

Annual Progress Report 2024: Joint Programme in the Seed Funding Track

INTRODUCTION

Reporting period: From the start date of the Joint Programme (JP) until 31 December 2024.

- Please be succinct and to the point, focusing on the most important accomplishments and issues that you want to bring to the attention of the Joint SDG Fund at the global level.
- Please do not exceed the word limit for each narrative question.
- Please contact Rena Hinoshita at rena.hinoshita@un.org for questions and support.

Submission deadline from RCOs to the Joint SDG Fund: 31 January 2025 via MS Form (<https://forms.office.com/e/RWkzAwS14i>)

PROFILE

JOINT PROGRAMME (JP) PROFILE:	
UN Country Team	Mongolia
JP title	Strengthening Digital E-Mongolia Services and Communities (DEMOSC)
Funding Round (Select the applicable funding round for the JP)	Decent Jobs and Universal Social Protection Digital Transformation Energy Access and Affordability Food Systems Transformation Integrated Policy and Capacity Building SDG Localization
Cross-fertilized SDG Transitions (Select up to 2 main SDG Transitions that are reflected in the JP progress to date)	Decent Jobs and Universal Social Protection Digital Transformation Energy Access and Affordability Food Systems Transformation Transforming Education Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution
JP TEAM:	
Resident Coordinator	Name: Jaap Van Hierden Email: jacob.vanhierden@un.org
JP's RCO focal point	Name: Sang Won Lim Title: Development Coordination Officer Email: lim6@un.org
Lead PUNO focal point	Name: Barkhas Losolsuren Title/Organisation: UNDP / Programme Analyst Email: barkhas.losolsuren@undp.org
PUNOs focal point	Name: Tserennadmid Nyamkhuu Title/Organisation: UNICEF / Education Specialist Email: tnyamkhuu@unicef.org

JP's designated communications focal point	Name: Soyolmaa Dolgor Title/Organisation: Communications and Advocacy officer, RCO Email: soyolmaa.dolgor@un.org
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OVERVIEW

1. Overall self-assessment of the JP progress as of 31 December 2024.

The primary objective of the Joint SDG Fund's seed funding track is to provide countries with support and resources to incubate and pilot transformative solutions and approaches (including actions to development and implement national roadmaps or priorities) that can subsequently lead to accelerating progress across [key SDG Transitions](#) at scale. Towards this objective, please evaluate the performance of the JP.

1.a. Rate the overall implementation of the JP: Is the JP advancing as planned against its workplan in the ProDoc to deliver its key results?

☐ **Limited Progress:** Less than 50% of expected progress achieved; or implementation delayed by more than 2 months.

☒ **Moderate Progress:** 50-75% of expected progress achieved; or implementation delayed by 1 to 2 months.

☐ **On-Track Progress:** 100% of expected progress achieved; implementation completed on schedule.

☐ **Exceptional Progress:** 100% of expected progress achieved ahead of schedule, with additional results or improvements delivered.

1.b. Incubation and validation of solutions/approaches/roadmaps: How much progress has the JP made in incubating innovative approaches/national roadmaps and/or piloting transformative solutions during the seed funding phase?

☐ **Limited Progress:** No formal incubation activities/roadmaps or pilot solutions have been launched yet.

☒ **Moderate Progress:** Initial incubation activities/roadmaps or pilots have begun but are in early stages.

☐ **On-Track Progress:** All planned incubation activities, roadmaps and pilots are fully operational and progressing as scheduled; data collection and validation processes are ongoing as planned.

☐ **Exceptional Progress:** All planned incubation activities/roadmaps and pilots are completed ahead of schedule; early results show promising outcomes.

☐ **Not Applicable:** The JP did not plan to incubate ideas, roadmaps or conduct pilots during this phase.

1.c. Sustainability and scalability potential: To what extent has the JP progressed in establishing pathways for future viability and scale-up of the innovations/solutions proposed under the seed funding phase?

☐ **Limited Progress:** No concrete sustainability or scale-up strategies have been developed yet; or preliminary discussions with potential partners/funders have not begun

☐ **Moderate Progress:** Initial sustainability plans are being developed; some potential scale-up pathways identified; preliminary stakeholder engagement or market assessment underway.

