

## Development Dialogue 1: Mongolia and the Post-2015 Agenda

### Summary Report

On 5 December 2012, UNDP launched its Development Dialogue series for 2012-13 with the first Dialogue focusing on “Mongolia and the post-2015 agenda.” The Development Dialogues are intended to support evidence-based policy formulation in Mongolia by providing a platform for discussion, exchange of analyses, and sharing international good practices on key development issues.

The Dialogue brought together over 50 representatives from Government, international development organizations, civil society and academia, for information sharing and discussions on Mongolia’s achievements on the MDGs, challenges in sustainable development and guiding principles for the post-2015 development agenda.

Opening statements were made by UNDP and MED:

- Introducing the Dialogue series, the UNDP Resident Representative informed the audience that the aim is to institutionalize and organize the Dialogues on a regular basis each year.
- The first dialogue focuses on the Post-2015 development agenda as the timeline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) comes to an end in 2015 and global discussions on the Post 2015 agenda have already begun. It is crucial that Mongolia become a part of these deliberations as it can make an important contribution to the global Post-2015 discussions and in this way also chart its own course for the years after the MDGs.
- It was emphasized that still there are three years until the end of 2015 and a lot can still be done to accelerate progress on the lagging MDG targets. There is no trade-off between the acceleration of the MDGs and initiating discussion about a Post-2015 development agenda and the two processes can proceed in parallel.
- Vice Minister, MED mentioned that although Mongolia’s economic landscape has changed dramatically since the start of MDGs thanks to fast economic growth in recent years, equivalent changes have not been realized in social landscape and human development and the development dialogue can help in exchange of ideas on potential correction to this trend in the years ahead.

Presentations were made by UNDP, MEGD and MED:

1) **”Introduction to the Post-2015 consultation process”** - Mr. Thomas Eriksson, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative and Chair of the UN Working Group on Post-2015 development agenda informed the audience of the rationale for the Post-2015 development framework and consultation processes and indicated how national consultations are a part of the global process.

2) **“Expanding the Post-2015 development agenda to include Sustainable Development Goals”**

- Mr. T. Chuluun, Director General, Department of Green Development Policy and Planning, Ministry of Environment and Green Development, noted that “growing first and cleaning up later” should not be an option for Mongolia and for the world post-2015. Promoting green development as one of the key concepts of post-2015 development framework, Dr. Chuluun introduced the Human Sustainable Development Index that adjusts the HDI by CO<sub>2</sub> per capita and demonstrated how current HDI ranking changes after this environmental factor is taken into account.

3) **“Key challenges facing Mongolia that should be reflected in the Post-2015 development agenda”** - Mr. O. Chuluunbat, Vice Minister of Economic Development, emphasized that reduction in income inequality and unemployment, sustainable and green development, optimal social protection system and inclusive growth are the key issues that Mongolia should focus within the post-2015 development framework. Some essential features of the global post-2015 development agenda should include setting goals both at national and global levels and having measurable and action-oriented goals.

Key points from the ensuing discussions are summarized below:

**On general development discussions:**

- There is high recognition and strong focus from the Government on the importance of taking necessary measures to achieve some of MDGs that Mongolia is lagging behind.
- Fast economic growth that Mongolia has experienced in recent years has not equally benefited all. Income inequality has widened with less than 10 percent of the population receiving most of the benefits of two digit economic growth in last consecutive years and still 30%-40% of Mongolians live in poverty. Although Mongolia as a country advanced to lower middle income category, many development challenges remain and supports by international development partners are sought as ever before.
- Evaluating Mongolia’s achievements in MDGs is important on its own, but it is equally important in forming lessons to be learned in formulating and implementing post-2015 development framework. Some of the reasons that Mongolia is currently lagging behind in some MDGs include lack of transparency and accountability of Government policies and actions.
- It was Government of Mongolia’s official position that sizable funds raised by the Government on international markets through commercial vehicles will not be directly spent to support human development. However, there will be many channels such as increased employment and investment in human capital that the infrastructure projects to be invested from the fund indirectly support human development in the long term.

**On the post-2015 development agenda for Mongolia:**

- As a resource rich country with economic growth driven by mining sector, environmental and green development goals should receive high priority in post-2015 development agenda.

- Reducing income inequality and channeling benefits of fast economic growth to all Mongolians in fair manner should be one of the key goals.
- Post-2015 development goals should be clear and measurable and measuring criteria/indicators have to be formulated together with the goals.
- Languages for post-2015 development framework should be simple and understandable by general population.
- Discussions should take bottom-up approach with focus on reflecting opinions at the grass-root level and capturing voices of marginalized groups. Also, it is important that policy makers and implementers hear opinions of ordinary people, for example, in town-hall style meetings, especially at local levels.
- There could be inter-country consultations with countries with similar economic conditions as Mongolia, for example, with resource rich developing country like Malaysia to exchange ideas on development challenges, good practices and development policies.
- Mongolia should take active role in post-2015 development dialogue, for example by promoting human sustainable development index proposed by Dr. Chuluun, so that the discussions in Mongolia are heard at global stage.

Overall, the discussion resulted in clear coming together on the key post-2015 development vision for Mongolia and demonstrated that Mongolia would like to be a part of the global post-2015 discussion.

Participants agreed that discussions on the Post-2015 agenda needs to be expanded to various population groups such as women, youth and children to ensure their views are reflected in the final proposal. Similarly, there need to be thematic discussions around key topics such as the importance of utilizing mining revenue for development for creating the future that Mongolians want.

The second Dialogue is planned for 18 December 2012 on “Poverty in Mongolia: Looking beyond the numbers.”