

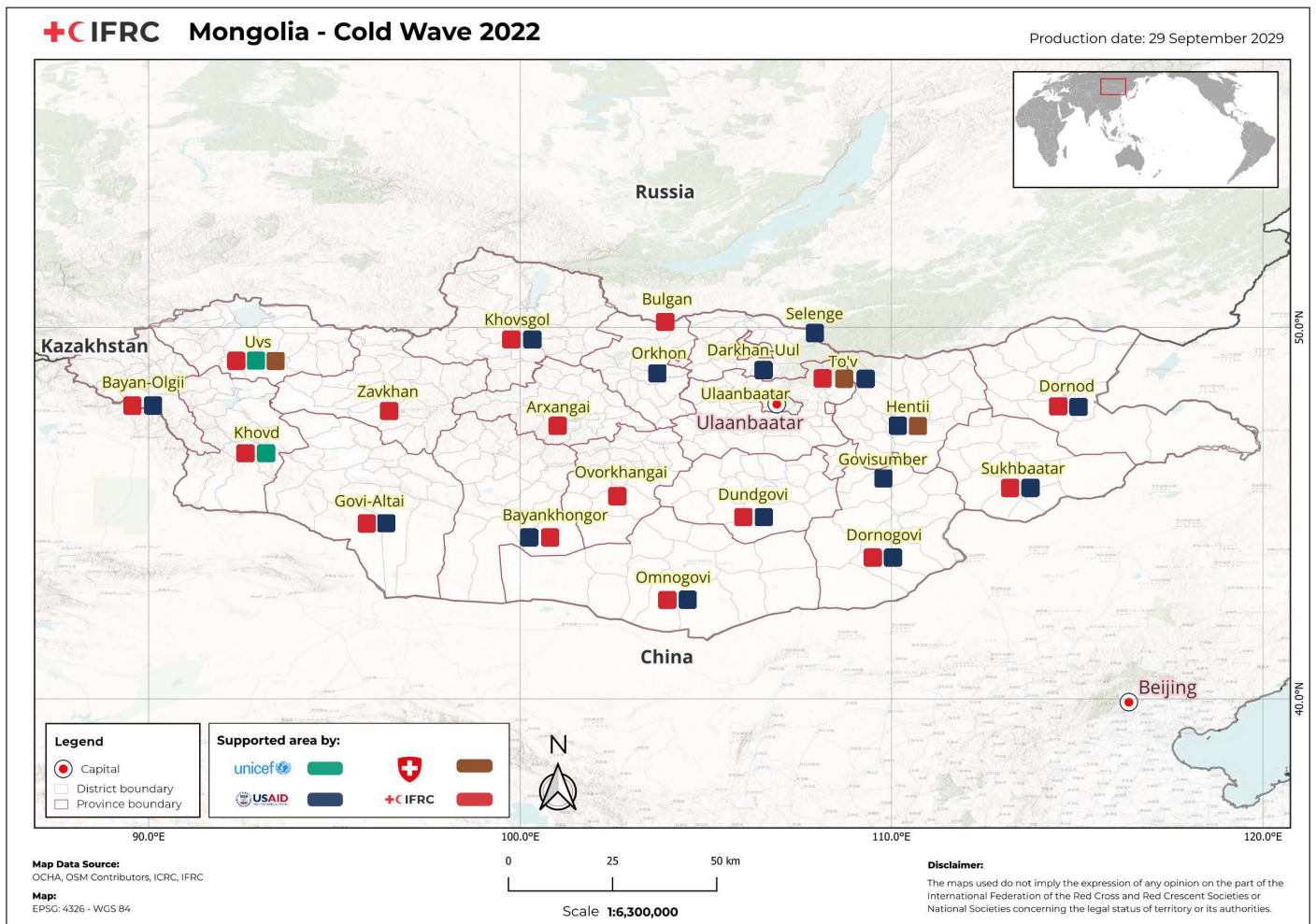


Herder migrates with herd for better pasture in Arkhangai province (Photo: MRCS)

Appeal: MDRMN017	Total DREF Allocation CHF 570,650	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Cold Wave
Glide Number: CW-2022-000372-MNG	People Affected: 115,956 people	People Targeted: 11,660 people	
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 2022-12-07	New Operational end date:	Total operating timeframe: 6 months
Targeted Areas:	Arhangai, Bayanhongor, Bayan-Ölgii, Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Govisumber, Govi-Altai, Khovd, Ömnögovi, Övörkhangai, Sükhbaatar, Töv, Ulaanbaatar, Uvs, Zavkhan		

Red Cross Societies and governments of Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as DG ECHO and Blizzard Entertainment, Mondelez International Foundation, and Fortive Corporation and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of Mongolian Red Cross Society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

Description of the Event



MRCS intervention map in 2022-2023 winter

What happened, where and when?

