacts. Climate change for instance is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity, and effective communication is crucial to achieving climate action. However, communication during crises is often hampered by a lack of public awareness and understanding of the issues. As the world emerges and hopefully recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic which is considered the worst public health crisis of modern times, the significant role of risk-informed communication cannot be overemphasized, and this makes the workshop very timely.

6.3 Setting the Scene and Workshop Introduction

This session focused on highlighting the objective and expectations of the workshop and provided an opportunity to discuss and share insights on the key concepts and strategies for promoting risk-informed communication, prevention, preparedness, and mitigation against disasters. The development of action plans for follow-up was at the core of the workshop.

Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs and the Toolkit on Risk-informed Governance and Innovative Technology for DRR: Focus on accelerating Progress on the SDGs

The [Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs](#) is a comprehensive set of training of trainer's capacity development toolkits, which contain ready-to-use training material on key governance dimensions needed to advance the implementation of the SDGs. The Curriculum's goal is to promote critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs and develop the knowledge and capacities required to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Curriculum is designed and implemented through the engagement of governments and schools of public administration. Video of the Curriculum is available [here](#).

This Training Toolkit on [Risk-informed Governance and Innovative Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience](#) is part of UN DESA's overall Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs, developed by its DPIDG. The Toolkit is interlinked with all the other Training Toolkits of UN DESA as part of the Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs. The toolkit provides ready-to-use training materials to support UN Member States' efforts to strengthen country-level capacities to promote government innovation for disaster risk reduction and resilience, with a specific focus on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Video of the Toolkit is available [here](#).

6.4 Key Concepts on DRR and Resilience

The concept of "natural disasters" is challenged, as disasters are not solely caused by natural hazards but also influenced by human choices, such as where we live and how we build. Risk is determined by the combination of hazards, exposure, and vulnerability. Climate change and disaster risk exacerbate existing inequalities and crises, affecting different groups unequally. Disasters result in significant loss and damage, leading to loss of life, disruptions to livelihoods, and increased displacement. The impact

on poverty is more severe than previously understood, with annual consumption losses of billions of dollars and millions of people being pushed into poverty each year.

There is changing environment which include:

- intensifying disaster trends and more frequent events; resource scarcity and degradation (land, water, food, energy, biodiversity).
- increasing risk of “unchecked” urbanization coupled with high exposure of population and assets in high risk areas;
- increasing governance challenges, coordination, accountability, legislations, institutional mechanisms, migration, conflict, all affecting human security;
- equity, poverty, inclusion – all being fundamental development challenges contributing to vulnerability;
- inter-dependency and complexity of risk drivers, and climate change [extreme events, slow onset disasters (drought).”

New Hazards: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

- COVID-19 is likely to cause the first increase in global poverty since 1998, when the Asian Financial Crisis hit.
- In 2020, COVID-19 is threatening cities and communities, endangering not only public health, but also the economy and the fabric of society.
- The World Bank estimates that COVID-19 is pushing between 88 and 115 million people into extreme poverty in 2020 and as many as 150 million by 2021.
- Many of these “new poor” will be people living in cities and who are self-employed, mostly working in the informal sector.
- Cities are on the front line of coping with the pandemic and its lasting impacts.

Resilience embraces chronic stresses and acute events and must embrace “systems of systems”. Cities and communities are complex because they are where multiple systems interact. Connections abound both causal, and those related to resources and data, often, those connections can be a source of strength and resilience. However, connections can be missed, and some may only emergent when a disaster happens. This reduces resilience because unforeseen consequences occur that may be disastrous.

The world is not on track to reducing risks – human action is creating greater and more dangerous risk. Systematic risks are undermining sustainable development - systematic risk cannot be eliminated entirely, but it can be reduced and addressed more effectively, human choices are driving vulnerability and exposure and increasing losses. The role of the media include - educate, entertain, inform, hold to account in democracies; but stories need to be interesting, newsworthy, readable. Key messages journalists can help convey include - disasters are not ‘natural’, they can often be prevented and their impact mitigated; disasters impede long-term development by keeping people trapped in a vicious spiral of poverty; prevention is better and cheaper than cure; early warning systems can be life-saving; educate; be prepared and every citizen’s responsibility.

