

# The National Composite Index for Family Planning (NCIFP)

## MONGOLIA 2017 Scores and 2014-2017 Trends<sup>i</sup>

### What is the NCIFP?

A tool that supports FP2020's<sup>ii</sup> efforts to improve the policy environment for family planning (FP), the NCIFP provides information on FP program activities that are not readily available in national demographic or reproductive health surveys or service statistics systems. The NCIFP measures the existence of FP policies and program implementation based on 35 items that fall under five dimensions: **Strategy, Data, Quality, Equity, and Accountability**.

**Strategy** – whether a national FP strategy/plan exists that includes quantified objectives, targets to reach the poorest and most vulnerable, projected resource requirements, and support for wider stakeholder participation. Also included are two items that affect strategy implementation: high-level leadership and regulations that facilitate contraceptive importation or production.

**Data** – whether the government collects/uses data on special sub-groups (e.g. the poor) and their access, private sector commodities, and the quality of service statistics. It also includes data-based evaluation and research to improve the program.

**Quality** – whether the government uses WHO standards of practice (SOP), task-sharing guidelines, and quality of care indicators in public and private facilities. Quality of care (QOC) also considers the adequacy of structures for training, logistics, supervision, IUD and implant removal, and informed choice, including informing clients about the permanence of sterilization.

**Accountability** – whether mechanisms exist to monitor discrimination and free choice, review violations, report denial of services, enable facility-level feedback, and encourage communication between clients and providers.

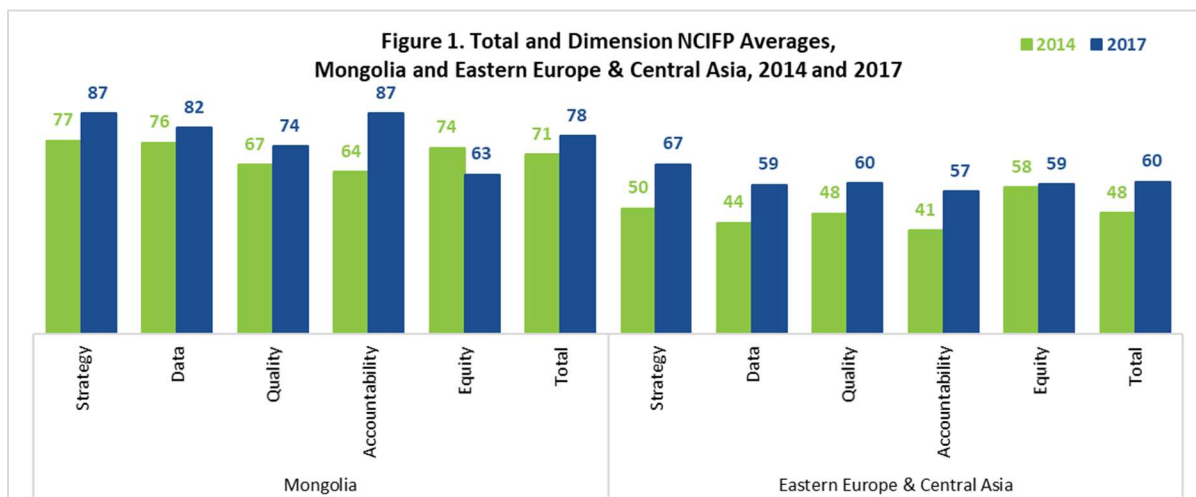
**Equity** - whether anti-discrimination policies exist, providers discriminate against special groups, the population has easy access to modern contraceptive methods (referring to STMs meaning short-term methods, or LAPMs meaning long-acting and permanent methods), and services are provided to underserved areas through community-based distribution (CBD).

First undertaken in 2014, the NCIFP builds on the long-standing National Family Planning Effort Index (FPE). In 2017 Avenir Health's Track20 project (funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to assist countries participating in the FP2020 Global Initiative) administered a new round of NCIFPs to assess current national FP program status and changes since 2014. NCIFP data are intended for policy and planning use by each country's FP stakeholders.

### Mongolia vs Eastern Europe and Central Asia Results

Figure 1 shows total NCIFP scores for Mongolia and the region rising between 2014 and 2017. Mongolia's total scores (71 and 78 respectively) exceeded those of the region in both years (48 and 60 respectively). In terms of dimensions, Mongolia also averaged higher than the region in both years, despite Mongolia's score for Equity declining in 2017.

