



FAO's ROLE IN THE MONGOLIA DZUD APPEAL 2010

Launch date: 11 May 2010

Background

During 2009/10, Mongolia faced its most severe winter in nearly five decades. Over 7.8 million head of livestock have died due to the extreme cold and snow, and a lack of fodder triggered by prolonged drought during the previous summer. This cumulative disaster, called *dzud* in local language, has had a catastrophic impact on families who rely on intensive herding practices for survival. By the end of April 2010, thick snow continued to blanket 60 percent of Mongolia, measuring up to 61 cm and leaving animals unable to graze for months. Over 217 000 families (769 106 people) have been affected.

Over 50 percent of rural Mongolians live in poverty. Families have grown increasingly vulnerable due to the lack of energy sources for heating, warm clothing, food supplies and access to basic services. Fiscal constraints have caused the retraction of welfare benefits such as 'child money', upon which many rely to provide for their families.

Unlike sudden onset disasters, the *dzud*'s impact has escalated over months, forcing an increasingly weakened population to battle for day-to-day survival with diminishing food stocks, income and health status. Its impacts will further unfold through the spring and summer seasons, as flooding, displacement and mass migration generate further hardship.

The Mongolia Dzud Appeal 2010 was launched on 11 May to support Government efforts in responding to the most critical needs. Total funding requirements of **USD 18 150 794** are being sought to: (i) meet emergency needs of the most vulnerable groups and institutions; (ii) address protracted humanitarian and early recovery needs; and (iii) strengthen capacity at community and national levels to prepare for and respond to crises.

Challenges facing livelihoods

The livestock sector employs 30 percent of Mongolians and is a core survival strategy for nomadic families that rely entirely on pastureland livestock. Their animals, primarily sheep and goats, are dying rapidly from starvation and the severe conditions brought on by the *dzud*. Families are losing their direct source of food, fuel from animal by-products and income from the sale of dairy products, cashmere and meat. Women and children have been worst affected. The sector contributes greatly to gender equality by creating employment for women, while products such as milk play a key role in child nutrition.

The magnitude of this winter's losses is three times greater than the previous most severe *dzud*. As of the end of April 2010, more than 8 700 families lost all of their animals and nearly 33 000 families lost over half of their flock. During spring – an essential time of pasture regeneration and livestock birth – challenges will intensify as weakened animals continue to perish and miscarry, thawed carcasses threaten human and animal health and intense snowmelt triggers flooding. Despite significant animal losses, it is believed that the current livestock population exceeds the carrying capacity of pastureland.



Dzud-affected herders receiving livestock inputs

Herders lack the basic supplies they need to save their animals, such as fodder, animal feed and veterinary medicines. As experienced during previous and less severe *dzuds*, the deterioration in livelihoods and food security will result ultimately in deepened levels of poverty and increased migration. Preventing further livestock deaths is a time sensitive challenge. Without rapid support, the most vulnerable herders stand to lose their only means of livelihood.



FAO's response

Within the framework of the Mongolia Dzud Appeal 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) appealed for **USD 5.6 million**, to deliver on the most critical needs of *dzud*-affected herders. Unmet funding requirements amount to **USD 4.2 million***. Following the onset of the disaster, FAO set up an Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordination Unit in Mongolia and is leading the efforts of the Agriculture Cluster.

FAO's proposed activities include:

- delivery of time-critical livestock inputs, such as live animals, shelter materials, feed and veterinary supplies;
- provision of production inputs and training for improved fodder production;
- enhancing capacity and planning at all levels in disaster preparedness and risk reduction for future disasters; and
- providing coordination support to increase the effectiveness of the Agriculture Cluster response.