6.5 The Media Environment and Historical Setting in Mongolia

The birth of national journalism in Mongolia is connected to the period the Mongols were freed from the Manchurian rule and established the Bogd Khanate Mongolia. At the end of 1911, the Bogd Khanate Mongolia was established, and in the beginning of 1913, the publication of the newspaper "*New Mirror Paper*" under the leadership of intellectuals who held appropriate positions was the genesis of national journalism in Mongolia. From this, it can be seen that the declaration of Bogd Khanate Mongolia and its independence from Manchuria and China became an event that gave impetus to the emergence of national journalism. The main platforms for creating journalistic works in this period were the publications such as "New Mirror Paper" (1913-1914) and "Newspaper of the Capital" (1915-1920). Mongolian journalism researchers led by Dr. G. Deleg defined the above two publications as "Newspapers and magazines in democratic progress."

The beginning of the 20th century was the time when many events took place that had an exceptional impact on the fate of Mongolians and the history of journalism. The next progressive development period of Mongolia's national journalism is more than 30 years of free journalism from the late 1980s up to the present.

Factors that influenced the formation of the mass media system in Mongolia

It is believed that the following factors had the greatest impact on the formation of the mass media system, and the emergence and development of journalism in Mongolia:

- *Newspapers and magazines promoting the policies of foreign countries such as China and Russia entered Mongolia, thus motivating the intellectuals of Mongolia of the time to follow their example.*
- *As a result, the need to disseminate information at the national level created the first periodicals such as "Shine Toli Bichig" (New Mirror Paper) and "Niislel Kureenii Sonin Bichig" (Newspaper of the Capital).*
- *Achievements of the People's Revolution became favorable ground for establishing, developing, and maturing the news agency and periodicals.*
- *Need for information exchange with foreign countries duly arose.*
- *From the 1930s, the government supported the development of media.*
- *Intensive training of personnel required in this field both abroad and domestically.*
- *With the democratic revolution and the new Constitution of 1992, the freedom to express individual opinions was guaranteed and a favorable environment was created for the development of free media.*
- *Impact of new trends and waves of global journalism and media development.*

Media environment in Mongolia and its current situation

The democratic revolution in Mongolia in the 1990s marked the birth of free democratic journalism in the country, with key media programs and articles playing a foundational role. Today, Mongolia boasts a significant number of officially registered mass media outlets, ranking high globally in terms of media per capita. However, the media environment in Mongolia still faces challenges in meeting the criteria of a truly free and independent press. Issues such as financial independence, autonomy, self-reliance, absence of censorship, and independent operation remain as areas of concern. As of 2020, there were 513 media outlets in Mongolia, including newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and news websites.

Factors contributing to the increase in the number of electronic media outlets:

1. *Economical, does not require additional financial costs.*
2. *Creation of a fast and comfortable environment (soft infrastructure). This is due to the extensive usage of social networks, smartphones, and the internet among Mongolians. This fosters a culture in which media organizations gradually move their information online and deliver it to consumers quickly.*

Freedom of the Press in Mongolia and global standards

Mongolia's Press Freedom Law was enacted in 1998. Although this Law was declaratory in nature, it was able to strengthen the foundation of the free press. In this way, many advantages have been created, including the fundamental freedom of publication. However, the press freedom index in Mongolia has not been very good in recent years according to global indicators. Although this indicator shows that Mongolia ranks after South Korea, Malaysia, and Japan in terms of press freedom in the region, it has been in the category of "problematic" in recent years, which concerns our industry.

History and Lessons of Mongolian Media and disaster situation

Mongolia is not prone to frequent disasters, but the most common one is the Dzud, which causes great loss of animals. Historically, there have been famines in Mongolia, such as the devastating one in 1944. In recent years, there have been droughts and a tragic helicopter crash in 2002. Earthquakes have occurred but haven't caused significant damage. The media's role in reporting on disasters has been limited due to the infrequent occurrence of such events, but journalists have shown their ability to work during emergencies, as seen during the recent global epidemic.