☒ **On-Track Progress:** Comprehensive sustainability and scale-up strategies are in place; clear pathways for expansion identified; active engagement with potential partners/funders ongoing.

☐ **Exceptional Progress:** Robust sustainability plans finalized ahead of schedule; multiple viable scale-up pathways secured; strong commitments from partners/funders obtained; additional opportunities for expansion identified beyond initial plans.

☐ **Not Applicable:** The JP has not yet reached the stage of planning for sustainability and scalability.

RESULTS OF THE JP TO DATE

A. Results-Based Narrative

2. Overall progress on JP (600 words / 1.5 pages max)

Using bullet points, describe how the key progress of the JP, especially around how it is contributing to incubating and piloting new ideas and approaches (including actions to development and implement national roadmaps/priority areas) to propel the [key SDG Transitions](#). Your response should cover how the JP is making changes around: 1) developing new policy and regulatory frameworks; 2) identifying new pipelines of solutions; 3) strengthened capacities of key stakeholders; 4) enhanced partnerships and financing mixes to ensure sustainability and scale, and other transformative shifts. Please include specific reference to the SDG targets identified in the ProDoc.

- The establishment of a Technical Working Group, comprising representatives from Regulatory Authority of Government Digital Services (RAGDS), UNDP, UNICEF, and other stakeholders, alongside progress from the First Steering Committee Meeting co-chaired by the RCO and Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications (MDDIC), has created a collaborative platform to align project activities with national digital priorities and laid the groundwork for advancing policy frameworks to strengthen digital service delivery in support of Mongolia's digital transformation goals. (SDG 17)
- Darkhan-Uul aimag has been designated as the pilot hub for the central region, serving as a testing ground for innovative approaches to bridging the digital divide and piloting scalable solutions under Project Outputs 1 and 2, including:
 - o Establishing a Digital Training Facility (DTF) to provide targeted digital skills training tailored to local needs. (SDG 4,10)
 - o Deploying a KhurDan Mobile Unit to extend access to digital services in rural and underserved communities, fostering inclusivity and accessibility. (SDG 10)

- A digital training needs assessment is underway to develop a tailored gender-sensitive curriculum addressing the unique needs of local communities and public servants, providing a roadmap for impactful digital capacity-building efforts.(SDG 4,5,10)
- Capacity-building efforts include funding for tools and technology to equip the DTF and KhurDan Mobile Unit, as well as the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and user-friendly handbooks to ensure smooth and sustainable operations.
- Enhanced coordination between national and local actors through the Steering Committee and the Technical Working Group is fostering improved implementation and oversight.
- The Darkhan-Uul aimag administration has demonstrated strong local ownership and commitment by allocating a vehicle for the KhurDan Mobile Unit and providing a venue for the DTF.
- The project is spearheading the development of customized digital solutions tailored to Mongolia's unique challenges, positioning Darkhan-Uul aimag as a model for nationwide scaling under project outputs 1 and 2. (SDG 17)
- Under output 3:
 - School-based Digital Community Information Workers (DCIW) initiative successfully trained and deployed 68 DCIWs, including 8 public officials from local education departments, across 30 schools in Darkhan-Uul, Khentii, Dornod, and Ulaanbaatar. This model has proven effective in enhancing school connectivity, digital literacy, and access to e-services and digital learning, while also strengthening local technical capacity and bridging the gap between schools and service providers to support sustainable digital transformation in education (SDG 4, 9, 17).
 - Aligned with Mongolia's 2023 revised Law on Education and the Digital Aimag strategy, the initiative contributes to national digital transformation efforts. 8 provincial education officers were trained to oversee and institutionalize the DCIW model, ensuring its long-term sustainability. Additionally, over 6,400 community members, including teachers, students, and parents, received digital literacy training on e-Mongolia, e-Kids, digital signatures, and online safety. To enhance accessibility and learning outcomes, an interactive training module was introduced, enabling self-paced learning and certificate generation upon successful completion (SDG 4, SDG 8).
 - To improve real-time school connectivity monitoring, the Daily Check Application (DCA) was deployed across all target schools, strengthening data-driven decision-making for connectivity investments. Furthermore, two baseline surveys with 712 participants were conducted to validate school connectivity status and assess internet usage among community members (SDG 9, SDG 17).
 - Dornod province demonstrated local government buy-in by contributing 10,000 USD to support the school-based DCIW model. The initiative has also strengthened multi-stakeholder partnerships between UNICEF, Giga,

