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Journey to Job: New Film Explores Inequality

and Unemployment in Mongolia

Unemployment is one of the most critical issues facing Mongolia today. Though it was once considered one of the world's fastest growing economies, the country's employment rate has risen steeply in recent years. Last year, nearly *12 percent* of Mongolians were out of work. The situation is even more dire for certain segments of the population: according to Mongolia's National Statistical Office, 30 percent of people aged 20 to 24 are unemployed, a figure that soars to more than 70 percent for people with disabilities.

A new documentary argues that Mongolia's unemployment crisis cannot be tackled without acknowledging this disparity and the social inequalities that make it possible. On July 28, a team of emerging civic leaders premiered the film *Journey to Job*, which aims to raise awareness of these social and institutional barriers facing young people seeking employment. The film was the culmination of their participation in **World Learning's Leaders Advancing Democracy (LEAD) Mongolia program**, which works with democracy advocates to spur change in their communities.

Journey to Job focuses on the stories of three people: Otgonjargal, a young deaf man and skilled carpenter who has been actively but unsuccessfully looking for a job for three years; Munkhzaya, a single mother who hasn't been able to find employment since her daughter was born with a disability six years ago; and Otgontsetseg, a 16-year-old woman who recently migrated from rural Mongolia to Ulaanbaatar, where she works as a bricklayer to support her family. Their distinct experiences underline the ramifications of social inequality.

"Our society has so much stigma against these groups. They can't find jobs and Mongolia's employers are losing important talent," says Ariunsanaa Batsaikhan, CEO of Maral Angel Foundation for Children with Spina Bifida. As the documentary illustrates, stigmatized groups—such as persons with disabilities or internal migrants—are quickly labeled "lazy," "uneducated," or "incapable" and may be barred from decent work, rather than being recognized for the skills and talents that they bring to the table

The film argues that social inclusion can help close the unemployment gap for marginalized groups and lead to a more just and vibrant society. The film makers were exposed to social inclusion approaches through their LEAD Mongolia fellowship and TAAP Inclusion analytical framework and trainings. The framework and trainings helped the LEAD Mongolia fellows use data to understand and recognize who was excluded in Mongolian society, and look for solutions for how to help integrate these marginalized groups. "After taking these workshops, we wanted to speak for as many identities as possible in a really big way," notes Ganzorig Dolingor, a LEAD Fellow and co-founder and chief editor of the popular news site *Unread Today*.

And in addition to that moral imperative, there is an economic argument for embracing inclusion: Citizens who are excluded from society cannot contribute to it. "There's the threat of what we lose economically when we don't include all groups," says Dolgion Aldar, executive director of the Independent Research Institute of Mongolia (IRIM), who provided data and research for the documentary project. Aldar commends the group and argues that issues of poverty and unemployment should be topics of interest not only to academics and politicians, but to everyone

in society. “Young leaders [like LEAD Fellows] are drivers of change,” she says. “It’s important for them to understand and acknowledge deeper social and structural constraints that prevent people from improving their lives.”

Working on the documentary gave the team greater insight into inclusion. “The LEAD program made me see the broader picture,” Dolingor says. The team itself was composed of leaders from deaf advocacy and LGBT rights groups. They’re from rural areas as well as urban. Dolingor says that having a diversity lens improved the impact of the *Journey to Job* effort: “When we include more groups [in our projects] we can have more impact. We can make more change.”

Now that the documentary is complete, the group will circulate *Journey to Job* widely to raise as much awareness as possible. “We want to show it to many target groups, especially corporate businesses,” says Enkhjin Selenge, one of the team leaders. Ultimately, the aim is to convince employers to hire talent from disadvantaged groups. “We want to make an impact on hiring practices,” Selenge says. “If companies start hiring disadvantaged groups, then we succeeded.”