While Mongolia faces relatively fewer disasters, the media's preparedness and response during emergency situations have improved. The media effectively transmitted information provided by health and emergency organizations during the epidemic, contributing to reducing the spread of the virus and encouraging public engagement. Journalists believe they have fulfilled their social obligations, but there is a need for clear guidelines for media organizations and journalists in emergency situations. Collaboration among state authorities, agencies, and media organizations responsible for emergencies is essential to ensure timely and accurate information. Training and campaigns focused on informing the public about disaster risks are crucial. Overall, efforts to enhance journalists' ability to work during disasters are underway, facilitated by international support and the study of good practices from other countries.

6.6 Risk-informed Communication: Strategies, challenges, and policy measures for managing multi-faceted crises, DRR and climate action

Risk-informed communication involves effective communication of relevant information, such as warnings, forecasts, and risk assessments, to support decision-making and facilitate action to reduce risks and increase resilience. It is fundamental to disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate action and plays a crucial role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters, as well as in promoting resilience. Risk-informed communication is important because:

- the Sendai Framework for DRR (2015-2030) emphasizes timely, clear, and relevant communication.

- the spread of misinformation and disinformation calls for risk-informed communication and this is essential for reducing uncertainty, promoting prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
- UNDRR also emphasizes the importance of risk-informed communication in crises management as it helps promote informed decision-making, fosters community engagement, coordination, and effective risk management strategies.
- it is a critical tool for building public awareness, trust, and social cohesion as well as promoting behavioral change and adoption of sustainable practices.

The role of the media is critical to promoting risk-informed communication as they are an essential source of information for the public and influence public perception and understanding of risks. However, media reporting can sometimes be sensationalized, inaccurate, and biased, leading to misinformation and disinformation. To promote risk-informed communication, media reporting should be evidence-based, balanced, accurate, timely, transparent and culturally sensitive. The guiding principles of risk-informed communication should focus on timeliness, clarity, accessibility, relevance, consistency, coherence, transparency and participation.

Challenges associated with traditional communication approaches include - failing to adequately address the complex nature of crises, limited/inadequate resources, information overload, cultural and linguistic barriers, limited access to information, time constraints, limited capacity to interpret information, limited trust in the sources of information, complexity and uncertainty, often one-size-fits-all approach, providing generic information, varying levels of awareness and language barrier, fragmented communication, misinformation and disinformation, insufficient policy and legal framework.

As a policy measure, it is therefore important for strengthening and promoting risk-informed communication by ensuring that - tailor communication to communities cultural and linguistic context, prioritize participation, build collaborative networks through multi-stakeholder engagement, enhance communication capacity, develop risk-informed communication strategies, empower local communities, invest in capacity building, leverage innovative technology, develop clear and consistent messaging and build trust and credibility among communities and stakeholders.

6.7 Strengthening evidence-based policymaking and disaster risk management systems for Disaster Risk Reduction in achieving the SDGs

Climate change adaptation and sustainable development are closely intertwined, and disaster risk reduction is a crucial aspect of sustainable development. Climate change contributes to increased disaster risk, and if current trends continue, the number of disasters globally is projected to rise by 40% by 2030. A significant portion of the global urban population, particularly in developing countries, lives in vulnerable conditions without adequate infrastructure or emergency services. Disaster risk assessment should consider various factors such as systematic risk, uncertainty, gender sensitivity, and the protection and rights of vulnerable groups. Integrating disaster risk reduction into development policy and planning is essential, and it should be an ongoing process that encompasses short-term and long-term measures. Coordinated efforts at the national and local levels involving governments, administrative organizations, legal entities, and citizens are necessary for effective disaster risk reduction and informed decision-making.

6.8 The Role of Media in Nation Building and Early Warnings and Climate Action

The media has a critical role in national building and for ensuring effective early warning systems (EWS) and climate change. Media has a strong bearing on governance, democracy, and building trust, and supports early warnings through:

- effective early warning systems,
- support emergency warning agencies,
- rapid flow of information to public in danger,
- reaching the “last miles”,
- grass-root feedback,
- verification of information.

