

Working for Equal Access to Education for Blind and Low-Vision Children in Mongolia

Urtnasan Lhagvasuren

The Rehabilitation Training Centre for the Blind
School #116 for Visually Impaired Children
Police Street
Khoroo #11
Sukhbaatar District
Ulaanbaatar
Mongolia

Education in Mongolia – The Facts

There is very little legislation in Mongolia to ensure that visually impaired children receive an education that is of a comparable standard to sighted children. In 2003, the National Federation for the Blind went on a hunger strike to force the government to separate the School for the Deaf and Blind into two independent schools because it was not meeting the needs of all the children. School #116 for the visually impaired opened in August 2004.

TODAY:

- School #116 is the **only** school for visually impaired children in Mongolia
- 75 blind and low-sighted children attend School #116
- 40 children stay in the dormitory because they live in the countryside, hundreds of miles from the school
- There are up to 12 students per class
- A sub-standard curriculum
- There are no Braille textbooks
- There are no Braille university entrance exam papers

AIMS:

- The option of inclusive education
- **All** visually impaired children attending primary **and** secondary school
- 30 – 50% higher wage for special needs teachers
- A maximum of 10 students per class
- Special/ technical equipment financed by the government
- An expanded CORE curriculum
- Access to higher education and vocational training

Table 1
Primary School Attendance

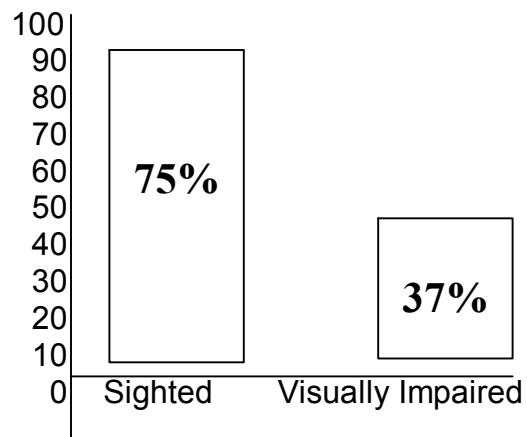
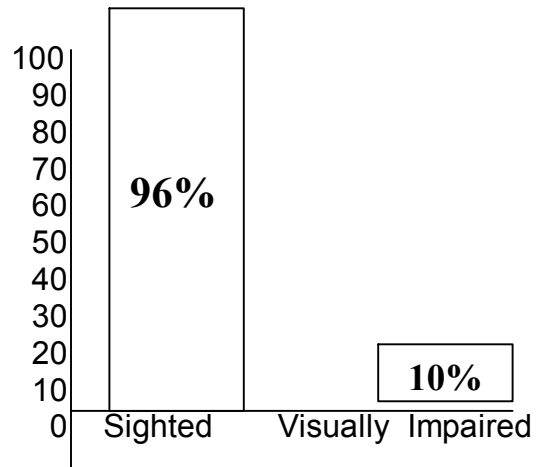


Table 2
Adult Literacy



Living in Mongolia with a Visual Impairment

<p>Urtnasan was 4 years old when she became blind. She did not attend school until she was 9 because her parents did not know that there was a special school where blind children could study with deaf children. She did not know how to read or write. There were no Braille textbooks; the teachers prepared a few materials by hand. The school only offered 8 grades of study, 2 years less than mainstream schools.</p>	<p>Therefore, Urtnasan attended mainstream School #83 to finish her education. She relied on her parents to dictate her textbooks to her, which she carefully transferred into Braille by hand. Her favourite subject was English – she wanted to become an interpreter. She took the entrance exam into the Foreign Language State College verbally because there were no Braille exam papers.</p>	<p>She passed but was refused admission. The teachers thought it would be too difficult to teach her. She attended the Private Orkhon School instead, taping lectures and copying them up by hand after class. She performed very well and many of her friends asked her for help with their homework. Since graduating nine years ago, she has worked as a translator and is now the Director of the Rehabilitation Training Centre for the Blind.</p>
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Table 3
% Unemployment

