

FINAL REPORT

Logistics Support and Material Distribution for Dzud Humanitarian Response Project



Photo 1: Local residents receive SDC humanitarian aid.
Zavhan aimag, Telmen soum, 20 March 2016.

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ACRONYMS

Aimag	Province in Mongolia
APF	Aimag Partnership Facilitator
CERF	Central Emergency Relief Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
MRCS	Mongolian Red Cross Society
NEMA	National Emergency Agency of Mongolia
NFI	Non-food item
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistancess
PIN	People in need
CC	Caritas Czech
UN	United Nation
UN HCT	United Nation Humanitarian Country Team
UN FAO	United Nation Food and Agriculture Office
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Soum	Administrative subdivision of aimag
SRH	Self-Related Health

GENERAL INFORMATION

Project Name: Logistics Support and Material Distribution for Dzud Humanitarian Response
Duration: February 2016 – July 2016 (three month plus one month no-cost extension)
Funded By: USAID OFDA
Funding Amount: 150,000 USD
Target Area: 35 affected soums within ten aimags
Target Beneficiaries: 13,736 individuals from 3,434 herder households
Reporting Period: February 26, 2016 – July 31, 2016

PROJECT GOAL

To support the rapid distribution of humanitarian assistance planned by the Mongolia UN Humanitarian Cluster Team (HCT) and member agencies in order to decrease the vulnerability of 3,434 households currently at risk.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Ensure effectiveness coordination of humanitarian assistances at the aimag¹ and soum² level by supporting local government's information management and coordination efforts.
2. Provide coordinated logistics and transportation to deliver humanitarian supplies to at least 3,434 affected households in at least 35 soums within ten aimags
3. Supplement existing humanitarian supplies as necessary through non-food item (NFI) kit distributions to ensure that the needs of local communities in the affected soums are met

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mercy Corps worked in partnership with local governments, humanitarian peer agencies and The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to ensure that the distribution of humanitarian assistance was timely, well-coordinated and sufficient to the needs of households affected by dzud in 77 of the most affected soums within the ten affected aimags. This effort reached 9,508 beneficiaries in a total of five aimags: 3,105 people received NFI kits, 5,750 people received SDC's hay, fodder and work gloves, and 653 people benefited from Mongolia Red Cross Society (MRCS) food packages.

Mercy Corps supported a subset of beneficiaries targeted by the Humanitarian Cluster Team (HCT) that lived in areas with particular logistic challenges including: distance between administrative centers, mountain roads and a high number of responding agencies. Building on our network of aimag offices and longstanding partnerships with aimag and soum governments and local civil society organizations, Mercy Corps coordinated logistics services that supported four agencies to reach target households with humanitarian goods.

During implementation, Mercy Corps requested and received permission from OFDA to expand its activities beyond the originally proposed soums, aimags and partners due to some of the projected transport needs not being necessary due to MRCS' plan of food delivery. This delayed the monitoring and reporting schedule; therefore, Mercy Corps requested and received a no-cost extension to finish the planned activities.

¹ Aimag - province

² Soum - county

Table 1: Progress against indicators

Beneficiaries Targeted	13,736 (3,434 HH)			
Beneficiaries Reached	9,508 (6,881 HH)			
SECTOR: Humanitarian aid distribution				
Indicator	Baseline	Cumulative Target	Achieved	Notes
Sector Name: Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management				
Number of humanitarian organizations actively coordinating	0	4	4	
Number of other key humanitarian actors (e.g., private sector, military) actively participating in humanitarian coordination mechanisms	0	35	35	
Number and percentage of humanitarian organizations utilizing information management services	0	35	35	
Number and percentage of humanitarian organizations directly contributing to information products (e.g., situation reports, 3W/4W, digital tools)	0	4 11%	4 11%	
Number of products made available by information management services that are accessed by clients	0	2	17	We produced 3 situation reports, one 5/W survey with regular updates, managed a website with transportation tracker and reports, and broadcast local TV and radio programs 12 times in 5 aimags

