**Mongolia**

**Consultation meeting with academic institutions on draft World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework**

**January 31, 2019**

*This is a brief, informal summary of the issues raised during the meeting. If you were present and wish to make a correction or provide further information, please email to wbmongolia@worldbank.org.*

The World Bank Group (WBG) met with representatives of the academic institutions in Mongolia on January 31, 2019 to exchange views and recommendations as it prepares the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Mongolia. The CPF identifies and prioritizes critical areas where the World Bank Group support would have the biggest impact in promoting sustainable poverty reduction and shared prosperity, from 2019 to 2024 .

The discussions focused on four guiding questions:

1. In your view, what should the principal objective of the World Bank’s strategy in Mongolia be for the next five years?

2. Do you think that the areas of engagement identified by the World Bank are appropriate? If not, what three principal development priorities would you propose?

3. What are the main risks that are likely to impede the implementation of the World Bank’s support in Mongolia?

4. Are there areas where you think the WBG should not engage in Mongolia?

Representatives of academia concurred on the gravity of governance issues in Mongolia and welcomed singling them out as a major CPF pillar. Government instability and the ensuing high turnover in the civil service were seen as causing disruptions in the service’s institutional memory and technical capacity and affecting the sustainability of long-term development goals. Participants stressed the need for an effective civil service reform. Better donor coordination was cited as an important factor in achieving development goals.

One commonly expressed view was need for a stronger World Bank cooperation with civil society organizations (CSO), media and other stakeholders. It was noted that a more active citizen engagement with public policy issues can help strengthen public oversight and government responsiveness and increase the pressure on government to deliver on its policies. Strengthening the capacity of CSOs, media outlets, and research institutions as well as consulting with them on a regular basis on the Bank projects was seen as one area where the Bank could do more. It was proposed, for instance, that CSOs could be engaged in the monitoring and assessment stages of relevant Bank projects. Such an effort was seen as a means of both enhancing their transparency and pressuring the government to deliver on the Bank-funded projects.

The Bank noted that efforts to this effect were already ongoing and that recourse to CSO expertise and stakeholder engagement remained among its priorities.

The meeting participants also encouraged the World Bank to extend funding support to research initiatives or projects undertaken by research institutions in such areas of national significance as health impacts of air pollution, soil degradation and its impact on underground water reserves, development of new products, etc.

Participants also expressed concern over the effects of climate change in Mongolia and appreciated the CPF focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Given the significant impact of overgrazing and desertification in many parts of the country, promoting green economy through attracting green investments and investing in eco-friendly projects was seen as a major development goal in the years to come.

Some of the other important areas to keep focus on, as mentioned by meeting participants, were food security, the quality of education, livestock health, pension reform, poor ethics in civil service and its effect on the general populace, data insufficiency, especially data on the social well-being, activities carried out by Transparency International, responsible mining, separation of business and political interests and utilization of Integrated Results Based Management to achieve results in different sectors.