Ministry of Education (MoE), MDDIC, RAGDS, General Authority For Education (GAE), Information Technology Center of Education (ITCE), local governments, and schools, fostering a scalable and sustainable approach to digital transformation in education (SDG 17).

3. Constraints, adjustments and lessons (500 words / 1 page max)

In bullet points, please explain any constraints, including risks identified in the ProDoc's Risk Matrix, that were encountered and any adjustments that were made or mitigation actions taken by the JP team to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the JP and the coherence and coordination of UN system support.

In describing lessons learned, please be candid about both successes and failures, explaining what was learned from each experience and how these insights might be applied in the future.

- The JP faced unexpected challenges in ensuring consistent engagement with national partners due to the timing of the project launch, which coincided with national elections. As a result, key positions in the relevant ministry were reshuffled and the project had to work with newly appointed government officials, causing delays in implementation.
- To address this, the JP actively communicated and negotiated with local government stakeholders, with the support of the ministry, to secure cost contributions and adjust to the new circumstances, such as the unavailability of the government's in-kind vehicle contribution for equipping mobile khurdan center with JP.
- The JP could mitigate these delays by conducting a thorough risk assessment of political transitions and embedding contingency measures into the project design.
- The team of master trainers for Output 3 utilized Google platforms for DCIW engagement and feedback mechanisms, aligning with the Ministry of Education's official collaboration with Google for Education. While Google Education licensed emails (@moes.edu.mn) were distributed to all teachers, DCIWs did not actively use these platforms as anticipated. Instead, they preferred direct communication channels such as direct consultations with master trainers and the UNICEF Education officer, seeking immediate and personalized support rather than structured digital forums. Efforts to establish formalized support systems through Google Groups, Microsoft Lists, and Facebook groups for troubleshooting and peer learning were also underutilized. However, bi-weekly online monitoring meetings proved to be an effective alternative, providing a structured platform where DCIWs could discuss challenges, receive guidance, and engage with experts. This experience highlighted the importance of integrating hybrid support models that combine formalized digital engagement tools with real-time communication. Moving forward, a dedicated DCIW support application could be explored to facilitate issue tracking, peer learning, and immediate technical assistance while ensuring ongoing expert support.

4. Scale up and pathways for transformative systems change (Select all that apply)

Please select all relevant pathways that the JP is applying with the aim of scaling up and developing the JP to ensure scale and systematic transformation:

☒ **Capacity-building & local ownership:** Strengthening capacity of individuals, local institutions and communities to independently implement and sustain activities; or transferring ownership and management to local organizations for sustained impact.

☒ **Cross-sectoral collaboration & partnerships:** Partnering with diverse stakeholder groups to address interconnected issues and amplify impact; engaging with private and public sector to replicate successful programme components; or institutionalize participatory governance mechanisms to ensure inclusivity and intensify effectiveness.

☒ **Policy integration & mainstreaming:** Incorporating successful programme elements into national or local policies and regulations to ensure wider adoption and impact; or integrating programme components into existing systems and structures for wider reach, efficiency and sustainability.

☒ **Resource mobilization & financial sustainability:** Developing innovative financing mechanisms and attracting new donors/investors to ensure financial sustainability and expansion; or influencing existing financing mechanisms or diversifying resource streams to support long-term programme viability and growth.

☒ **People-centred technology adoption & innovation:** Leveraging technology and solutions to increase reach, efficiency, impact of activities; or using technology and innovation to enhance cross-sectoral collaboration and scale-up of impact.

