

CHILD FRIENDLY LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Key results of UNICEF/ Government of Mongolia cooperation cycle 2012–2016

- Adopted Child Friendly Community Strategy (CFC Strategies) (2014-2016) in Khuvsgul and Nalaikh, which became the main planning and monitoring tool for child rights at the local level, setting accountability targets and milestones for child survival, development, protection and participation.
- Improved Inter-sectoral coordination through establishment of Councils for children headed by aimag and soum governors to prioritize the interests of children in all sectors, to succeed in the development of a positive child, and respect child friendly environments with child-centred decisions, budgeting and planning.
- Enhanced participation of children in Khoroo/Soum , Aimag/Dureg Citizen's Khural Assemblies and created an environment which they could raise voices on specific issues for inclusion in the annual socio-economic objectives, monitor child rights related achievements and participate in prioritization of Local Development Fund planning and allocation of budgets. The percentage of child-led organizations which receive budget support from local government is increased from 5.8 in 2013 to 22.5% in 2015 and 75% in 2016. The capacity of planning and decision-making utilizing child participation was strengthened-18000 children learned life skills and are involved in child development programmes. All schools issue students' magazines and child-led organizations have begun to influence policies and decisions.
- Built local government's capacity to form appropriate policies and deliver services for children. For instance, developed a Long-term Khusvgul development strategic document which serves as a basis for sustainable support and provision of interventions for realization child rights. The 10% of the Local Development Fund allocation approved by the Local Parliament in April 2014 is officially endorsed to be the main source for implementation of child related programs of aimag until 2021. The percentage of budget investment allocated for children from the local development fund is increased from 8.8 in 2013 to 32.5 in 2016. 65% of all soums and 20% of the agencies under the jurisdiction of the Aimag Governor have satisfied the criteria for child-friendly organizations and were awarded certificates of the Governor's Council. 30% of all schools and 65% of all kindergartens met the criteria for Child friendly facilities and received certificates. Of 45 dormitories, 25% created child friendly environments and services and 1/3 of all students gained access to water supply and sanitation facilities. Learning healthy behaviors has led to a 20% reduction in overall child morbidity.

New Country Programme of cooperation 2017–2021: Planned Results

The local governance programme will work with local authorities in the geographic focus areas to scale up Child Friendly Community Strategy by building local capacity to plan and budget to address disparities and deliver integrated and equitable supply of services.

More specific results are:

- Replication of CFC Strategy in focus areas.
- Scale up service models and good practices
- Monitoring and supporting national policies and programmes implementation at sub-national level
- Pilot to Policy: Influencing national policies and budgets tested at sub-national level

PROMOTING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING



Baaska is a 17-year-old high school junior, studying at "Aviyas" school of Khuvsgul province. She lives with her grandmother and two younger siblings in Murun, Khuvsgul province, in northern Mongolia.

Since young age, Baaska has been an active member of various student clubs at her school, from "Mongolian Red Cross Society" to Girl Scout. As a result of her active involvement in child participation clubs, she was chosen as a member of Children's Council of Khuvsgul province two years ago. The council is an advisory body to the local administration on child rights related matters.

"In 2013, I took part in my first ever children's forum, which was organised as part of UNICEF's Child Friendly

Community initiative. During the forum, we discussed many issues, one of which was a request from students from "Ireedui" secondary school. The school is located very far, and there was no public transportation to the school. Children had to walk a long distance to the school, in cold and in dark. It was very dangerous because stray dogs could attack children. Also children get sick easily because of cold weather. So we decided to raise the issue to town authorities" shared Baaska.

Following children's appeal, a purchase of a school bus was approved at the community meeting on planning for the Local Government Fund investments. With these funds, Murun town purchased two buses that became operational in 2014.

"Children are very happy because with the bus we can get to our school faster and safer! The bus is helping solve overcrowding issue as well. Now that there is a bus to "Ireedui", children are transferring to "Ireedui". We hope that there will be more buses like this in future!" she added.

Baaska believes that children can make real changes for them if they speak up.

"I think that children themselves can best identify issues facing them. In Khuvsgul, the children's forum has become a tradition, so now children have a better chance than before to make their voices heard. Adults have become more attentive to our requests".

Child Friendly Community strategy

UNICEF has been actively promoting child-focused governance, investment and integrated delivery of social services in Khuvsgul province since 2012. As a result of CFC Strategy, priority issues for children were integrated in Khuvsgul province's mid-term development plan, and children's councils were set-up in 18 out of 24 soums in Khuvsgul province to prioritize children's issues in decision-making.

Child Friendly Community (CFC) is a system of local governance, committed to fulfilling children's rights. It is the embodiment of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at local level, which means children's rights are reflected in policies, laws, programmes and budgets. In a child friendly community, children are active agents; their voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence decision making processes.

Khuvsgul province aims to become child-friendly province by 2016, and is working step by step to achieve this goal. Every village and citizen is taking part to implement this program, and to make children's issues a priority. Local authorities have been giving increased importance to children's participation in decision making.

"The local parliament issued a resolution on investing not less than 10 percent of Local Development Fund (LDF) for well-being of children. As a result, the LDF investment for children in Khuvsgul province reached 22.5 per cent in 2015 compared to 8.8 per cent in 2013" explains Mr. Tumurbaatar G., Head of Governor's Office of Khuvsgul province.