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Information bulletin

Mongolia: Severe winter

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Glide number: CW-2020-000004-MNG	Date of issue: 23 January 2020
Date of disaster: Ongoing from 2 January 2020	Point of contact: Munguntuya Sharavnyambuu, Disaster Management Programme Manager
Operation start date: N/A	Expected timeframe: N/A
Category of disaster: Yellow	
Host National Society: Mongolian Red Cross Society	
Number of people affected: 22,000 approx.	Number of people to be assisted: TBC
N° of National Societies currently involved in the operation (if available and relevant): N/A	
N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation (if available and relevant): N/A	

This bulletin is being issued for information and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), will seek funding through DREF activation to provide support to the affected population.

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The situation

Pastoral herding is still common in Mongolia and many people herd livestock for their living. It could be challenging to herd livestock in Mongolia where harsh climate dominates. Mongolian herdsman experience dzud¹ which is unique to pastoral communities in Central and East Asia and can be caused by a combination of summer drought, heavy snowfall, and high winds in concurrence with extremely low winter temperatures which combine to cause unsustainable conditions for animal survival. As stated by National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (NAMEM) on 12 January 2020, over 70 per cent of the country is covered by 10-30 cm snow layer and 41 soums² out of nine provinces in white dzud³ condition while 51 soums out of 16 provinces ([Table 1](#)) are near white dzud⁴.

Province	Soums in white dzud condition	Soums in near white dzud condition
Bayankhongor	-	Galut
Bulgan	-	Selenge, Khangal, Bulgan
Govi-Altai	-	Yusunbulag, Khukhmorit, Altai
Dornogovi	-	Altanshree, Ikhkhet
Dornod	Matad	Khalkhgol, Khulunbuir
Zavkhan	Bayantes, Bayankhairkhan, Ikh-Uul, Numrug, Tosontsengel, Tudevtei, Telmen, Tes, Tsagaanchuluut, Tsetsen-Uul, Erdenekhairkhan, Zavkhanmandal,	Santmargats, Songino, Urgamal, Tsagaankhairkhan
Uvurkhangai	Khujirt, Kharkhorin, Bogd	Taragt, Bayan-Undur, Jargalant

¹ A zud or dzud is a Mongolian term for a severe winter in which large number of livestock die, primarily due to starvation due to being unable to graze, in other cases directly from the cold.

² Soum is a second level administrative subdivision of Mongolia.

³ White dzud is when snow density reaches 0.25 gr/cm³ or more in any region and stays for 10 days or more and average monthly temperature is lower than annual average by 3.00C or more or (average quadratic curve is derived) and snow depth is more than 25cm in high mountainous or forest steppe areas, more than 22cm in steppe areas, more than 12 cm in dessert areas.

⁴ Near white dzud is when snow blanket density is 0.20-0.24 gr/cm³ in any region and average snow depth is more than 16cm in high mountainous and forest steppe areas, more than 11cm in steppe areas, more than 5cm in dessert areas.

Province	Soums in white dzud condition	Soums in near white dzud condition
Sukhbaatar	Asgat	Baruun-Urt, Bayandelger, Munkhkhaan, Sukhbaatar, Tuvshinshree, Tumentsogt, Uulbayan, Khalzan
Selenge	-	Yuruu, Khuder
Tuv	-	Bornuur, Zuunmod, Jargalant
Uvs	Malchin, Ulaangom, Tes, Undurkhantai, Zuungobi,	Baruunturuun, Davst, Zuungovi, Naranbulag, Sagil, Tes, Khyargas, Turgen
Khovd	Darvi	Altai, Bulgan, Uyench
Khuvsgul	Galt, Jargalant, Tsetserleg, Shine-Ider, Ikh-Uul	Ikh-Uul
Khentii	Binder, Bayan-Ovoo, Galshar, Batnorov,	, Batshireet, , Jargaltkhaan, Umnudelger, , Undurkhaan, Ulziit
Dundgobi	Erdenedalai, Saintsagaan, Gurvansaikhan, Adaatsag, Deren, Luus, Ulziit, Undurshil, Khuld	-
Arkhangai	-	Jargalant
Darkhan-Uul	-	Darkhan
	41 soums of 9 provinces	51 soums of 16 provinces
	91 soums of 17 provinces	

