



FACTSHEET WOP MONGOLIA 2023–2026

Strengthening Water Services in Ulaanbaatar

Water Operator Partnership (USUG – VEI)

BACKGROUND

USUG, Ulaanbaatar’s water utility, serves a rapidly growing city facing aging infrastructure and climate pressures. Under the Millennium Challenge Compact (2023–2026), investments expanded water supply and wastewater treatment. An **IWA AquaRating** assessment identified priority areas for improvement, forming the basis for a **Water Operators’ Partnership (WOP)** to strengthen sustainable operations.



Employees of MCA Mongolia and USUG visit the Dutch water sector

OBJECTIVE & PARTNERSHIP

The WOP strengthened USUG’s technical, financial, and management capacity, enabling sustainable operation of new infrastructure and high-quality services. Through peer-to-peer learning and best practices, it also prepared USUG to mentor other regional utilities. The partnership between USUG, VEI (seven Dutch utilities), and MCA-Mongolia focused on long-term cooperation, knowledge exchange, and capacity building to strengthen sustainable operations.



IMPLEMENTATION

Based on AquaRating results, VEI and USUG created an organizational structure consisting of **11 multidisciplinary Project Groups**. Staff addressed practical improvements with guidance from mentor experts from the Dutch water sector, through on-the-job coaching, study visits, expert missions, online sessions, and leadership training via **Appreciative Inquiry**.

QR code with an arrow pointing to the text: Scan the QR code to watch the videos of the Mongolian visits to the Netherlands.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

AquaRating score (selected domains):

- 2021 Baseline: 48.3**
- 2023 Diagnostic: 65.2**
- 2025 Self-assessment: 88.9**



THE WOP PARTNERS
MONGOLIA WATER COMPACT
ULAANBAATAR BULK WATER SUPPLY PROJECT





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KEY RESULTS



The WOP strengthened operations, finance, and management, including risk-based asset management, modernized procurement, and upgraded wastewater operations. Automation, telemetry, cybersecurity, emergency preparedness, and environmental management were reinforced. Non-revenue water was reduced using IWA methods, while HR and customer service improvements, supported by digital tools, increased customer satisfaction by 30%.


The partnership led to visible improvements in internal processes, decision-making and staff confidence, strengthening USUG’s ability to plan, operate, and manage its expanding infrastructure. Project Groups became more data-driven, cross-departmental cooperation improved, and managers gained stronger strategic insight. Staff reported higher motivation and professional recognition.






These improvements also sparked a deeper institutional culture shift: teams increasingly work with shared ownership, transparency, and a stronger habit of using evidence to solve operational challenges

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT & IMPACT

The WOP program has positioned USUG to operate new water and wastewater infrastructure more reliably, reduce operational risks, and continue its evolution into a modern, high performing utility. **96 USUG staff** were trained through 11 Project Groups, supported by 17 mentor experts, 11 study visits, and 6 mentor missions. The WOP boosted data-driven decision-making, collaboration, and staff confidence, and prepared USUG to take on a future mentoring role. Results are being embedded in **USUG’s Strategic Plan 2040** to ensure long-term impact.

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-  11 Projects groups
-  17 Mentor experts
-  11 Study visits
-  6 Mentor missions



GWOPA Congress Bonn 2025