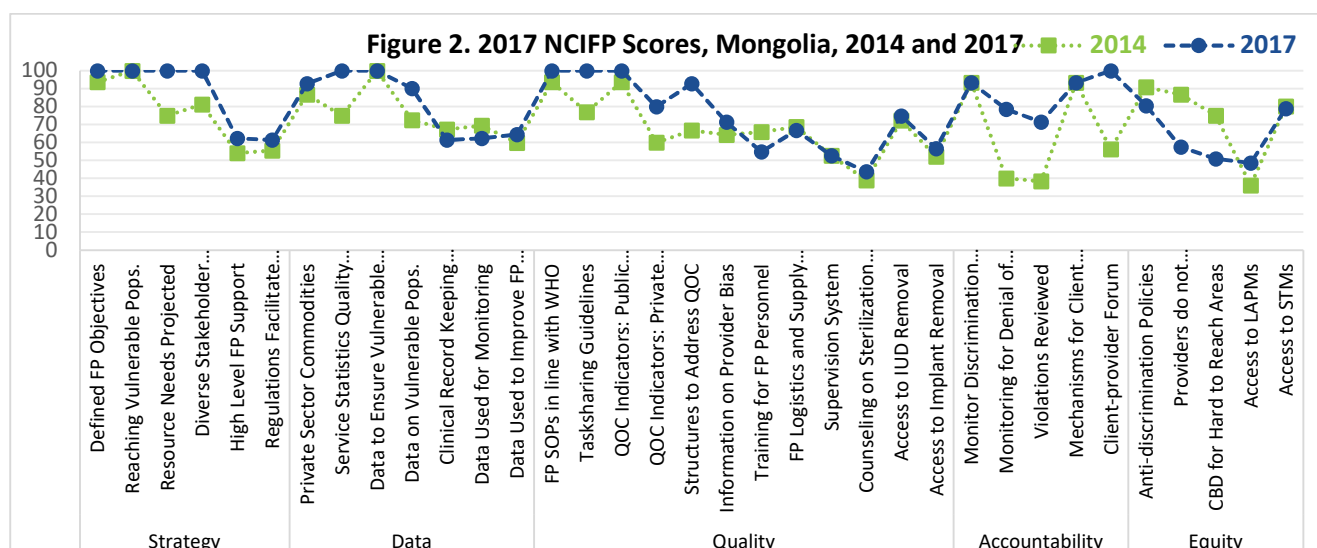
- Mongolia's lowest rated dimension was Accountability in 2014 and Equity in 2017. Strategy and Data were the country's highest rated in 2014. Strategy, along with Accountability (which improved significantly), ranked the highest in 2017.
- The region's highest rated dimension was Equity in 2014 and Strategy in 2017. Accountability was the region's lowest rated in both years despite the dimension's score improving in 2017.



### Individual NCIFP Trends, 2014 and 2017

Scores of individual NCIFP items across the years indicate which FP program activities are progressing, stagnant, or deteriorating. Figure 2 shows Mongolia rated higher for about 15 items, lower for 7 items, but practically stagnant for over 10 items. The country earned several high marks in 2017: 10 items had perfect scores; five items had scores in the 90s.

- **Strategy** – 2017 ratings were 100 for the strategy’s clear objectives, focus on vulnerable groups, resource needs estimate, and support for diverse participation; and in the 60s for high-level support and regulations facilitating contraceptive importation.
- **Data** – 2017 ratings included 100 for quality control of service statistics and the use of data to ensure the most vulnerable have access; 90s for government collection of data on subgroups and private sector commodities; and 60s for clinic record-keeping and feedback to clients, data-based monitoring, and the use of research findings to improve the program.
- **Quality** – 2017 scores ranged widely, although most items had high ratings: 100 for the use of WHO SOPs, tasksharing guidelines, and QOC indicators in public facilities; 93 for clinic/community structures to monitor QOC; 80 for QOC indicators in private facilities; in the 70s for access to IUD removal and provider bias data; 67 for logistics; in the 50s for training, supervision, and access to implant removal; but only 44 for sterilization counseling.
- **Accountability** – Scores included 100 for client-provider dialogue; 93 for mechanisms to monitor discrimination and free choice and to solicit client feedback at the facility level; and 70s for mechanisms to review violations and report denial of services.
- **Equity** – Individual scores show why the dimension averaged the lowest in 2017. Although scores for anti-discrimination policies and STM access were about 80, ratings were much lower regarding the lack of provider discrimination against population sub-groups (57), CBD coverage of underserved populations (51), and LAPM access (49).



## Implications

Mongolia’s total population grew from 2.2 million in 1990 to 3.2 million in 2019. Annual population growth increased from about 1% in 1990 to 1.8% at present. A country with very vast territory and widely dispersed population, it achieved considerable socioeconomic and political transformation since democratization in the 1990s. The country’s economy grew rapidly from 2011 to 2014 to achieve middle-income status due mainly to its extractive industries and livestock agriculture sector. A few years of downturn followed, but in 2018, the economy returned to double-digit growth. Poverty, however, remains a problem; 38.8% of the population is poor based on the national poverty line. As the UNFPA Country Programme Document 2017-2021 noted, Mongolia already has its Long-term Sustainable Development Vision 2016-2030 in place and strongly supports the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) agenda. Mongolia has also developed strong capacity in data collection and analysis as evidenced by its censuses and surveys.<sup>iii</sup> Estimates show the total fertility rate increasing from 2.4 lifetime births per woman in 2005-10 to 2.9 in 2015-2020. The country is young; 37% of the population are less than 20 years of age. Track20 estimates that about 41% of all women in Mongolia are using modern contraception compared to 53.5% among married women, with about 20% of married women having an unmet need for FP, the latter an increase over 16% in 2013 cited by UNFPA along with 36% unmet need among females aged 15-19. Also notable is the abortion ratio rising from 169 per 1,000 live births in 2008 to 189 in 2013.

Mongolia’s improving NCIFP results from 2014 to 2017 attest to the country’s efforts to improve its FP program, particularly regarding the FP strategy, data systems and utilization, the quality of service provision, and accountability. The results also flagged out some items that lag behind, particularly counseling sterilization clients about the method being permanent, LAPM access along with access to implant removal, and CBD coverage of underserved areas and populations, as well as two operational systems—training and supervision – which affect the quality of services. These challenges are for discussion and appropriate action among the country’s stakeholders in their efforts to further strengthen the national FP program.

<sup>i</sup> Suggested citation: Avenir Health Track20. “The National Composite Index for Family Planning (NCIFP): MONGOLIA 2017 Scores and 2014-2017 Trends”. 2017 NCIFP Policy Brief Series (2019).

<sup>ii</sup> FP2020 is a global initiative through which governments, civil society, multilateral organizations, donors, the private sector, and the research and development community work together to enable more women and girls to use contraceptives by 2020. See <http://www.familyplanning2020.org/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/data/transparency-portal/unfpa-mongolia>. See also <https://data.worldbank.org/country/mongolia?view=chart>