Each year, National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring (NAMEM) publishes Dzud risk map which uses summer condition, pasture carrying capacity, livestock number, anomalous precipitation and temperature, snow depth, biomass, drought index, temperature forecast etc. to predict which regions may experience severe winter condition. On 2 January 2020, dzud risk map was published (see Figure 1) and 97 soums of 13 provinces were at very high risk, which triggered Dzud EAP for Mongolia.

Currently, as stated by Joint assessment team of NEMA and MOFALI, Arkhangai, Bulgan, Govi-Altai, Dundgovi, Uvurkhantai, Sukhbaatar, Khovd, Khentii and Zavkhan provinces are experiencing severe winter as the local hay and fodder reserves are already used up at soum level. The herder households who are in the affected areas are in great need for cash, livestock medicines and food and nutrition. As it is difficult for livestock to dig under the snow to reach for grass, many of the livestock are injured, especially in western provinces and livestock are perishing due to malnutrition.

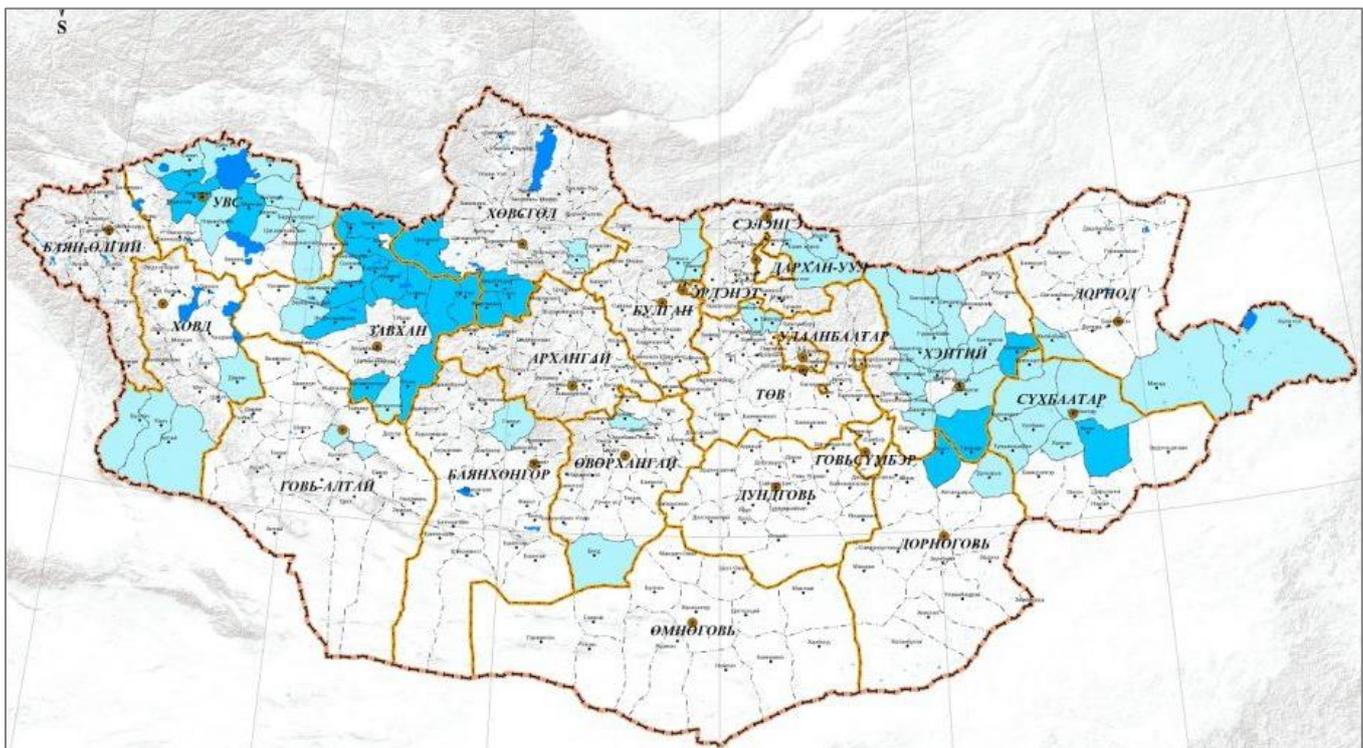


Figure 1. Soums in dzud condition (white: average, light blue: moderate, dark blue: severe).

In December 2019, the Government of Mongolia decided to allocate a funding of 1.7 billion tugriks⁵ to provinces higher risk of being affected by dzud. The following allocations were made by the government:

- Allocated 50 million tugriks to Uvurkhangai, Arkhangai, Dundogovi, Tuv, Bulgan, Zavkhan, Khuvsgul provinces where most herders migrate or go on otor⁶.
- Allocated 1,710 tons of hay without charge, 1,370 tons of fodder at 50% discounted price to Dundgovi, Uvurkhangai, and Tuv provinces.
- Allocated 10 vehicles to Local Emergency Authority, Agency for Food, Agriculture and Health Centers in Uvurkhangai, Dundgovi, Bulgan, Tuv and Khuvsgul provinces.
