

## MONGOLIA

### Country Summary of Higher Education

#### **Background<sup>1</sup>:**

**Recent expansion of tertiary education sector:** In recent years, Mongolia has experienced a remarkable growth in higher education with a rapid expansion in the private sector. During 2000-2006, the total number of enrollment in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) increased by 62% from 84,985 to 138,019. Enrollment at private HEIs increased by 140% from 15,552 to 37,995. Mongolia is unique among East Asian countries in that female students outnumber male students by 20% in higher education. In 2004-2005 academic years, female students accounted for 61.8% in bachelor's degree, 66.9% in master's degree, and 60.8% in doctor's degree.

**Tertiary education system:** The higher education system in Mongolia consists of universities, higher-institution of higher education, and colleges in both public and private sectors. Universities offer doctoral study; higher-education institutions offer master's degree programs; colleges offer undergraduate higher education, including diploma programs. During the 2005-2006 academic years, 131 out of a total of 180 higher education institutions were private, admitting 33.5% of higher education students. The Minister of Education, Culture and Science has overall policy responsibility for the higher education sector, except for some HEIs managed by particular line ministries.

**Quality assurance mechanisms:** The accreditation systems for both institutions and programs have a short history in Mongolia. 1) The higher education institutional accreditation system was established in 1998. While only 15.1% of HEIs were accredited in 2001-2002, nearly 50% of HEIs were accredited in 2005-2006, accounting for close to 80% of total higher education students. Most **public** HEIs are currently accredited; however, only 15% of **private** HEIs were accredited in 2003. Institutional accreditation has been conducted on a voluntary basis. 2) The regulations for program accreditation were introduced in the 2002 amendments of the Mongolian Education Law. Professional councils established by the National Education Accreditation Council carry out the program accreditation with the help of licensed NGOs. Its objectives are to continuously develop curriculum, support the implementation of new technologies into training process, increase professional skills of graduates, and popularize good programs.

**Government Strategy & Policy Reforms:** Master Plan to Develop Education of Mongolia in 2006-2015 describes mid-term action plan 2006-2010 for higher education. Its goals and strategies are to 1) improve coordination of enrollment by supporting students majoring in engineering, technology, national science, teaching, and agriculture and expanding framework of services of universities; 2) create favorable conditions to ensure quality guarantee of higher educational training by strengthening professional capacity of human resources, developing standards and accreditation of operations of HEIs, and providing support to renewal of training, research, and production base of HEIs; and 3) improve management and financial system by optimizing management and coordination of higher education and improving policy and management of social welfare of students.

In 1995, the Government decentralization policy was introduced in the higher education as the management board was created by the education law. Since then, with democratic principles, the policy has lessened the administrative centralization and increased the independence of HEIs from the Central Education Authority.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reference: Review of the Mongolian Higher Education Sector 2005, MSTEC; The Changing Structure of Higher Education in Mongolia, Mijid Baasanjav, Begzjav Munkhbaatar, and Udval Lkhamsuren, 2003; Statistical Yearbook 2006, MSTEC

## Summary Data Table on Higher Education (Data in 2004)

Enrollment	Total Enrollment	123,824
	% of Female	61.4%
	% of Private	32%
Gross Enrollment Rate	Total	43.2%
	Male	33.0%
	Female	53.5%
Student Teachers Ratios		
Teaching Staff	Total Number	8,018
	% of Female	55%
	% of teachers with Masters	64.2%
	% of teachers with Doctorate	20.1%
Gross Graduation Rates*	Total	33.5%
	Male	23.0%
	Female	44.3%
Total Public Expenditure on Education	% of GDP	5.3%
	% of Govt. Expenditure	
Total Public Expenditure on Higher Education	% of total education budget	18.4%
Number of Higher Education Institutions	Total	180 (2006)
	Public	49 (2006)
	Non-Public	131 (2006)

Source: Global Education Digest 2006, UNESCO/ Statistical data's of Education, Culture, Science, Technology Division 2004/ Statistical Yearbook 2006, MSTEC

\* Number of graduates regardless of age in a given level or program expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical graduation age for that level or program

### Issues:

Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrollment in doctor's programs expands slowly. During 2002-2005, the enrollment increased by only 211 students.</li> </ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are large disparities between urban and rural areas. In 2004-2005 academic years, 60.6% of students were from urban area.</li> </ul>
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The curriculum continues to be too theoretical and focused on traditional subjects.</li> <li>Teaching needs to focus on critical and creative thinking, interaction with students, and teamwork.</li> <li>The number of subjects and credit hours of elective courses within the bachelor's degree programs is not satisfactory.</li> <li>Accreditation system needs to be strengthened, especially for small private HEIs as well as newly established programs.</li> </ul>
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The demand for more skilled workers is increasing, but graduates lack relevant skills necessary to get a formal job.</li> </ul>
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public HEIs have little financial autonomy to manage for results.</li> <li>HEIs are responsible for making their financial plan independently, but the government policy of keeping the tuition fees stable without providing substantial financial support leads to financial hardship in many schools.</li> <li>The only source of public funding of HEIs is through the State Training Fund, which provides grants and loans to needy students.</li> </ul>
Governance/ Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governing boards of HEIs have limited power over policy making. For public HEIs, for example, the Central Finance Authority still controls the management board decisions related to investment and budget allocation.</li> <li>There is need to develop a higher education management information system to bring higher education administration, registration, and information systems to the international level.</li> </ul>

