As a whole, Mongolia is the least densely populated country in the world with just two inhabitants per square kilometre and a significant portion of the population living nomadic lifestyles in the unspoiled countryside. Yet, nearly 1.5 million people, half of Mongolia’s total population, reside within the nation’s capital – Ulaanbaatar.

Ulaanbaatar has grown. Day by day new groups of nomads arrive in the city searching for the promises of modern life. However the city’s rapid urbanization has caused a serious impact on the health of the population.

People living in cities increasingly lead lifestyles characterized by unhealthy diet, reduced physical activity, stress, excessive alcohol and tobacco consumption: all risk factors for the development of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). As a result, around 40% of the adult population suffers from hypertension, the primary cause of morbidity and mortality from cardiovascular diseases (CVD).

Better Hearts Better Cities is a Novartis Foundation initiative which seeks to improve cardiovascular health in low-income urban communities by adopting a multisector, multidisciplinary approach to improve the control of hypertension as a key risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

Find out more about Better Hearts Better Cities.