

MONGOLIA: STEPPE AND FOREST FIRES

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General situation

As of 20 May, 21 fires, most of the forest fires, were still ablaze in Zavkhan, Tov, Bulgan, Selenge, Huvsgul and Arhangai aimags. According to the Chairman of the State Emergency Commission, this situation is likely to continue at least to the end of this month.

National society action

The Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) is currently providing relief assistance to 192 affected families in 7 aimags: Tov aimag, one; Selenge, 3; Uvs, 7; Dornod, 117; Huvsgul, 13; Bulgan 8; Hentii, 43. Of 30 tents procured by MRCS, 21 have been distributed, as follows: Selenge (3), Hentii (10) and Bulgan (8). Meanwhile, of the 196 pieces of felt materials ordered for tents, 41 pieces have so far been delivered to Dornod aimag. The remainder will go to Dornod, Hentii, Uvs and Selenge aimags.

There are reportedly additional families affected in Selenge and Uvs aimags. As soon as more precise information has been obtained, the MRCS will provide assistance. Nevertheless, as the situation has stabilised and most of the active fires are now forest fires, it is unlikely that the number of affected families will exceed 220, considerably less than the 370 of earlier estimates.

Of CHF 208,550 made available through the Federation, the MRCS has so far spent CHF 85,000.

In-country response through the MRCS

The MRCS has so far received a total of USD 60,737 in cash and 1,468 metres of cotton materials for gers from embassies, businesses, private groups and individuals. A cash pledge from the Chinese Red Cross Society (US\$ 30,000) is expected shortly through the Chinese Embassy in Ulaanbaatar.

Mid/long-term rehabilitation needs

While providing emergency assistance to the affected families through its aimag branches, the MRCS has initiated a process of identifying post-emergency needs and its role in relation to the local governments which are responsible for post-emergency

assistance. The MRCS is asking aimag branches to conduct research on the affected families in consultation with the local governments. It has also asked them to examine what aid (such as food items) the affected families will continue to require before the introduction of the post-emergency plan. The aimag branches are expected to report to the MRCS HQs by 5 June. The heads of the aimag branches will be called to Ulaanbaatar in the first half of June (preferably before 10 June) to review the relief operation and make a final plan for MRCS involvement in post-emergency assistance. The Regional DPP Delegate from the Regional Delegation in Kuala Lumpur is expected to facilitate this meeting.

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