☐ **Others.** Please specify:

5. Plans for 2025 with a focus on sustainability (500 words / 1 page max)

In bullet points, please provide the JP plan for 2025 including measures taken to ensure the JP's successful implementation. Please also describe any '[enabling actions](#)' undertaken to ensure the mid- to long-term sustainability and scalability of the JP results.

- The joint program will launch a unified training platform connecting national and sub-national stakeholders to enhance the capacity of civil servants and marginalized communities in basic digital skills and effective use of the e-Mongolia services through the DTF. Long-term sustainability will be achieved through strategic partnerships with theMDDIC, the RAGDS, and the appointment of dedicated government staff positions. Scalability will be supported by the development of gender-sensitive SOPs, a handbook for mobile DTFs and the mobile KhurDan unit, as well as the certification of master trainers.

- The pilot gender-sensitive training program on basic digital skills and e-Mongolia services is a vital step in fostering digital inclusion and empowering both public servants and citizens. The 2025 implementation will aim to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to essential public services.
- The development and implementation of gender-sensitive SOPs and a Handbook for the Mobile DTF are critical to ensuring inclusive and equitable access to digital services for marginalized communities. The 2025 roll-out will reinforce these efforts and further empower underserved populations.
- The DTF will focus on enhancing basic digital skills and improving access to the e-Mongolia services. This programme targets marginalized communities, with a specific commitment to ensuring that at least 50% of beneficiaries are women.
- A dedicated training program will be launched to strengthen the digital competencies of civil servants in target areas and marginalized communities. The programme is designed to ensure that 50% of participants are women, advancing gender equality within the public service sector.
- The school-based DCIW model will expand in 2025 by training 350 high school students as "Young Digital Leaders," equipping them with digital literacy and troubleshooting skills to strengthen community outreach and ensure sustainability. Additionally, education department officials will continue to be trained and engaged, with a focus on expanding the initiative's reach to 100 public officials from other provinces to introduce and institutionalize the DCIW model. By reinforcing the integration of DCIW within education departments, the initiative aims to embed digital literacy support into local government structures for long-term sustainability.
- Local buy-in will be reinforced, building on Dornod province's financial contribution of 10,000 USD, to encourage further co-financing opportunities for long-term sustainability and national scale-up of the model.
- To measure impact and refine strategies, endline surveys will be conducted to assess progress, inform policy decisions, and enhance school connectivity planning. The DCA will remain a critical tool for real-time monitoring of school connectivity issues, enabling data-driven interventions to improve digital learning environments.

6. Areas for further support from the Joint SDG Fund and its UN System Partners

Please describe where additional support at the global level is needed and how the Joint SDG Fund and UN partners, including the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, the Local2030 Coalition and others, can better help the JP.

- A global webinar with UN partners on effective communication strategies for digital literacy initiatives would enhance visibility, advocacy, and knowledge-sharing to increase engagement from government, private sector, and donors in scaling the Project initiatives.
- Additional support is needed to explore co-financing opportunities with key international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, EU to ensure the sustainability and nationwide scale-up of the project initiatives including the regional DTFs, KhurDan Mobile Units and school-based DCIW model. Provincial representatives have expressed interest in expanding the initiative to additional schools within their regions and nationwide.

B. Indicator-Based Performance Update

This section is based upon the JP results framework and workplan.

7. The JP results framework and workplan (Upload Excel)

Please assess the JP performance against the indicators identified in Annex 1: Integrated results framework and workplan, including 1) JP outputs, 2) JP contribution to Joint SDG Fund global indicators, and 3) JP workplan. If the JP has SDG Localization's Marker 3, please include also the progress against the SDG Localization indicators.

8. Number of people directly benefited by the JP

Direct beneficiaries are individuals, groups or organizations who actively participate in JP activities and directly benefit from its interventions, such as civil servants attending workshops, small business owners receiving training, or households accessing services provided by the JP. It is important to disaggregate the primary beneficiaries by sex as per table below when possible.

