

# DREF operation



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Mongolia: Cold Waves

DREF operation n° MDRMN003  
GLIDE n° [CW-2010-000010-MN](#)  
15 January 2010

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

**CHF 150,000 (USD 147,220 or EUR 101,445) has been requested from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 1,500 households or 6,000 people. Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged. The major donors to the DREF are the Irish, Italian, Netherlands and Norwegian governments and ECHO. Details of all donors can be found on:**

<http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/responding/drs/tools/dref/donors.asp>

**Summary:** Beginning from the end of December 2009, Mongolia saw a sharp and sudden drop of temperature combined with continuous heavy snowfall, recognized locally as *dzud*. The current situation has caused a loss of hundreds of thousands of livestock, leaving numerous herders without any source of livelihood. As the *dzud* is a slow-onset disaster which continues for weeks and months, there are challenges in gathering information and conducting emergency assessments.



The Mongolian Red Cross Society is responding to the disaster through its extensive network of primary and mid-level branches. The National Society has launched a national appeal to assist the herders who are suffering most due to their nomadic way of life.

The MRCS runs a programme where well-to-do herders donate seed stock to those who have lost their animals to Winter storms or other emergencies. This programme helps vulnerable families to rebuild income streams. **Rob Few/International Federation**

This operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 18 April 2010; a Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 18 July 2010).

[<click here for the DREF budget, here for contact details, or here to view the map of the affected area>](#)

## The situation

Mongolia is experiencing a severe winter locally known as *dzud*, a continuous heavy snowfall combined with extreme cold. Local media indicate that approximately 90 per cent of the country is suffering from *dzud* conditions, with snowfall reaching between 20-100 centimeters. The average temperature in northern Mongolia has dropped to -35 degrees Celsius, with temperatures in the rest of country hovering between -22



to -17 degrees Celsius. So far, the coldest temperature of -47 degrees was recorded in Uvs province in northern Mongolia. As of 10 January 2010, a total of 198 counties in 19 provinces were suffering from these harsh conditions, together with severe snow storms or blizzards that are classified as between dangerous to extremely hazardous by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

MRCs and the International Federation work together to provide herding families with mobile phones and other technology to help issue early warnings before storms. Once those storms have caused damage to lives and livelihoods, though, it is relief items that are most helpful. **Rob Few/International Federation**

NEMA estimates that a total of 454,000 heads of livestock have died, out of which up to 89 per cent belong to the ten worst-affected provinces. The total loss of livestock is approximately 10 per cent of the estimated 43.6 million heads of livestock in Mongolia. However, unofficial sources report that livestock losses may reach up to two million across the country.

From December 2009 to 11 January 2010, the number of people referred to hospitals for frostbite reached 73, twice the number in the same period of the previous year. Up to five people died during a snow storm that battered the country between 23 and 26 December. In spite of the small number of deaths reported, the *dzud* by its nature typically poses various health risks and social challenges:

- Frostbites and increase in acute respiratory infections due to exposure to extreme temperatures and lack of heating materials (cow dung, etc.);
- Logistical challenges in delivering health care to remote communities as roads become snowbound, and lack of medicines;
- Needs for emotional support, as snowbound families became isolated for months and people lose their entire livelihoods; and
- Mass migration of herder families in search of pastures and separation of families.

Generally, it is the most vulnerable groups such as the poorest herder families, the elderly, pregnant women and small children, who suffer the most from those conditions.

A meeting of the State Emergency Commission was held on 8 January 2010 and the following decisions were made to meet requests from herders suffering from *dzud*:

- To submit a request to sell 4,000 tonnes of hay and 5,000 tonnes of fodder valued at MNT 1.7 billion (approximately CHF 1.17 million or USD 1.15 million) with a 50 per cent discount to the herders of the most-affected provinces;
- To deliver a national appeal to municipal councils, governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as international organizations and organize a campaign for assistance;
- To process 30,000 tonnes of red wheat that do not meet food standards into fodder, to be exchanged for stocked meat or to be lent to herders jointly with provincial level administration, and study the possibility of exporting meat stocked by herders;
- To conduct a campaign for assistance and arrange well-organized delivery of relief items to local areas; and
- To dispatch emergency working groups to the 12 most-affected provinces.