* As of 21 May 2010. For updates on funding status, visit:
<http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/pageloader.aspx?page=emerg-emergencyDetails&appealID=896>





FAO's COMPONENT OF THE MONGOLIA DZUD APPEAL 2010

Total FAO requirements: USD 5.6 million

Project title: Immediate input support to vulnerable herders affected by livestock losses in 12 provinces to protect their livelihoods and strengthen food security (MNG-10/A/32368/R)

Objectives: Maintain the productive capacity of remaining herds and prevent further losses of livestock heads; support vulnerable migrating herder families with the most critical and appropriate livestock inputs; and enhance capacity on disaster preparedness and risk reduction for similar future disasters.

Beneficiaries: 5 000 most vulnerable affected families (around 30 000 people) that owned 100 300 head of livestock and have lost over 50 percent of their stock in 12 affected provinces.

Implementing Partners: FAO, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MoFALI), National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), local government authorities and international NGOs.

Funds Requested: USD 2 920 000.

Vulnerable dzud-affected herders are still at risk of heightened livestock losses. Surviving animals are weak and have lacked adequate feed and much needed veterinary support for months. The proposed project seeks to assess and deliver emergency livestock inputs to 5 000 households. The families to be assisted possessed between 100 and 300 animals – a herd size considered of subsistence level and insufficient to enable profit – and that have lost over half of their stock due to the crisis.

The provision of time-critical assets such as feed, live animals, shelter materials, veterinary drugs/vaccines and animal husbandry supplies will protect herders' livelihoods, prevent further livestock losses and strengthen animals' productive capacity. The project also seeks to support the development of a comprehensive medium-term livestock rehabilitation and recovery programme for dzud-affected areas, with focus on disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

Project title: Pilot intervention to support the vulnerable herder families on dzud disaster risk reduction and preparedness through community fodder production and transfer of technical skills (MNG-10/A/32369/R)

Objectives: Supply fencing material, seeds and necessary supplies and equipment for the production of improved fodder on pastures; enhance technical knowledge and skills on fodder production and use; and transfer technical know-how on disaster preparedness and risk reduction for future dzuds.

Beneficiaries: 1 500 dzud-affected families (approximately 9 000 people) that have lost more than 50 percent of their stock in 12 provinces.

Implementing Partners: MoFALI, NEMA, local government authorities and international NGOs.

Funds Requested: USD 2 150 000.

Restoring fodder production is crucial in order to mitigate further livestock losses. Animal feed is scarce and beyond the financial means of herders. Traders have as much as tripled the cost of staple livestock feed inputs, such as wheat bran and hay. Furthermore, dry conditions over the past two years will likely affect the regeneration of pasture some areas.

This project seeks to provide fencing material, adapted species and varieties of fodder crop seeds and the necessary equipment and tools to create reserve grazing fields for 1 500 herder families. These efforts will improve livestock feed security for vulnerable subsistence herders who lost over half of their livestock. The project will also enhance the technical knowledge and skills of beneficiaries through providing training on fodder harvesting, conservation, quality assessment and utilization techniques, with focus on community-based management skills, as well as contribute to developing a comprehensive medium-term livestock rehabilitation and recovery programme.

Project title: Coordination of agricultural and livestock emergency and rehabilitation interventions (MNG-10/A/32370)

Objectives: Achieve effective cluster coordination in addressing emergency and rehabilitation needs in dzud-affected areas.

Beneficiaries: Government, NGOs, UN agencies, all dzud-affected herder families.

Implementing Partners: MoFALI, NEMA, local government authorities, international NGOs.

Funds Requested: USD 500 000.

FAO has been designated as the lead of the Agriculture Cluster. Cluster leadership is crucial to ensure coordinated, efficient and effective response to needs in the sector, covering areas such as updating and developing response strategies and action plans, providing technical guidance, developing matrices on who is doing what and where, ensuring effective needs assessment and analysis and assuring monitoring mechanisms are in place. This position requires a full-time Cluster Lead, with more resources than have so far been allocated. Through this proposed project, the Agriculture Cluster will be led by a full-time Cluster Lead, supported by a full-time information manager. The Cluster Lead will be supported by FAO's experience in emergency and rehabilitation coordination and its capacity to provide technical assistance, policy advice and strategy development to authorities in the agriculture and livestock sectors.

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