The media plays also has vital role in promoting DRR education and climate action as it helps to educate people by raising public awareness of disaster risk reduction, prevention and emergency preparedness during the “quiet time” between disasters provide the channel to educate on climate change, its impacts, ways to adapt and how to prevent further warming and pollution of the planet.

Lobbying through programmes for investment in climate change resilient development by giving platform for new technologies and solutions is another key role of the media.

6.9 World Broadcasting Union (WBU)/UNDRR Media Savings Lives initiative

The multi-activity programme for the Asia and the Pacific region aims to enhance the capacity of all ABU broadcast Members to:

- ensure the continuity of the broadcast services during disasters by making their physical networks resilient;
- link the broadcasters’ services to their national disaster management authorities;
- issue timely, accurate and relevant early warning messages by developing up to date broadcast emergency plans;
- mainstream climate change adaptation and disasters’ prevention in their news, current affairs and general programmes.

The project activities include:

- DRR knowledge level 1 – online course; support for development of organizational DRR action plan and establishing a task group for regular exchange of information and coordination with the national disaster management authorities and met services. Also, for developing a regional co-production on DRR issues.

The key outcomes include:

- To institutionalise disaster risk reduction in ABU members’ organisational policies in form of DRR work plans and DRR task groups among the employees.
- To change the mentality of content producers from reactive to proactive.
- To enhance the ability of broadcasters to provide useful information for climate change adaptation and disaster prevention.

6.10 Group Activity Session and Simulation Exercises on Reporting on Crises and DRR: Focus on earthquakes, fire outbreaks, floods

Participants were actively engaged in a group activity session with simulation exercises on reporting on DRR with a focus on earthquakes, wildfires floods and volcanic eruptions among others. The exercises explored the key issues and factors to consider when preparing to report on an emergency; the tools and channels to be used in reporting on crises, challenges encountered in promoting risk-informed communications and the policy recommendation for reporting on these crises. There was an opportunity to simulate live broadcasting in a crises situation and this helped share experiences and lessons in strengthening risk-informed communication.

Group Activity on developing Action Plans for follow-up

In addition to the group exercises, participants were also engaged in hands-on action plan development session to be endorsed at the institutional level of the participating media organization. Another key outcome of the session in this workshop was the development of a roadmap by MONTSAME for media officials to guide the implementation of the action plans and the next steps. This is important to help secure participants commitment and ownership.



6.11 Leveraging on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Frontier Technologies for Risk Informed Reporting on Crisis and Disasters: Science-based approach in Managing the COVID-19 Pandemic

Leveraging ICTs and frontier technologies are critical for ensuring risk-informed reporting in times of disasters and crises. Science-based approach to managing disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic is important. Scenario-based time series projections include scenarios on type of community quarantine, adjusting health capacity, and compliance to minimum health standards.

Participatory Design Approach provides targeted solution (not one size fits all) for localization, expanding to address other related problems. Ensure Interoperability such as cultural, social and technological helps ensure knowledge transfer through capacity building and for product transfer.

Building and maintaining relationships is important for ensuring consistency and persistence builds trust, validation methods (stakeholders and academic publications), sustainability of the solution and continuous research and development. Science (research) never ends but requires continuous improvement.

6.12 Experiences and Lessons Learned from Reporting on Crises and DRR to accelerate progress on the SDGs

Mr. Thomas Naadi in his presentation shared insights on his experience and lessons learned over the years in reporting on disaster and crises. He has had a unique opportunity to have been part of the first team to cover the COVID-19 pandemic at a detention centre which was quite scary at the initial stages of the pandemic. Journalism can be a very challenging profession and takes you to various parts of the world. His experience of a disaster of massive proportion in a mining area in Ghana where a truck carrying explosives had an accident and exploded leading to several casualties and injuries was also shared. Illegal mining often referred to as “*galamsey*” in mining communities in Ghana is a major disaster. The activities of these illegal miners have led to the destruction of water bodies. While government have made efforts to use the military to flush out these illegal miners, the menace persists. Reporting on such disasters and crises required the following risk-informed measures:

- *In the case of the COVID-19 outbreak, there was the need for a comprehensive risk assessment to assess the level of risk to ensure reporters were safe and alive to be able to report on the pandemic and not get infected. This required adhering to the protocols and all the precaution since very little was known about the virus, and many did not believe COVID-19 existed.*
- *such scenes required scanning the area to ensure safety, contacting the security officers at the scenes, explaining to the security personal about the mission. Specific instructions should be taken on where to film and where not to go as a danger zone.*
- *comply with the specific instructions which is very important because disaster scenes pose a lot of risk. Key lessons in this situation include: -*
- *important to wear protective clothes, speak to those in charge of security such as the police at the crises scene and activate all your senses at the scene of the accidents since anything can happen.*
- *Need to also scan the area to be sure you one is safe before interviewing, filming, or doing anything at the disaster scene. This is very important because the journalist needs to be alive to tell the story. This is because safety is paramount and key to risk-informed communication.*
- *Need to explore what are the potential dangers in the area and what can be done to mitigate the potential danger.*

Next Steps: MONTSAME Roadmap for Media Officials in Mongolia

MONTSAME Roadmap for Media Officials



7. Closing Session

Mr. Kyu Chang Ko, Head of Office, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA in closing underscored that while Mongolia has made significant progress in advancing the SDGs, challenges still remain. This workshop has provided an opportunity to deliberate on how to address these challenges and align national and sub-national priorities with the SDGs. This is a step in the right direction towards equipping governance institutions for an accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Mongolia's Vision 2050. He proceeded to emphasize that:

- The COVID-19 pandemic did not only interrupt and halt progress but also uncovered the fragilities and social inequalities that exist across societies. This has put the resilience of public institutions to the test and reaffirmed the need for strengthened capacities of governance structures. Enhancing transparency, accountability, anti-corruption strategies, and inclusion as key principles of governance systems. By reducing corruption, promoting participatory policymaking, and fostering innovation in public service delivery, we can restore public confidence and promote the whole-of-society approach for sustainable development.
- Risk-informed communication is not just an abstract concept, but an important process. Our knowledge on critical issues such as institutional arrangement, multi-level governance, policy coherence, financing for the SDGs, data governance, multi-stakeholder engagement, and systems thinking have deeply been enhanced. We must all make frantic efforts to continually strengthen national and sub-national capacities to achieve accelerated progress in this decade of action. We have also emphasized the significance of effective communication in addressing the complex crises we face and have recognized that risk-informed communication is not just an abstract concept, but an important process.

Ms. Surenchimeg Dulamsuren, Rector of the National Academy of Governance, underscored that, the timely workshop encompassed a wide range of discussions on how we can collaborate to achieve effective governance and the importance of aligning our efforts with governance. She emphasized that the workshop provided a crucial platform for government officials, NAOG trainers, and other stakeholders to come together and exchange ideas on effective governance practices for sustainable development. The challenges faced by Mongolia in achieving sustainable development are significant, and it is through collaborative efforts like this workshop that we can address these challenges more effectively. She appreciated the partnership between UNPOG/DPIDG/ UN DESA, NAOG, MONTSAME and UNRCO in organizing the workshop which was timely in the Mongolian context.

Mr. Batbold Shoovdor, Head of the National News Department of MONTSAME delivering his closing remarks on behalf of **Ms. Sodontogos Erdenetsogt**, Director General, MONTSAME, reiterated that, the workshop was an important initiative to enhance disaster reporting skills of media professionals. The focus of the workshop on disaster preparedness, accurate reporting and the critical role of media in mitigating the impact of disasters was of immense importance as it provided a platform to share good practices to contribute more effectively to reporting on disasters in Mongolia. He went on to state that, MONTSAME is committed to work with media officials to replicate the lessons and outcomes workshop and thanked all the parties for organizing the workshop.



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