The government-appointed working groups are operating in the eight most-affected provinces and plan to mobilize cross-country armed forces and border troop vehicles to open blocked roads and deliver hay, fodder, food, clothes and medicines to the herding families. The Mongolian government plans to allocate a

total of MNT 315 million (approximately CHF 217,000 or USD 213,000) to Dundgobi, Zavkhan, Uvurkhangai, Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai, Umnugobi, Arkhangai, Bayan-Ulgii, Tuv, Uvs, Khuvsgul and Khovd provinces to deliver urgent health and social care services to herders.

On 11 January 2010, a high state of preparedness was declared in Gobi-Altai province due to the worsening situation in that area. All traffic was blocked and livestock could not go to pasture due to heavy snowfall.

There are limited opportunities to estimate the number of herding families suffering from the *dzud* and calculate loss and damage as the disaster covers almost 90 per cent of the country and the herders who are most affected are spread over the country due to their nomadic lifestyle. However, according to the ministry of agriculture and food, the number of affected herding families is estimated to be 120,000.

According to the weather forecast of the National Agency of Meteorology, Hydrology and Environment Monitoring of Mongolia, more snowfall is anticipated between January and March, with temperatures between -45 and -28 degrees Celsius.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

In the period from 1999 to 2003, the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) responded successfully, with support from the International Federation, to the severe effects of four successive years of *dzud* and has accumulated good experiences in dealing with such types of disaster. It responded rapidly to the current *dzud* situation, launching a press conference and national appeal to help the herders who are directly impacted by the disaster.

In addition, mid-level branches are intensifying their disaster response actions through the mobilization of volunteers for psychosocial support, engagement of students and schoolchildren in donation campaigns and stronger cooperation and coordination with partner organizations.

In December 2009, the National Society delivered relief items including mattresses, blankets, *ger* (tent) canvases, boots and warm clothes to affected people valued at approximately MNT 50 million (approximately CHF 34,494 or USD 33,898) from its disaster preparedness stocks at headquarters level. MRCS is also distributing clothes to the most vulnerable communities affected by the disaster in 20 provinces and three districts of Ulaanbaatar.

There is an urgent need to replenish MRCS emergency stocks as soon as possible to meet future needs of disaster-affected communities if required.

The National Society also runs a European Union-funded community-based social care project which assists the most vulnerable people within the community in four of the affected provinces of Bayan Ulgiii, Bayankhongor, Khovd and Khentii. The MRCS has started providing material and food assistance to the beneficiaries to help reduce the risk of starvation and frostbite for the urban poor in centres of these four provinces.



This elderly woman, living alone, is one of numerous beneficiaries of the European Union-supported social care project which gives material assistance to vulnerable communities in preparation for the harsh Mongolian winter. **MRCS**

## The proposed operation

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

**Objective 1: To assess the current situation and identify needs for Red Cross actions (immediate and longer term) to assist the most suffering communities.**

**Objective 2: To ensure that up to 1,500 households or 6,000 individuals most affected by the *dzud* disaster receive material assistance that meets their most critical needs for up to one month.**

**Objective 3: To ensure that the National Society replenishes its emergency stock in order to be able to respond to various disasters when required.**

#### **Activities:**

- Dispatch an international team to assess the current situation and identify needs for the Red Cross actions (immediate and longer term) in order to assist the most affected communities;
- Define the critical needs of the most affected communities;
- Develop a selection criteria of the beneficiaries;
- Replenish the National Society's emergency stock with standard items such as mattress, blanket, first aid kit etc.;
- Procure and stock the relief items as a part of disaster preparedness activities;
- Monitor and evaluate the relief activities and provide reporting on relief distributions;
- Organize lessons learnt workshop.

