

# ***MONGOLIA: SNOWFALLS***

*29 August 2000*

*Appeal no. 5/2000 (revised)*

*situation report no. 07*

*period covered: 6 July - 18 August 2000*

---

*Even though the effects of the worst winter for thirty years are slowly diminishing, the continued drought is now causing great concern. Given the weakened state of the herds following the dzud, the current shortage of new pasture is likely to exacerbate further the suffering of the nomadic herders, who only have a limited time to prepare their herders before the onset of the winter. The continued support of the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) to the most vulnerable will be essential.*

---

## ***The context***

Severe snowfalls and extremely low temperatures over the winter period preceded by the worst drought in 30 years, affected large areas of Mongolia between September 1999 and April 2000. This and other factors combined to create what is locally called a multiple 'dzud' which caused the death of over two million head of livestock, the mainstay of the rural economy and the main source of food for herders and their families.

Over 450,000 people in 13 Aimags have been affected by the food shortages in the immediate term, and by the loss of their livelihood in the longer term. Throughout the year, the government and the Mongolian Red Cross Society have continued to distribute emergency supplies to the worst affected areas.

In response to the disaster situation, the Federation launched an initial Appeal on 22 February 2000 to provide support to 30,000 beneficiaries over a 3 month period. Further assessments of the situation indicated that the situation was likely to deteriorate further with far reaching consequences for the affected population. Consequently, the Federation launched a revised Appeal on 29 March to support 35,000 beneficiaries with wheatflour, rice and 8,000 winter boots over a 12 month period.

## ***Latest events***

The State Emergency Commission (SEC), the government body responsible for co-ordinating the overall emergency response, has now completed the emergency phase of their operation. Currently, restocking of animals is being carried out with financial assistance from the World Bank.

After such a harsh winter, the herders would normally expect a good summer, but a continued shortage of rainfall has caused another severe drought in many parts of the country. On 15 August, the Mongolian Meteorological Institute reported that 50% of the total territory of Mongolia was dry and that 20% was suffering from a severe drought. This is likely to have a negative impact on many aimags that have already been affected by drought during the summer of 1999 and the disaster of last winter. If sufficient rain doesn't fall before the middle of August, conditions are likely to deteriorate even further. There will not be sufficient time for the regeneration of pastureland and already weakened livestock will not be able to gain enough weight and body fat to survive the forthcoming harsh winter season. All these factors indicate that Mongolia is likely to face another disaster during the winter.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Phase 1: March - September 2000 •**

The Phase 1 of the Mongolia Snowfalls Emergency Appeal included three distributions. The first one was carried out in March, the second one in May and June and the third one is currently underway.

The main objective of the third distribution is to provide a further 3 month supplementary food ration to 6,300 identified households (35,000 beneficiaries) in Dundgobi, Bayankhongor, Overkhangai, Zavkhan, Uvs and Tuv Aimags. This will conclude Phase 1 of the Snowfalls operation by 30 August.

#### *Procurement and transportation of supplies*

Even though contracts for rice and wheatflour for Phase 1 have been signed between suppliers and the Federation, the Mongolian Red Cross Society and the Federation have experienced some problems with the availability and prices of supplies.

- Five aimags have received their final distribution of wheat flour. Due to the non-availability of rice it was substituted with wheatflour.
- Due to a significant increase in the price of wheatflour in Uvs aimag (located some 1,300 kms from Ulaan Baatar), 157.5 tons of wheatflour for this aimag will be procured in Ulaan Baatar for the final distribution.

The savings made through procurement of wheatflour instead of rice, will be used to cover the additional costs for the transportation of wheatflour to Uvs.

In total, 5,300 households in Dundgobi, Bayankhongor, Zavkhan, Uverkhangai and Tuv aimags will receive the following 3 month supplementary food ration:

- 6 x 25 kg bags of Grade II wheatflour
- 1 x 25 kg bag of Grade I wheatflour (instead of rice)

Partially, the rice (21 tons) for Uvs aimag final distribution was procured and shipped by truck from Ulaan Baatar to Uvs with the supplies for the second distribution in May. A further 7.5 tons are needed for 1,000 identified beneficiary households and this will be provided in wheatflour as follows:

The identified 1,000 households in Uvs aimag will receive the following 3 month supplementary food ration:

- 6 x 25 kg bags of Grade II wheatflour for 1,000 families
- 1 x 25 kg bag of rice for 700 households and 1 x 25 kg bag of wheatflour for 300 households

*Distribution*

The wheatflour has been transported by truck from Ulaan Baatar to 76 soums and the main distribution is taking place at the soum centre. A team from the Mongolia Red Cross Society headquarters has been assigned to each of the aimags to accompany the trucks from Ulaan Baatar and to monitor the distributions. They will also be responsible for dissemination of information on the programme and on current MRCS activities.