SECTOR: Logistics Support and Relief Commodities				
Indicator	Baseline	Target	Achieved	Notes
SUB-SECTOR: Humanitarian aid (hay, fodder, food, and NFI)				
Total USD cost of transport by type (e.g., commodities, personnel)	0	USD 56,000 Commodities	USD 15,356	The proposal included only total cost of the whole project.
Total kilograms of commodities transported by transport type	0	TBD when all kits are weighed	505,500 kg	
Total number and per item USD cost of NFIs distributed	0	19 Items USD 100 per Kit	12 items USD 34 per kit	Number and cost of NFIs were identified later
Total number of people receiving NFIs, by sex and type	0	300	931 (313 female and 618 male)	

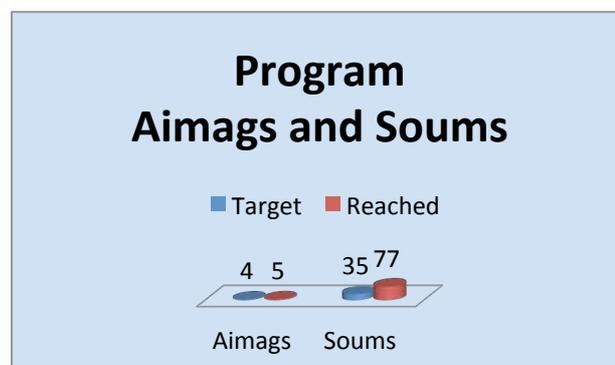
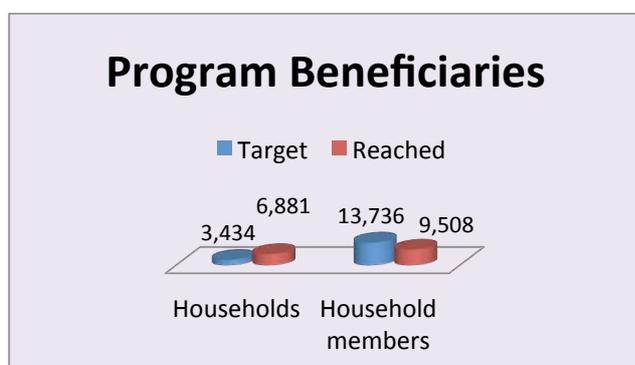


Table 2: Program Beneficiaries Disaggregated by Sex and Age

Humanitarian assistances	All ages		Age 0-14		Age 15-24		Age 25-59		Age 60+		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
MC humanitarian aids	1,498	1,607	371	435	381	368	610	622	136	182	3 105
SDC transportation support	2,698	3,052	320	466	798	881	1282	1341	298	364	5 750
MRCS Transportation support	317	336	79	61	75	90	109	123	54	62	653
Total	4,513	4,995	770	962	1,254	1,339	2,001	2,086	488	608	9,508

Beneficiary Gender Ratio



Table 3: International organizations and types of assistance

#	Organizations	Types of assistance
1	Mercy Corps	Protection dignity kit (Non Food Items)
2	SDC transportation support	Fodder, hay, work gloves
3	MRCs transportation support	Food kit

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Dzud is a cyclical slow onset disaster unique to Mongolia. It consists of a summer drought followed by a deterioration of the weather conditions in the winter and spring (10 to 350 cm of snow, temperatures -40°C to -50°C) during which shortages of pasture and water lead to a large-scale death of animals. The dzud conditions were compounded by a prolonged, El Nino-induced, drought in the summer of 2015 that resulted in a 40% reduction in wheat harvests and grazing pasture in some areas. In the winter of 2016, around 60 per cent of Mongolia's 339 districts were in dzud or near-dzud conditions.

As of 15 February 2016, an estimated 225,788 people (62,719 herder households or 41 per cent of the total herder population) in 211 districts were impacted by adverse weather conditions, including 28,290 children under age 5 and 3,340 expectant mothers. Of those impacted, an estimated 11,800 herder households with less than 100 animals residing in the 98 most dzud-affected districts were considered particularly vulnerable. The number of animals that perished as a result of the heavy snow fall, severe storms and cold weather conditions jumped 10-fold from 40,000 in January 2016 to 359,981 as of 10 March 2016. Soaring trends indicated that the number of deaths would cross 1.2 million during the spring, when weak and starved animals are expected to die in large numbers.