## How we work

*All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

## Contact information

### For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- Mr. Ravdan Samdandobji, Secretary General, Mongolian Red Cross Society, Ulaanbaatar, email: [redcross@magicnet.mn](mailto:redcross@magicnet.mn); phone: +976 11 312 578; fax: +976 11 320 934
- International Federation country office in Mongolia: Mrs. Maija-Liisa Fors, (head of country office); email: [majialiisa.fors@ifrc.org](mailto:majialiisa.fors@ifrc.org); phone: +976 11 312 720; fax: +976 11 321 684
- International Federation regional office in China: phone: +86 10 6532 7162; fax: +86 10 6532 7166
  - Mr. Carl Naucler (head of regional office); email: [carl.naucler@ifrc.org](mailto:carl.naucler@ifrc.org);
  - Mr. Qinghui Gu (regional disaster management coordinator); email: [qinghui.gu@ifrc.org](mailto:qinghui.gu@ifrc.org);
- International Federation Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur:
  - Mr. Jagan Chapagain (deputy head of zone); email: [jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org](mailto:jagan.chapagain@ifrc.org); phone: +603 9207 5700
  - Disaster management unit: Mr. Heikki Väättämoinen (operations coordinator); email: [heikki.vaatamoinen@ifrc.org](mailto:heikki.vaatamoinen@ifrc.org); phone: + 603 9207 5729, mobile: +6012 230 7895
  - Regional logistics unit: Mr. Jeremy Francis (regional logistics coordinator); email: [jeremy.francis@ifrc.org](mailto:jeremy.francis@ifrc.org); mobile: +6012 298 9752, fax: +603 2168 8573
  - Resource mobilization & planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) unit: Ms. Penny Elghady (resource mobilization & PMER coordinator), email: [penny.elghady@ifrc.org](mailto:penny.elghady@ifrc.org), phone: +603 9207 5771

For pledges of funding: [zonerm.asiapacific@ifrc.org](mailto:zonerm.asiapacific@ifrc.org)

[<DREF budget and map below; click here to return to the title page>](#)

## **DREF BUDGET SUMMARY**

MONGOLIA: COLD WAVES

MDRMN003

**ORIGINAL**

### **RELIEF NEEDS**

Clothing & Textiles	85,500
Food	17,250
Medical & First Aid	17,250
<b>Total Relief Needs</b>	<b>120,000</b>

### **TRANSPORT, STORAGE & VEHICLES**

Transport & Vehicles Costs	7,000
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### **PERSONNEL**

International Staff	6,000
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### **WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**

Workshops & Training	500
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### **GENERAL EXPENSES**

Travel	6,000
Office running costs	400
Communication Costs	300
Financial Charges	50
Other General Expenses	