Type of engagement	Total Number of People	Number of Women and Girls*	Number of Children and Youth (0-24)*
Training/workshops for targeted groups	6,476	2,873	2,103
Awareness raising campaign for broad audience	4,019	-	-
Dialogues/consultations with relevant stakeholders	30	-	-
Coordination meetings with key partners	80	-	-
Access to expanded services	0	-	-
Others (Please specify)			

** Note that it is allowed to have overlaps in the reporting of women/girls and children/youth columns.*

9. Contributions to marginalized and vulnerable groups (250 words / 0.5 page max)

In bullet points, please provide a summary of how the JP is benefiting the marginalized and vulnerable groups identified in the ProDoc. Include results achieved to date at both institutional/policy and local/human levels. Please find the 20 standard LNOB groups in footnote 28 on page 17 of the UNSDG Output Indicator Framework's [Implementation Guide](#).

- School-based DCIWs reached 62 people with disabilities, 1208 teachers, 2103 students, 2738 parents, 277 elderly, 88 schools staff providing targeted digital literacy training to enhance their ability to access government digital services through e-Mongolia, ensure online safety, and navigate digital spaces confidently.

10. Additional financial resources mobilized/leveraged through growing partnerships

Please indicate the additional financial resources (in USD) mobilized or leveraged in 2024 through the JP. The source of funding/financing should be categorized by sources, including public-private partnerships, private sector investments, Government contributions, and financial commitments from IFIs, DFIs and other donors, if any. Please clarify the actual amounts already mobilized/leveraged or the potential amounts expected to be mobilized/leveraged.

Source of Funding/Financing	Amount in USD (mobilized/planned)
Darkhan province local government	\$ 41,000 USD
Dornod province local government	\$ 10,000 USD
Total	\$ 51,000 USD

11. Cross-cutting issues and principles of leaving no one behind (LNOB)

For each question, select the relevant response and provide a brief 1-2 sentence explanation directly in the table.

Question	Yes	No	Comment
The JP has adequately implemented environmental and social standards/safeguards to avoid and address adverse impacts on people and the planet.	Yes		
The JP has developed or operationalized a strategy to address human rights issues, undertaking and drawing upon relevant human rights analysis.	Yes		
The JP has developed or operationalized a strategy to address structural inequalities facing women and girls.	Yes		

The JP has demonstrated positive results / effects for youth in accordance with the principles in Youth 2030.	Yes		
The JP has developed or operationalized a strategy to address structural inequalities facing marginalized and vulnerable persons in any other LNOB groups. Please specify which groups: PWD (person with disabilities)	Yes		

C. Strategic Communications and Partnership Update

12. Strategic communications

Please provide the information of the event(s) held or planned, and links to written articles and social media posts produced by the JP per the Joint SDG Fund's [Communications Guideline for Seed Funding Tracks](#) on [UNSDG Knowledge Portal](#) (NB: PUNOs may need to request access first).

Event Title	Partnership Agreement Signing with Darkhan-Uul Province
Date	2024/11/12
Location	Darkhan-Uul province, Mongolia
Participants (Mention if Donor Member States , Government representatives were present)	Mr. B.Javkhlan, Deputy Governor of Darkhan- Uul province Mr. P.Batbaatar, Chairman of the Regulatory Agency of Government Digital Services Other officials
Objective/Outcome (Briefly describe the key objective or outcome of the event)	To officially launch joint initiative to establish of Mongolia's first regional Digital Training Facility (DTF) and Khurdan Mobile Unit in partnership with the Darkhan-Uul Aimag administration, highlighting its crucial role in bridging the digital divide and improving government service delivery.
Quotes (Format: Name, Last Name, Title, Organization, Quote: “ ”) – especially from donors, government or UN representatives.	"We are delighted to collaborate on this project to deliver faster and more accessible public services via online to the citizens of our province and also enhance our citizens' digital literacy," said Soyolmaa Namkhajav, Head of the Government E-Services Department in Darkhan-Uul Province.
Additional materials and links on event coverage	https://khurdan.gov.mn/eng/archives/5210

List of links to written articles and social media posts:

- <https://un-dco.org/stories/bridging-digital-divide-mongolia>
- <https://www.jointsdgfund.org/article/un-supports-mongolias-effort-enhance-digital-literacy-nationwide>
- <https://mongolia.un.org/en/285715-un-supports-mongolia%E2%80%99s-effort-enhance-digital-literacy-nationwide>
- <https://www.facebook.com/unmongolia/posts/pfbid02zJehuywwwzpv74dtF4hicE5qK8H4mHQwK6XEhdGgnD4xgBNGAaSRXv9TXxabfANjgl>

13. Strategic partnerships (Select all that apply)

What type of partnerships has the JP established or is in the process of establishing?