There is already hope that the team’s effort is moving the needle. Several LEAD Fellows are initiating conversations with their own employers about inclusive hiring: Selenge’s employer, Toyota Mongolia, plans to revise the company’s hiring policy and will soon hire its first-ever person with a disability, while the construction company where Batsaikhan works when not involved in civil society just hired a former convict and a deaf welder. The team also shared *Journey to Job* with department heads from Ulaanbaatar’s Municipal Employment Office as well as with Oyu Tolgoi, one of the largest private sector employers in Mongolia.

But their advocacy journey is just beginning. “We need to do more to raise awareness,” Selenge says. “This documentary is just one step.”

Photo: LEAD Mongolia Fellows at the premiere of “Journey to Job”



We Measure What Matters: How to Make Your M&E More Inclusive

Many organizations are refining the ways in which they measure the impact of their programs to ensure they are meaningfully inclusive. In a recent conversation at IREX about the outcomes of the Mandela Washington Fellowship (part of the Young African Leaders Initiative, funded by the US government), a colleague raised a recurrent challenge of inclusive monitoring and evaluation (M&E). "I have a feeling we're making a big impact on persons with disabilities and raising awareness about inclusion and persons with disabilities (PwD)," she shared, "but none of our traditional indicators relate to this." Underlying her observation is an important issue - how can we make M&E sensitive to issues of inclusion when that might not be the explicit goal of the program?

One approach that we at IREX have found to work well is [Most Significant Change](#) (MSC) with Participatory Video (PV), a method the Mandela Washington Fellowship has used for the past four years. MSC is a participatory M&E method that explores program outcomes, while PV lets participants directly communicate their own stories and findings. As we have adapted it, the MSC process has three main phases:

- **Story collection:** We cast a broad net and collect examples of all types of program outcomes - both intended and unintended - by asking participants to share their most significant change since participating in the Fellowship. This gives us a better picture of what changes program activities lead to and helps us understand the impacts different groups, such as women or PwD, might experience.

- Story selection: Participants and/or other stakeholders go through a process to elect a story that best represents the outcome they think is most significant. The criteria participants develop in this selection process can serve as indicators about what different stakeholders value, especially if one selection group is made up of members from marginalized communities. Once a representative significant change has been selected, participants film that story using PV methods. That way, others can hear the outcomes directly from the source, a powerful tool for those who don't usually get to share their own experiences with a broader audience.
- Story analysis: Participants analyze all the stories collected use pile sorting to pull out trends and create learning statements about their findings. This encourages immediate learning and can strengthen the community around the program and evaluation activities.

Our findings from using PV and MSC with the Mandela Washington Fellowship over the past years have shown some interesting trends around inclusion. One major theme was a change in perception of what it means to be a leader for PwD. Beth Ndirangu, a Fellow from Kenya with cerebral palsy, shared that she had never thought of herself as a leader because of her disability. As a result of the Fellowship, she realized leadership is more than being in charge, and she has embraced that perspective to initiate workshops for caregivers. You can hear more from Beth directly at [this link](#). We also saw that the knowledge and connections gained from the program helped several Fellows with disabilities expand their own work. For example, [Ojok Simon](#), a partially blind Fellow from Uganda, was able to connect with resources that allowed him to scale the reach of his organization, [HIVE Uganda](#), which trains youth with disabilities in beekeeping to provide them with livelihood skills. Similarly, [Grace Jerry](#) shared how participating in the Fellowship elevated her profile so she could connect with other organizations working to increase the political participation of women with mobility disabilities like her in Nigeria. Finally, we noted that exposure to Fellows with disabilities raised awareness about issues affecting PwD across the cohorts. This inspired Moffat Louis and Juby Peacock from Botswana to take action. After returning home to Botswana, Moffat created [Inclusive Directions](#) and later worked with [Juby to organize a disability seminar](#) to learn more about policy and implementation for PwD in the Southern Africa region.