In response, the United Nations in Mongolia scaled-up its emergency response to address the urgent needs of populations affected by the *dzud*. These interventions, amounting to \$2.4 million, were funded by the UN Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) under the rapid response window. The UN response targeted 4,390 households with fewer than 100 head of livestock in 44 affected soums in six (6) aimags in which the animal losses were concentrated. People in Need, Caritas Czech Republic and the Red Cross implemented responses in an additional 36 soums and an additional four (4) aimags distributing humanitarian goods determined by the Red Cross network to 3,800 additional households living in dzud-affected areas.

Through OFDA's support, Mercy Corps worked with soums and aimag governors to ensure that local administrations had adequate information regarding the humanitarian response planned distributions, and support interventions from development and humanitarian actors. Mercy Corps worked with our partners in the local government to ensure that they had full access to critical response information and supported them as necessary to report out to and communicate with the humanitarian community.

Mercy Corps provided the following support:

- **Provided staging areas if/where needed at the soum level** to coordinate delivery to beneficiaries at the bagh level or directly to households.
- **Provided transportation services utilizing local contractors** on a coordinated schedule: Mercy Corps procured transportation services from local vendors to provide coordinated transportation services that reduced the number of trips needed and ensure more rapid distribution of humanitarian goods to affected households
- **Supported tracking of deliveries for partner agencies:** each partner agency conducted its own monitoring and evaluation and Mercy Corps tracked all trips and deliveries made through OFDA support and provided this information to the country partners.
- **Procured supplementary supplies for non-food item (NFI) kit distribution on an as needed basis.** Mercy Corps provided supplementary distributions as needed to ensure timely access to urgent supplies required by households.
- Mercy Corps' **transportation support** increased coordination and efficiency of the multi-agency response, shortened delivery time, made use of local resources and increased engagement with local stakeholders to ensure that the distribution process was clear and well implemented.

ACTIVITIES BY SECTOR

Sector 1: Humanitarian Coordination and Information Management

Objective: 1. Ensure effective coordination of humanitarian assistance at the aimag and soum level by supporting local government's information management and coordination efforts

Mercy Corps supported the coordination, logistics and transportation of emergency aid by establishing a system to support coordination among the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) members based in Ulaanbaatar. Mercy Corps established a Dzud Response webpage to inform and share information between more than 71 individuals from 33 organizations.³ The webpage allowed file-sharing and organizations were invited to share their information on the dzud response and humanitarian assistance. Mercy Corps uploaded a response map that showed the targeted communities and where deliveries were made.⁴ This response map helped our partners to get accurate information on distribution progress: where the distribution was taking place, what was delivered to affected communities, and prevented overlapping of distribution efforts.

Additionally, Mercy Corps attended the HCT meetings and country meetings to share and gather information. Regional and aimag staff communicated via phone with aimag and soum governors to ensure that local administrations had adequate information regarding Mercy Corps' humanitarian aid deliveries.

This information gathering informed Mercy Corps' webpage contents with:

- Maps
- Transportation and assistance distribution tracker
- Photos
- Videos from humanitarian aid distribution
- Market research information on common goods
- Bi-weekly reports
- Herder household distribution data

³ <http://mercycorps.org.mn/beta/index.php/en/dzud-response>

⁴ <http://mercycorps.org.mn/beta/index.php/en/dzud-response/dzud-response-tracker>

- Partner organization’s humanitarian assistance information
- MRCS new transportation tracker
- Protection dignity kits list
- Mercy Corps’ distribution of protection dignity kits to 5 aimags

Sector 2: Logistic Support and Relief Commodities

Objective 2: Provide coordinated logistics and transportation to deliver humanitarian supplies to at least 3,434 affected households in at least 35 affected soums in ten aimags

Mercy Corps worked in partnership with local governments, humanitarian peer agencies and National Emergency Agency of Mongolia (NEMA) to ensure that the distribution of humanitarian assistance was timely, well-coordinated and sufficient to the needs of households suffering from dzud in 77 of the most affected soums in six aimags. Mercy Corps procured transportation services from local vendors that reduced the number of trips needed and ensured the rapid distribution of humanitarian goods to the affected households.

Cooperation with the Swiss Development Agency (SDC)

Mercy Corps supported the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) on delivery of 281.5 tons of fodder to 29 soums in two aimags: Uvs and Zavhan. During the project period, the number of soums, number of target households and types of fodder changed several times due to various reasons.



Photo 2: Convoy with humanitarian aid ready to travel to target soums Uvs aimag center, 20 March 2016.