- ☒ National Government Institutions: Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications, Regulatory Agency of Government Digital Services, E-Mongolia Academy, Ministry of Education, General Authority for Education, Information Technology Center of Education
- ☒ Sub-national Government Institutions: Darkhan-Uul aimag, Khentii aimag, Dornod aimag
- ☐ International Financial Institutions & Development Finance Institutions (Please specify) : _____
- ☐ Private Sector Companies or Industry Associations (Please specify): _____
- ☐ Civil Society Organizations, Philanthropic Organizations and Foundation (Please specify): _____
- ☒ Academic/Research Institutions: National Academy of Governance
- ☐ Bilateral Development Partners (Please specify): _____
- ☐ Labour Unions or Organizations (Please specify): _____
- ☐ Others (Please specify): _____

ANNEX: SDG Localization Marker Survey

ONLY for the JPs with SDG Localization's Marker 3 to respond.

A. Did you upload the SDG Localization monitoring indicators as part of your JP results framework?

☒ Yes

☐ No

B. What action areas has your JP prioritized since launch to advance the SDGs at the local level? (Select all that apply)

☒ Empowering local authorities and communities (e.g. capacity building, leadership development, technical support)

☒ Facilitating multi-stakeholder engagement (e.g. participatory planning processes, community consultations)

☐ Strengthening multi-level governance (e.g. vertical coordination, central-local policy alignment)

☐ Localizing SDG financing (e.g. municipal finance mechanisms, local resource mobilization, local SDG budgeting)

☐ Enhancing local data systems (e.g. disaggregated data collection, community-based monitoring)

☒ Expanding social service access (e.g. last-mile delivery, integrated service provision)

☐ Others (please specify): _____

C. To what extent have financial resources been transferred or mobilized directly to local-level actors (e.g. local governments, local community organizations, local service providers) to support SDG Localization efforts in the reporting period?

☐ 0% i.e. no resource has been directed to local-level actors.

☐ 1-24% of total programme funding directed to local-level actors.

☐ 25-49% of total programme funding directed to local-level actors.

☒ 50-74% of total programme funding directed to local-level actors.

☐ 75-100% of total programme funding directed to local-level actors.

D. Please describe how your JP engages with sub-national (local and regional) authorities, communities, and/or local service providers to advance SDG Localization, including approaches to enhance local capacities, align policies with local contexts, and ensure sustainable financing mechanisms.
Please provide your response in the box below to upload in Q11 of MS Form, or directly enter your response in Q18 of MS Form.

The JP enhances SDG localization by strengthening governance, capacity-building, and sustainable financing for digital transformation in Mongolia.
A Technical Working Group and Steering Committee facilitate coordination between national and sub-national authorities, aligning project activities with local needs.

Darkhan-Uul aimag serves as a regional pilot hub, testing scalable digital solutions. Key initiatives include:

- Digital Training Facility (DTF): Providing tailored digital skills training.
- KhurDan Mobile Unit: Expanding digital service access to rural communities.

The School-based Digital Community Information Workers (DCIWs) initiative deployed 68 DCIWs across 30 schools, embedding digital literacy within the education system and engaging local stakeholders. Dornod province contributed USD 10,000, demonstrating co-financing potential. Education officials from Darkhan-Uul, Khentii, and Dornod were trained to oversee and integrate the model into provincial systems.

The Daily Check Application (DCA) enables real-time monitoring of school connectivity, supporting data-driven investments. These efforts align with Vision 2050, Digital Nation 2022-2027, the 2023 revised Law on Education, the Digital Aimag strategy, and the National Digital Literacy Framework, ensuring digital skills development supports national transformation.

– END –