- Allocated veterinarian medicines and nutrition items worth of 40.3 million tugriks to Uvurkhangai, Dundgovi, Tuv, Zavkhan and Khuvsgul provinces. Mongolian government also limited bran export until 01 April 2020 to protect internal market and keep the price stable and increase the supply to the herders.

In addition, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Mongolia is planning to deliver assistance (cash and animal care kit) to herder households in Dundgovi, Dornogovi and Uvurkhangai province in collaboration with MRCS.

[UNICEF Mongolia](#), the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Zavkhan Governor's Office are piloting a cash transfer for children during climate related shocks in Bayantes, Tes, Ikh-Uul and Tosontsengel soums of Zavkhan province. The current condition in these soums are classified as white dzud (severe winter). The pilot cash transfer implemented through the Child Money Programme system is to benefit all children in the age group of 0-5 years old.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Action

The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) has activated its Early Action Protocol for Dzud. The EAP was to trigger if three or more provinces have more than 20 per cent of very high risk in their area in dzud risk map. In the dzud risk map, as of 2 January 2020, more than 50 per cent of the country identified with dzud risk (21 per cent very high risk, 34 per cent with high risk in terms of dzud) and 25 per cent of the area are in mid-risk (see Figure 2) and eight provinces had more than 20 per cent of very high risk coverage in territory, calculated by Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. Out of that, in most areas of Khovd, Gobi-Altai, Uvurkhangai, Dundgobi, Zavkhan, Arkhangai, Bulgan, Khentii, Sukhbaatar, Dornogobi provinces and some areas of Bayan-Ulgii, Uvs, Bayankhongor, Khuvsgul, Tuv, Dornod, Umnugobi provinces are expected to experience extreme winter continued with deteriorating spring.