Our aimag staff contracted local companies to transport humanitarian aid from aimag centers to soum centers. All aid was delivered to the target soum centers safely and on time.

Mercy Corps, SDC and local authorities mobilized communities to help with shipping and transportation of humanitarian aid, opening soum roads and distributing aid to herder households.

Zavhan Aimag

The Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency’s (SDC) Green Gold project delivered 161.5 tons of fodder to 14 soums, reaching 3,684 herder households in the dzud affected areas.

For this activity, local Mercy Corps office hired 44 people (13 of these were truck drivers) to load and unload fodder. In three soums (Bayantes, Tes and Otgon), the mountain passes and roads were closed due to heavy snow. Mercy Corps hired 17 people to open 93 km of blocked road. The local residents were very happy with opening of roads. Open roads not only allowed them to receive assistance, but also let them travel to the aimag center to receive public services such as healthcare.

Table 4: Soums and number of beneficiary households in Zavhan aimag

#	Soums	Beneficiary
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		households
1	Tudevtei	250
2	Bayankhairkhan	457
3	Bayantes	536
4	Asgat	206
5	Tsetsen-Uul	250
6	Santmargats	220
7	Songino	286
8	Shiluustei	171
9	Telmen	140
10	Yaruu	200
11	Ikh-uul	200
12	Tes	506
13	Ider	112
14	Otgon	150
Total		3,684



Photo 2: Frostbitten faces of herders Batmunkh and Bat-Erdene. Zavhan aimag, Ih-uul soum, 2 April 2016.



Photo 3: Herders carrying weak animals from pastures to the shelter. Zavhan aimag, Ih-Uul soum, 2 April 2016.

Uvs Aimag

Mercy Corps organized the delivery of emergency aid to Uvs aimag on March 20-22. Mercy Corps contracted a local transportation company to deliver 120 tons of fodder to 15 soums in seven separate directions from the aimag center. A total of 2,400 households received humanitarian assistance from SDC with Mercy Corps' support. The distribution of fodder from the aimag center to the soums took three days and an additional ten days to the households. (Please, see the news broadcast on the local TV in the following link:

<http://mercycorps.org.mn/beta/index.php/en/dzud-response/dzud-response-ticker>)

Table 5: Soums and number of beneficiary households in Uvs aimag

#	Soums	Beneficiary
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		households
1	Malchin	160
2	Hyargas	160
3	Baruunturuun	160
4	Zuungovi	160
5	Naranbulag	200
6	Sagil	160
7	Tarialan	160
8	Tes	200
9	Undurkhangai	200
10	Tsagaankhairkhan	100
11	Umnugovi	200
12	Zavkhan	180
13	Davst	160
14	Ulgii	100
15	Turgen	100
Total		2400



Photo 4: Herder is receiving emergency aid.
Zavhan aimag, Tudevtei soum, 10 April 2016



Photo 5: Herders are receiving emergency aid
Uvs aimag, Tarialan soum, 25 March 2016

Cooperation with the Mongolian Red Cross Society



Photo 6: MRCS food package distribution
Dundgobi aimag, Huld soum, 1 July 2016

Mercy Corps signed an MoU to support the Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) to distribute food packages to five soums in Bayanhongor and 15 soums in Dundgobi aimags.

The delivery of food packages was delayed due to parliament elections on 29 June. After the elections, Mercy Corps started transporting food packages from aimag centers to soum centers and distributing them to 200 dzud-affected herder households in both aimags.

Objective 3: Supplement existing humanitarian supplies as necessary through non-food item distributions to ensure that the needs of local communities in the affected soums are met

The herder household needs assessment was completed in April in five dzud-affected aimags (Bayanhongor, Zavhan, Uvs, Suhbaatar and Arhangai). Mercy Corps aimag staff assessed target beneficiaries in cooperation with soum officials and identified beneficiary households.

According to this assessment, most herders lacked cash to repay loans, buy food and clothes, hygiene items, and had no equipment to remove the carcasses of dead animals. Mercy Corps decided to procure non-food items (NFI) according to the list developed for all implementing partners by UNOCHA in Mongolia. The NFIs were dignity kits for the most vulnerable herder households not targeted by the Humanitarian Country Team assistance in five aimags. Dignity kits contained most needed hygienic supplies and were intended to meet needs of a family of four people for two months. Also, each herder household received a fuel coupon worth USD 4 to cover costs of picking up the kit at soum center.

