

FIRST DELIBERATIVE POLLING RESULTS REPORT FOR THE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – TOMORROW'S CITY EVENT IN ULAANBAATAR

On December 12-13, 2015 the Capital City Governor's Office hosted Mongolia's first ever Deliberative Polling. At the initiative of the Governor of the Capital City, more than 300 Ulaanbaatar citizens gathered to prioritize projects and programs to be implemented under the Master Plan to develop the city. The active participation of the invited citizens in two days of deliberation made for a successful event that made significant inputs that will be reflected in city planning and decision making. This Deliberative Polling also provided an example of a new technique to increase democratic participation in Ulaanbaatar to ensure that citizens are fully engaged in governance.

Following the Deliberative Polling, some actions resulting from the deliberation have been taken. For instance: During the development of an Action Plan for the implementation of the "Ulaanbaatar 2020 Master Plan and Development Approaches for 2030", the 14 projects discussed during the poll by the citizens were included in the Action Plan according to the prioritized order emerging from the Deliberative Polling. The highest scoring 9 projects were included in a package of 90 projects marked for implementation as a priority within the Action Plan. The remaining 5 projects were included in the "List of Bigger Projects to be studied and implemented". These prioritized lists within the Action Plan were approved by Government Resolution #174 of 2016. As a document that was adopted by the Parliament, the Master Plan is legally binding document that lays out plans that are to be implemented jointly by the citizens and residents of the city as well as all levels of city organizations.



Who participated?

A scientific random sample of Ulaanbaatar's citizens participated in the deliberation at the Government Palace on December 12-13, 2015. 317 citizens attended both days of the event, and together they were statistically representative of the whole population in terms of their demographics and attitudes on the issues to be discussed. These 317 were selected in two basic steps. Initially, 1500 households were randomly selected using a methodology based on household lists as well as maps of each local area to ensure no residences were left out. From the selected households, 1500 survey respondents were randomly selected from household members over 18 years old. These selected household respondents participated in pre-polling survey. This survey was carried out in all areas of the city, and contained fair representation of men and women, the youth and the elderly, and ger area residents as well as apartment residents. As a second step, 400 respondents were randomly selected out of the 1500 respondents and invited to the Deliberative Polling event organized at the Government Palace. This process put a microcosm of the city in one place where they could really think about the challenges facing the city including the advantages and disadvantages of each of the 14 projects.

What was the topic of deliberation?

Citizens gathered to discuss prioritization among 14 major investment projects included in the Master Plan for Ulaanbaatar. Citizens prioritized the 14 projects after reviewing information about each project's needs, discussing the pros and cons of each in detail, and following debate and discussion with other citizens during the Deliberative Polling event. This process was an important part of city efforts to effectively organize the state and the capital budget, as well as weigh potential foreign and domestic investments. A set of written briefing materials was produced on the projects and their pros and cons, city finances, and the Ulaanbaatar masterplan and shared with all participants prior to the event.



What happened?

The 317 citizens gathered at the Government Palace and were randomly assigned to small groups. Over the course of two days the citizens listened to several presentations from city officials, reviewed written documentation on each project to be discussed, discussed and debated proposals in their small groups, and asked specific questions to experts representing public and private sector actors as well as civil society about the proposed projects. At the end of the two days they were interviewed a second time to see how their opinions had developed and changed over the course of the event. Through the surveys citizen's shared their opinions on the specific projects, as well as some of the opinions and values that helped to explain their preferences.

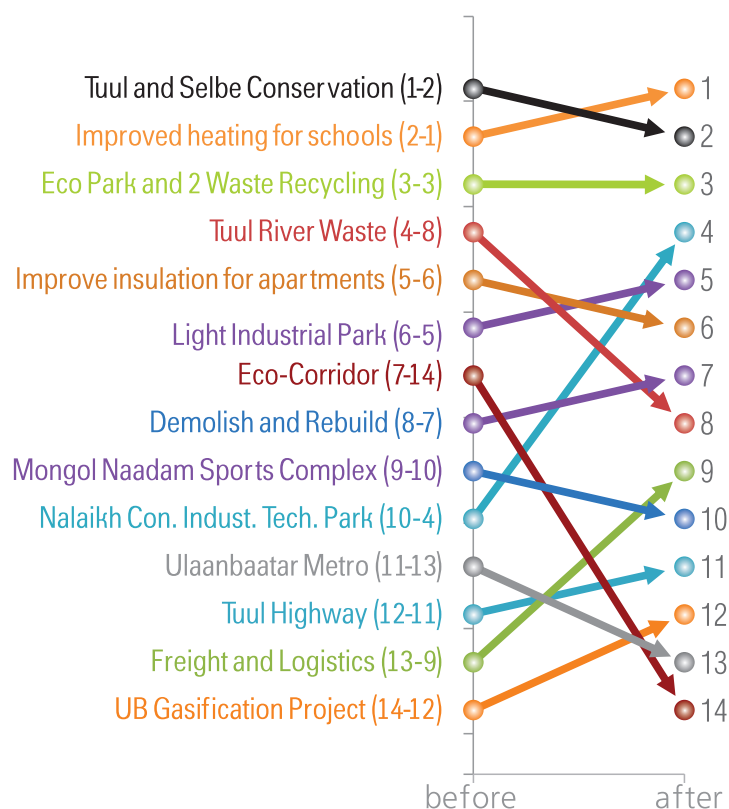


What were the views expressed by the citizens?