The shipment of supplies to soums is already underway and has been completed for Tuv, Dundgobi Bayankhongor, Zavhan and Uverkhangai aimags. Distributions in these 5 aimags is likely to be completed before the end of August. The shipment of wheatflour to the Uvs aimag took place on 14 of August.

Once the final distribution within Phase 1 is completed, 6,300 households will have received a 6 month supplementary food ration of wheatflour and 2,827 pairs of working boots will have been distributed to households that were not included in the food distribution.

The distribution schedule for 6 aimags is detailed in the table below:

<b>Aimag</b>	<b>No: of Soums</b>	<b>No: of households</b>	<b>Wheatflour (tons)</b>	<b>Rice (tons)</b>
Dundgobi	15	1,415	247.6	
Bayankhongor	6	465	81.3	
Zavkhan	24	1,230	215.3	
Uverkhangai	19	1,425	249.4	
Uvs	19	1,000	157.5	21
Tuv	12	765	133.9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>6,300</b>	<b>1,085.0</b>	<b>21</b>

*Planning for Phase 2*

A mid-term operational review will take place in the last week of August, involving a joint MRCS/Federation team. Once this review is completed, a decision will be made on the modalities of the second phase of the operation. Special attention should be given to the current drought and its impact on the victims of the dzud.

**Phase 2: October 2000 - March 2001 •**

The next challenge is the emergency assistance to herders over the upcoming winter months in freezing conditions and snow. Winter in Mongolia can start as early as September in the mountainous regions and last until the end of April.

The distribution of relief supplies is far from easy in this large and desolate country with herders constantly migrating in search of fresh pastureland and water for their livestock. Radio will continue to be a vital form of information for the herders. Through their weekly public programme on Mongolian National radio, the Mongolian Red Cross Society will be able to update herders on the Red Cross distributions schedule. The Mongolian Red Cross staff in the branches plays a crucial role in providing assistance through an extensive Red Cross network.

The MRCS will aim at providing the same 35,000 beneficiaries with another 6 month supply of supplementary food and a further 5,000 pairs of winter boots. This target will be revised after the mid-term operational review in August.

Discussions are already underway between the MRCS/Federation and potential suppliers for the procurement of relief supplies for Phase 2 of the operation. The tendering process has started with 2,205 MT of wheatflour and 5,171 pairs of winter felt boots. Transportation and storage are being carefully looked into since distributions are scheduled to take place in September/October 2000 and January/February 2001. The Federation remains in place assisting the MRCS as necessary with the upcoming tendering processes. A field trip to Uvs aimag and their branch enabled the inspection of the presently stored rice and of the possible warehouse space for September and January relief distributions.

#### **Mongolian Red Cross Society •**

Despite a large impact of the Mongolia Snowfalls programme on the overall MRCS programmes, Youth, Disaster Preparedness, Information and Dissemination and Health activities have continued, as well. A consolidated situation report was issued on the first six months of this year.

The National Forum of the Red Cross started on 5 to 7 August in Hovsgol aimag. The main goal of the Forum was to evaluate the activities carried out by the National Society during the first half of the year. This Forum will conclude in Ulaanbaatar on 14 August with a press conference on Disaster Awareness. It is expected that some members of the newly elected parliament, the Head of the Mongolian Herders Association, Members of the Managing Board and both the President and Secretary General of the MRCS will participate in the Forum.

## ***Outstanding needs***

A generous response to the Mongolia Snowfalls Appeal, enabled the MRCS/Federation to provide support to some 6,300 households over the first six month period.

The continued shortage of rain is presenting a very serious problem to the herders as they are preparing their herds and their fodder for the winter. There are many herders who have been badly affected by the snowfalls but have not been on the Red Cross beneficiary lists. The MRCS/Federation might, therefore, consider increasing the scope of its forthcoming winter supplementary food assistance operation.

## ***External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media***

The wife of the Australian Ambassador paid a courtesy call on the MRCS on 16 June 2000. She was accompanied by a number of Australian media who then toured the Dundgobi aimag to see at first hand the effects of the disaster.