### **PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

Programme Support - PSR (6.5% of total)	9,750
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<b>Total Operational Needs</b>	<b>30,000</b>
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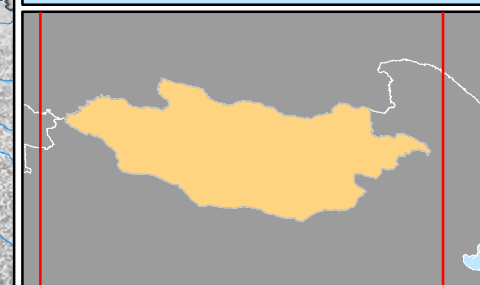
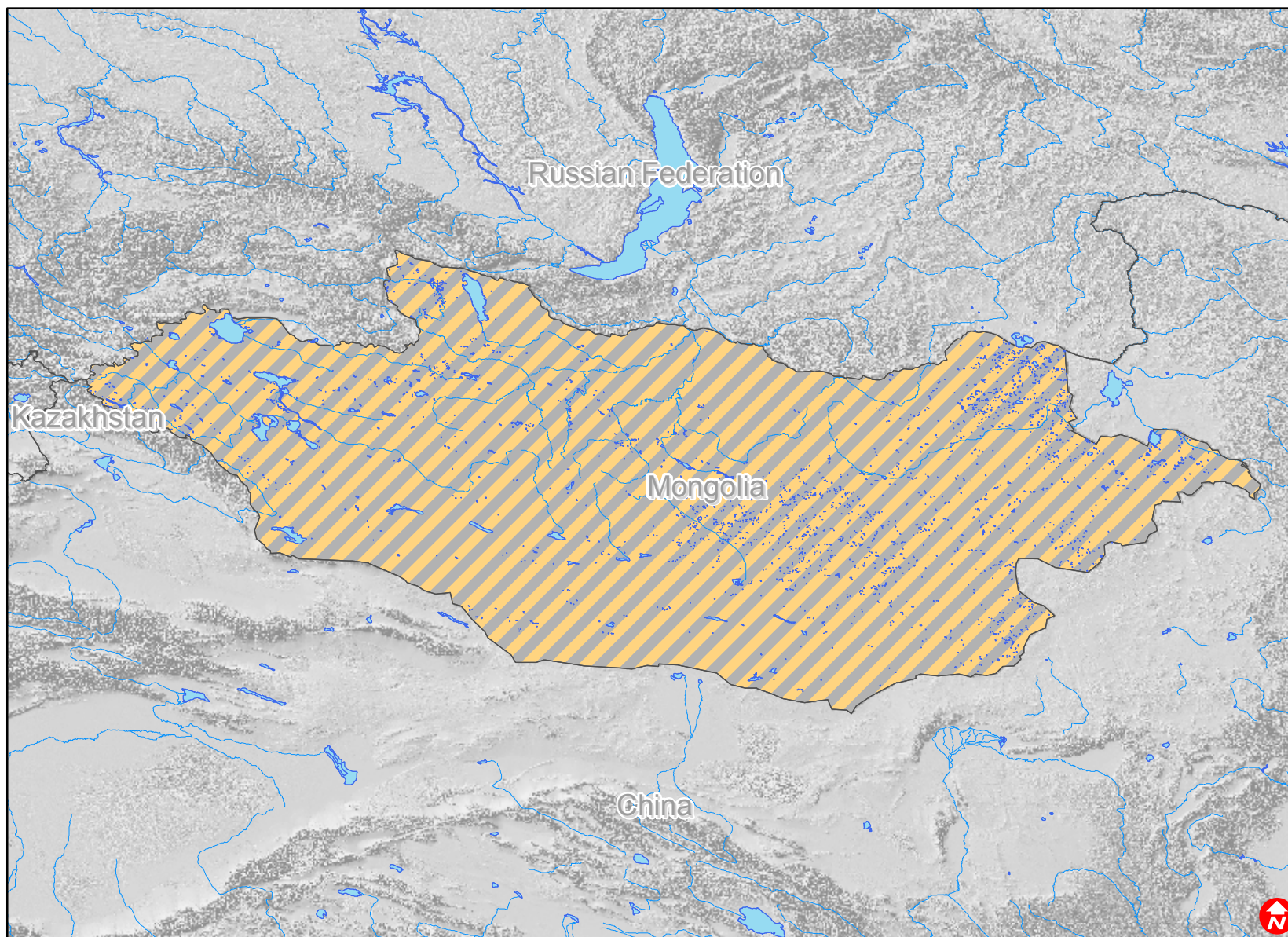
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<b>Total DREF Budget (Cash &amp; Kind)</b>	<b>150,000</b>
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Mongolia is experiencing a severe winter locally known as dzud, a continuous heavy snowfall combined with extreme cold. The national emergency management agency estimates that a total of 454,000 heads of livestock have died, out of which up to 89 per cent belong to the ten worst affected provinces.

-  Lakes
-  Rivers
-  Affected areas