The dignity kits were distributed to 931 dzud-affected herder households with less than 100 animals.

Table 6: Distribution of NFI by aimags and soums

#	Aimag	No of soums	No of households
1	Arhangai	3	173
2	Bayanhongor	6	178
3	Suhbaatar	6	158
4	Uvs	5	223
5	Zavhan	8	199
	Total		931

Procurement of protection dignity kits took place at the local supermarkets in compliance with Mercy Corps' procurement rules and procedures. Each kit cost about 68,000 MNT (USD 34). Below is description of what was included in each dignity kit.

Table 7: Dignity kit content

#	Items	Quantity
1.	Sanitary napkins	2
2.	Hand soap	2
3.	Washing powder	1
4.	Tooth brush	2
5.	Tooth paste	2
6.	Underwear	2
7.	Socks	2
8.	Wet tissue medium size	1
9.	Towel	2
10.	Sun cream	1
11.	Protection glasses	2
12.	Fuel coupon	1



Photo 7: Distribution of dignity kit to herder family.
Zavhan aimag, Yaruu soum, 1 July 2016



Photo 8: Distribution of dignity kits
Zavhan aimag, Tudevtei soum, 6 July 2016

Monitoring and Evaluation

Mercy Corps conducted monitoring visits between June 6 and 18 in four aimags: Bayanhongor, Zavhan, Uvs, Suhbaatar. Mercy Corps’ monitoring teams visited a total of 120 local residents in four aimags during these monitoring trips and interviewed them.

Methodology: Individual interviews, focus-group discussions and on-site observations with local residents in four aimags.

Key Findings:

1. More than 80% of herders expressed satisfaction about the quality and timeliness of Mercy Corps assistance
2. “Dzud Lessons” book produced by Mercy Corps is very popular among herders and government employees.
3. Monitoring visits and interviews validated that our identification of the target group was accurate.
4. Around 80% of herders confirmed that they have outstanding bank loans. These herders were concerned about their loan payment in future while recovering from Dzud.
5. Most of herders did not insure their livestock. Main reasons cited were: lack of information, knowledge, smaller herd size, too much paper work etc.
6. All international and domestic NGOs targeted poor herders with less than 100 livestock. However herders who had more than 100 animals, but lost more than 50% of their herd received no assistance.

Focus Group Discussions

- Focus group discussions mainly took place in government offices.
- Main participants were government officers and herders.



Photo 9: Focus group discussion.
Suhbaatar aimag, Baruun-Urt soum, 14 June 2016.

- Local authorities expressed their appreciation for Mercy Corps timely assistance.
- Herders learned their lessons this dzud and started preparing for next winter.
- Each soum has a disaster risk reduction fund but it never has any funds.
- Herders suffer from lack of information on livestock insurance.

Challenges

Mercy Corps has successfully implemented this short emergency response project. Total of 9,508 herder households received hay, fodder, food, supplies, dignity kits and other timely assistance.

There were few serious obstacles during this project and Mercy Corps had successfully addressed those problems. One of the key problems was cooperation with our partners. Some of them were too slow to respond and it delayed our assistance. Others, such as UN FAO and PIN Czech Republic initially agreed to work with us, but suddenly changed their minds and decided not to cooperate. This seriously affected operations, but after consulting with OFDA, was able to procure NFI and distribute them to herders that did not receive assistance from the government and international organizations.

Elections presented different kind of problems. Mercy Corps had to be careful to avoid being associated with any of the political parties. Mercy Corps helped distribute the Red Cross Society's assistance after elections and carefully selecting soums during the monitoring visits that were not clashing with the ongoing election campaign. Thoughtful planning helped to keep the nature of assistance apolitical.

“All citizens of my soum are very grateful to Mercy Corps Mongolia for extending your helping hand. The dignity kit we received contains hygienic products that covered daily needs of my family for 2-3 months. Rural people ride motorcycles and horses all day. Thank you for providing us with sun glasses and sun cream. These products helped us to protect our eyes and skin. I am glad to say these kits helped us to overcome hard times.”

Nergui, herder from Tsahir soum, Arhangai aimag



Photo 10: Herder Nergui during interview. Arhangai aimag, Tsahir soum, 25 May 2016.