14 proposed investment projects were considered and debated by citizens. All of the projects received favorable ratings, with every project achieving at least a rating of 6.4 out of 10 for perceived desirability. After deliberation the 5 projects citizens found most desirable were:

PROJECT NAME	DESIRABILITY OF PROJECT RATED ON A SCALE OF 1 TO 10	TREND AFTER DELIBERATIVE POLLING
Improved Heating for Schools and Kindergartens	9.5 out of 10	Slight increase in support
Tuul and Selbe River Protection and Conservation	9.4 out of 10	Slight decrease in support
Eco-Park and 2 Waste Recycling Facilities at Existing Landfills	9.2 out of 10	Very slight increase in support
Nailakh Construction, Industrial and Technology Park	8.9 out of 10	Significant increase in support
Light Industrial Park in Emeelt Area	8.8 out of 10	Slight increase in support

Proposals Before and After Deliberation



Over the course of deliberation citizen priorities changed. Eight of the fourteen projects changed significantly: three went up and five went down. The graphs show how support for each project shifted from before to after the deliberation.

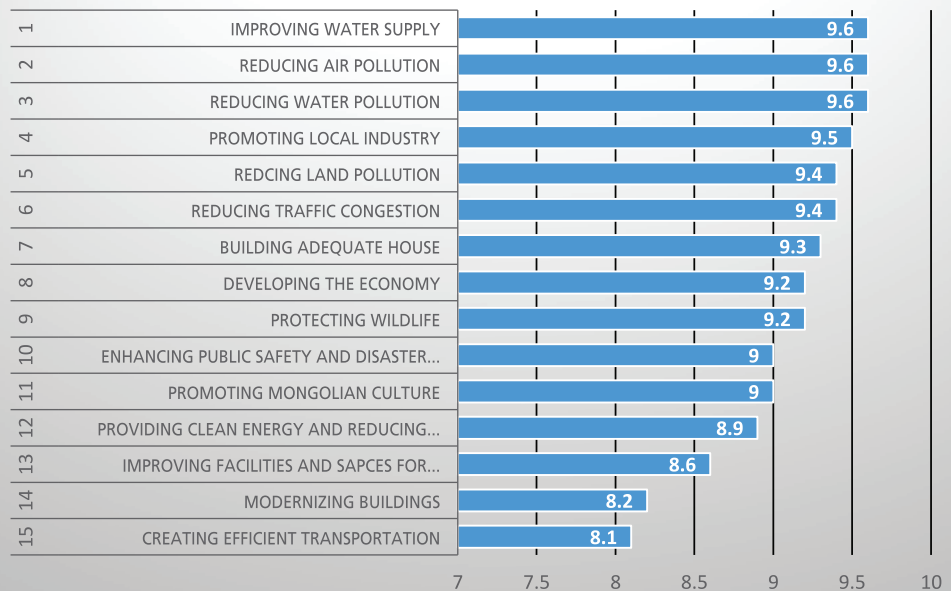
Remark: The notations in parenthesis show the rankings before and after deliberation

Review of these changes in opinion as well as participant answers about their values and ideas about city development provide three clear concerns that citizens have.

1. Citizens wanted to prioritize projects that would improve the environment.
2. Citizens also supported projects that would decentralize city and potentially stimulate the economy.
3. Citizens were concerned about debt and taxes and urged care in making spending decisions.

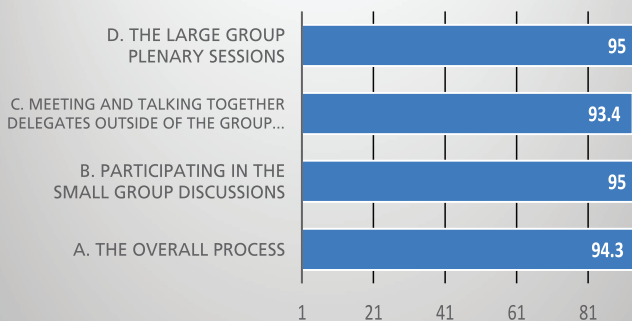
When asked to evaluate 15 possible policy goals, the citizens emphasized environmental concerns. Four of the top 6 were improving water supply, reducing air pollution, reducing water pollution, reducing land pollution.

Desirable Public Policy Goals



Other questions showed that citizen interest in decentralizing the city seemed to emerge both from a desire to see the local economy stimulated, but also from a feeling that it would create safer and healthier environment by moving relevant industries from the city center in order to reduce air, soil and water pollution. Concerns about debt and only limited support for increasing taxes to quicken development were also found in citizen answers to the survey. These concerns probably explain the drop in support for the Metro (which is very expensive) and for the Eco corridor (which had no revenue source). Before deliberation citizens indicated strong opposition to taking on more debt, but moved to a more moderate position after deliberation with more residents indicating support for taking on debt to increase the speed of development.

Percentage of Participants Who Found Each Portion of the Deliberative Polling Valuable



What were the reactions of participants to deliberative polling?

Participants in the Deliberative Polling showed a greater appreciation for diverse opinions after the poll, saying that they had greater respect and less suspicion of people who held different opinions than their own. In addition citizens expressed a stronger impression that the government valued their opinions.

Responses also rated the event highly in the evaluation. 95 percent or more thought each part of the process was "valuable". And more than 95% of participants agreed that they had learned a lot about the lives of people who were different from themselves.

Next steps: The Capital City Governor's Office is setting priorities within its policies that reflect the citizen opinions. In addition, the city has a high level of interest in organizing Deliberative Polls on vital issues facing Ulaanbaatar city and will aim to continue to make decisions with citizens' participation.

Partnerships: The Capital City Governor's Office would like to extend its thanks to Australian Aid for its financial support for the first Deliberative Polling. In addition thanks are extended to the Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University and The Asia Foundation for being key partners in the polling process. Finally thanks are extended to the distinguished members of the Advisory Committee, as well as the Zorig Foundation and the Mongolian Marketing Consultant Group for the critical contributions to the project.