Lastly, MSC is a powerful technique for ongoing monitoring and adaptive management. In fact, MSC is particularly well-suited for complex projects where the pathway to achieving target outcomes may be uncertain or assumptions about how certain groups will be affected need to be tested. Participant stories generate concrete examples of where change is happening (or not happening) and insights into what is enabling or hindering those changes so that you can adjust activities accordingly. Most importantly, the participatory nature of the technique breaks down barriers between evaluators and other key participants, fostering a culture of shared ownership and learning that is hard to replicate using more traditional approaches to M&E. To learn more about how MSC is being used and how, check out the online bibliography [here](#).

Photo: Courtesy Anne Laesecke, 2015 Mandela Washington Fellows capture Grace Jerry's Story of Change on film during the 2016 West Africa Regional Conference



The Inclusion Agenda: Older People, Displacement and Gender-Based Violence

In 2014, [HelpAge USA](#) partnered with the Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to study (see the full report [here](#)) the occurrence and risk factors of gender-based violence (GBV) among adults over the age of 49 in long-term displacement situations in Afghanistan, Columbia, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Syria, and Iraq. Adults in the study came from different settings and had different paths of displacement, but yet there were unifying factors that brought to light the prevalence of GBV among older people in prolonged displacement.

The number of people displaced by conflicts and persecution has increased 50 percent in the last five years, leading to unprecedented numbers of people forced from their homes. This, in addition to an aging population and an average displacement of 26 years has led to larger numbers of adults over 49 in prolonged displacements. Unfortunately, older people have frequently been overlooked in policy, research and programming regarding GBV in humanitarian settings.

The study found that GBV does not stop when you age or when you flee a conflict setting. Here are some of the highlights of the study:

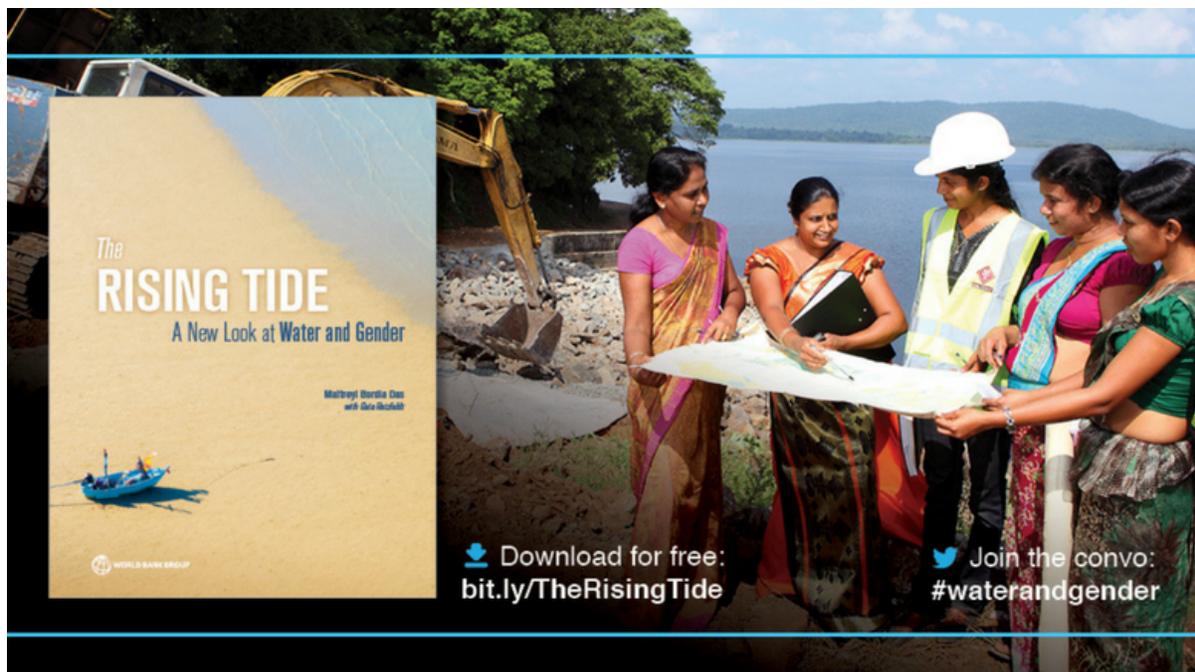
- Older people living in long-term displacement are at risk for violence including gender-based violence.
- At least one in ten older people - both men and women - have experienced some type of GBV in their lifetimes.