Contacts were established with Mission Ost, a Danish registered NGO that has recently started operations in Mongolia. This NGO plans to initiate a six month operation which hopes to reach a total of 12,000 households or approximately 60,000 beneficiaries. They plan to operate in the Uvs aimag which is also being covered by the MRCS. The Federation will co-ordinate their activities in order to avoid duplication.

The MRCS/Federation team visited two aimags in order to film two distributions. The final edited version of this footage was sent to Beijing and made available to both Reuters and ITN for international release. The report was aired on CNN's ASIA NOW on 6 August. .

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

Peter Rees-Gildea  
Director  
Operations Funding & Reporting Department

Hiroshi Higashiura  
Director  
Asia Pacific Department

**This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>**

Mongolia - Snowfalls						ANNEX 1	
APPEAL No 05 /2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				30/08/00	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	PLEDGE
<b>CASH</b>							
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				4,062,050	TOTAL COVERAGE		NUMBER
					101.4%		
Balance carried forward from 1999				0			
AUSTRALIA - RC		16,178	AUD	16,948	04/04/00		0004015
AUSTRALIA - GOVT/RC		98,210	AUD	96,590	14/04/00		0005021
AUSTRALIA - RC		10,000	AUD	10,476	02/03/00		0003078
AUSTRALIA - GOVT/RC		220,000	AUD	216,612	15.06.00	FOOD & BOOTS	
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID		32,000	GBP	82,880	14/03/00		0004014
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID		147,059	GBP	377,942	15.06.00		0006170
BRITISH - PRIVATE		500	GBP	1,295	29/03/00		0004163
BRITISH - RC		4,096	GBP	10,322	18.07.00		0007116
CANADA - RC		10,000	CAD	10,847	25/02/00		0003029
CHINA, TAIWAN - RC		1,000	USD	1,648	26.05.00		0006025
DENMARK - RC		250,000	DKK	54,125	05/04/00		0004097
DENMARK - GOVT/RC		950,000	DKK	200,640	10/05/00		0005081
ECHO		500,000	EUR	778,100	03.05.00	WHEAT FLOUR / STAFF	
FINLAND - GOVT/RC		58,865	EUR	94,861	22/02/00		0004007
GERMANY - GOVT		109,250	DEM	88,919	12/04/00	F/1300 PAIRS OF WINTER BOOTS	0004175
ICELAND - RC		1,000,000	ISK	21,895	29/03/00		0004004
ICELAND - RC		200,000	ISK	4,379	29/02/00		0003031
IRELAND - GOVT		75,000	IEP	148,178	22.06.00		0006256
JAPAN - RC				82,000	02/03/00		0003030
JAPAN - RC				121,000	31/03/00		0004003
JAPAN - RC		2,923,723	JPY	45,496	13.06.00		0006073
REPUBLIC OF KOREA - RC				20,000	29/02/00		0003028
REPUBLIC OF KOREA - RC		730,000	WON	1,083	07.06.00	PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION	0006067
LUXEMBOURG - GOVT		1,500,000	LUF	59,921	07/04/00		0004020
LUXEMBOURG - PRIVATE				275	06/04/00		0004164
MONACO - RC		50,000	FRF	11,985	29/03/00		0005020
NETHERLANDS - RC		15,000	NLG	10,973	13/03/00		0004125
NETHERLANDS - RC		75,000	NLG	54,867	13/03/00		0004171
NORWAY - GOVT/RC		450,000	NOK	89,089	07/03/00		0003079
NORWAY - RC		80,000	NOK	15,575	07/03/00		0003079
PRIVATES				4,233	10.04.00		0008150
PRIVATES				4,027	10.04.00		0008150
TURKEY - RC		20,000	USD	31,480	20/03/00		0003160
SWEDEN - RC		1,000,000	SEK	186,700	31/03/00		0004006
SWITZERLAND - GOVT				100,000	01/05/00	FOOD AND NON FOOD ITEMS	0005041
SWITZERLAND - PRIVATE				1,000	12/04/00		0004165
USAID		618,255	USD	1,043,614	24.04.00	FOOD ASSISTANCE	0006139
UNITED STATES - PRIVATE				82	04/04/00		0004078
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH</b>				4,100,057	CHF	100.9%	
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
Japan	Delegate(s)			17,413			
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES</b>				17,413	CHF	0.4%	
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>							
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT	
<b>SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED</b>				0	CHF		
<b>THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:</b>							
PMN504							