



Mongolia

The Mongolian Action Programme for the 21st Century was created in 1998, and contains a **National Sustainable development strategy**. The programme consists of four parts:

- Sustainable Social Development,
- Sustainable Economic Development,
- Use of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
- Means of Implementation.

The fourth section on Means of Implementation explores Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Mongolia. According to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, primary and secondary schools in Mongolia must provide natural science training with courses such as local environment study, nature exploration, geography, biology, chemistry and physics.

Projects/Initiatives

In 2002, the National Council for Sustainable Development of Mongolia, in collaboration with EERI ECO ASIA, initiated a study about ESD in Mongolian universities. The goals of the project were to introduce ESD into the curriculum of tertiary education institutes in Mongolia; to help students gain more detailed knowledge of sustainable development; and to improve the skills of lecturers and trainers in teaching for sustainable development. As part of the study, a sustainable development textbook and a national university-level ESD curriculum and training guide were developed and distributed to universities and colleges.

Mongolia has achieved a range of extremely impressive outcomes with respect to female education. The education system is dominated by women both as students and teachers from early childhood education through to the postgraduate level. Since the socialist era, enrolment rates of girls have consistently been higher than those of boys for primary, secondary and tertiary education. In secondary education, gross enrolment rates for girls are 20 percent higher than for boys, while women now account for 70 percent of all students in tertiary education. Although this bodes well for women in Mongolia, the low retention rate for boys is a concern. The main reasons for the growing gender gap in education have been the withdrawal of boys from schooling to assist in income-earning activities such as herding, the lack of male role models within the school system and the collapse of the vocational education system that was traditionally male-dominated. Despite the achievements in school enrolment, women have not been able to take full advantage of their higher educational status and emerging opportunities. The pattern of employment shows a considerable division of labour and discrimination, especially when it comes to managerial positions. Women lack access to resources, funds and market information in order to set up their own businesses. They also have limited access to information on recent legislation and social entitlements. Women face a significantly higher incidence of poverty throughout the country. In Ulaanbaatar, data for 1998 reveals that the proportion of poor women (44 per cent) is more than double the proportion of poor men.

Waste Reduction Training: Ecological Public Awareness is a government sponsored education programme in the Chingiltei District of Ulaanbaatar. The programme objectives include enabling the public to understand their environmental responsibilities; extending EE activities; and implementing a 'blue bag' project to educate the public about appropriate waste management practices. The programme targeted women as key stakeholders and held meetings with housewives to discuss issues such as the hygienic disposal of household waste. Academics also provided community training on basic ecological principles. Waste management

guidebooks and blue coloured bags with labels such as 'metal', 'bone', 'cans' and 'paper' were distributed to women with instructions on how to separate waste. Many women voluntarily initiated a neighbourhood cleanup as part of the programme. Recyclable materials were returned to manufacturers for refunds, resulting in increased household income. Companies and industries have since recognized the financial potential of this practice, and have opened processing depots.