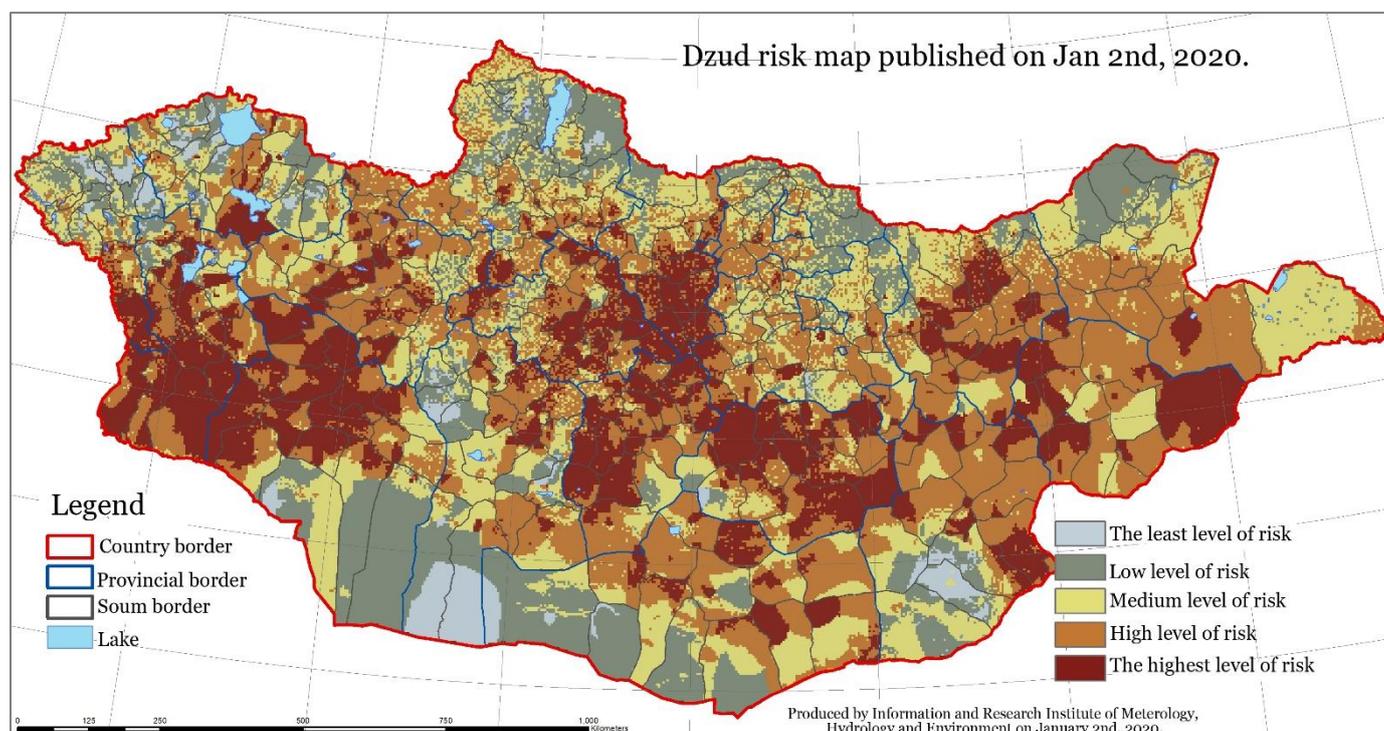


Figure 2: Dzud Risk Map, published on 2 January 2020.

⁵ Tugrik is a Mongolian currency.

⁶ Otor is a Mongolian term for process in which herders move to places for better pastures.

MRCS is currently targeting eight provinces (Govi-Altai, Khovd, Arkhangai, Bulgan, Uvurkhangai, Uvs, Sukhbaatar, Khentii) which had more than 20 per cent of very high-risk coverage their territory.

MRCS will deliver unrestricted cash assistance and livestock nutrition kits to the 1,000 vulnerable households in the target areas to assist them in meeting their immediate needs and save their livestock and livelihoods. The early action will be completed on 8 March 2020; within two months after the trigger date which is on 8 January 2020. However, MRCS continues to receive request from local governors to assist herder families who are residing in provinces which are in white dzud situation.



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How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:



Save lives,
protect livelihoods,
and strengthen recovery
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**
and **safe** living.



Promote social inclusion
and a culture of
non-violence and **peace**.