- In the year previous to the survey, 1 in 5 older people experienced some form of violence including GBV.
- Older women are two and a half times more likely to experience intimate partner violence than men.
- Men are not immune from violence and are more likely to experience violence directly associated with armed conflicts - some of which is related to gender dynamics.
- Across all sites, more than 1 in 3 older people experienced domestic violence.
- In the previous year, one in seven experienced domestic and one in seven also suffered from intimate partner violence.

In order to ensure that older people are included in humanitarian efforts and GBV prevention measure, HelpAge suggests removing age caps on data collection to include those over 49. We must also expand existing services to include older people and involve them in design and delivery of services. Finally, we need to raise public awareness among advocates, policy makers, researchers, funders, and program planners and implementers of the need to prevent and address GBV in older populations.

Implementing these changes to program design and implementation can help make programs more inclusive and responsive to the needs of older persons.

Photo: Report cover page "Age is No Protection: Prevalence of gender-based violence among men and women over 49 years of age in five situations of protracted displacement", AAAS, July 2017.



Lessons from a Rising Tide: A New Look at

Water and Gender

A new World Bank report, [“The Rising Tide: A New Look at Water and Gender”](#), provides insights in to how water often reflects, and even reinforces, gender inequality. The premise of the report is that “a rising tide of social, economic and technological progress has provided the world with immense new opportunities. This proverbial tide has raised many boats, but has left others behind. Individuals and groups who belong to certain ethnicities, religions, tribes, castes, races, disability statuses, locations, or sexual minorities have not been lifted.” The report builds on the previous World Bank’s [Inclusion Matters](#) report which argues that social inclusion matters for itself and also because exclusion is too costly, in framing water as *an asset, a service, and a space* with distinct economic as well as noneconomic and nonmonetary values, each of which has gendered connotations. The authors view the relationship between water and gender from the context of a new World Bank Gender Strategy that has four key objectives: improving human endowments; creating more and better jobs; increasing women’s ownership and control of assets; and enhancing women’s voice and agency, while engaging men and boys.

The introduction of the report provides a clear message—interventions in water-related domains are important in and of themselves and for enhancing gender equality more broadly. The report discusses examples of initiatives that have had intended and unintended consequences for gender equality, and underscores the importance of good diagnostics before designing action. The authors note that it is “not just the design but the delivery of policies and programs matter for gender equality” and argue for an integrated approach for advancing gender equality in water-related domains. The report also argues that “the interplay of gender and water does not mean that we need to address only female vulnerability” and that the intersection of multiple identities can determine advantage and disadvantage with regard to water. Development practitioners taking a cross-identities approach to social inclusion will find significant take-aways from viewing water as an asset for employment, water as a service that is viewed by and affects men and women differently, and water as something that both occupies physical space and serves as a marker of social, political and religious spaces. If, as the report argues, “water is often the space for the play of gender politics,” what can it tell us about the play of politics across intersecting identities?

Photo: Cover Training Manual “The Media On Gender-Sensitive Journalism”, International Labour Organization, 2014.

This Week’s TAAP Staff Pick:



1. [Why Millennials are Introducing Creativity to Diversity and Inclusion Programs](#): Check out this Forbes piece on how Millennials are looking beyond just diversifying hiring numbers to introducing programs to help everyone feel included in the office environment. "They [Millennials] want to build an environment which nurtures abstract and more complete types of thinking, rather than trying to hit a milestone for having a certain number of one type of worker on staff."

Photo: "Why Millennials Are Introducing Creativity To Diversity And Inclusion Programs", *Forbes*, September 2017.



Got Inclusion?

We want to hear from you! Please share your inclusion activities, success stories, upcoming events, and intriguing resources. Send to TAAP@worldlearning.org.

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