Mongolia's Dzud and Government Response:

Mongolia experiences a unique disaster locally known as "dzud" (harsh winter conditions). During these events, large numbers of livestock perish due to starvation or direct cold exposure. This poses a significant threat to the livelihoods of nomadic herder communities, constituting 25 to 30 percent of the Mongolian population according to the National Statistics Office.[]

Since the 1990s, Mongolia has witnessed an increase in dzud occurrences, attributed to climate change, poor pasture management, and policy issues (Disaster White Book, 2021). The Mongolian government has taken substantial steps to mitigate the impacts of dzud, including the implementation of livestock laws and the production of dzud risk maps.

The Dzud risk map, published by the National Agency for Monitoring and Environmental Monitoring (NAMEM) annually between October and December, categorizes dzud risk into five levels based on parameters like snow cover, density, air temperature, and vegetation.

In the first half of 2023, high temperatures and low precipitation led to severe drought in Mongolia during the



summer, resulting in insufficient grass for livestock to accumulate fat reserves for winter survival.□

Humanitarian Response:

The Dzud risk map released in December 2022 revealed concerning risk levels across Mongolia. It indicated that 16 per cent of the Mongolian territory was at the highest level of dzud risk, 43 per cent at a high level of risk, 33 per cent at a moderate risk, and 10 per cent at a low and the least level of risk. The meteorology office had reported an omalous low temperatures in late December. According to the MRCS National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) deployment mission report (26 November-3 December 2022), due to the drought and economic inflation, meat prices had significantly reduced, consequently decreasing the income of herders. The combination of drought, economic inflation, and severe winter conditions posed a threat to herder households' basic needs.□

In response to the escalating crisis, MRCS initiated an Imminent IFRC-DREF operation (CHF 136,038) with IFRC support in December 2022, providing financial assistance and psychosocial support to 1,000 herder households in high-risk locations as early actions.

Intensification of the Crisis and Expanding Relief Efforts:

A severe cold wave struck in January, with temperatures plummeting to -50 degrees Celsius in Zavkhan province and Uvs province. In other provinces, the air temperature was 3-4 degrees Celsius lower than the multi-year average. Snow coverage height was 37 cm in the central region and an average of 27 cm in the western region, preventing livestock from grazing. According to the task force staff at the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industries (MoFALI), the crisis affected 29,346 herder households, or 115,956 individuals.

Considering the worsening situation, MRCS requested additional funding (CHF 467,834) and approval to scale up and extend (three months) the Imminent IFRC-DREF operation. The request was granted in March 2023, enabling MRCS to support herder households severely impacted by the dzud.

Beneficiary Targeting and Geographic Reach:

MRCS employed a two-stage criteria approach for beneficiary selection, prioritizing households with 200 to 400 livestock in the first stage and those meeting specific vulnerability criteria, such as households with disabled members or pregnant women, in the second stage. This approach identified 11,660 people from 2,934 herder households as vulnerable by the soum authorities based on their social status and subsistence level threshold.

These households had not received assistance from any international or local organizations and were located in Arkhangai, Bayan-Ulgii, Bayankhongor, Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Govi-Altai, Govisumber, Khovd, Umnugovi, Uvurkhangai, Sukhbaatar, Tuv, Uvs, Zavkhan, Dornod, Khentii provinces, and Baganuur, Bagakhangai districts in Ulaanbaatar. In this top-up phase, MRCS provided assistance to an additional 2,000 herder households severely affected by the dzud crisis. This assistance included unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance, the distribution of animal care kits, and the provision of psychosocial support.

In this expanded phase of relief efforts, MRCS provided assistance to affected herder households in 20 provinces and 2 districts within the capital city, Ulaanbaatar, extending its reach beyond the initial 13 provinces.





IFRC and MRCS's joint assessment team visits herder household in Dornod province. (Photo: MRCS)

Scope and Scale

Low Vegetation and Drought:

In the summer of 2022, NAMEM reported that 20 per cent of Mongolia experienced low vegetation due to high temperatures and inadequate precipitation. This represented a more than twofold increase compared to the situation in 2021. The resulting scarcity of hay and fodder resources led to a significant rise in their prices.

Pasture Carrying Capacity and Decline:

As of 29 August 2022, the pasture carrying capacity map, published by NAMEM, highlighted the concerning state of Mongolia's pastures. Only 23.9 per cent of the total pasture had sufficient capacity and reserves, while 15.6 per cent had moderate capacity. A staggering 34.4 per cent of the total pasture exceeded its capacity 1-3 times, with 7.7 per cent exceeding its capacity 3-5 times, and 18.4 per cent surpassing its capacity multiple times. This reflected a significant decline from the pasture capacity observed in August 2021, where 42.1 per cent had sufficient capacity, 24.6 per cent demonstrated moderate capacity, and fewer pastures exceeded their capacities multiple times.

Impending Dzud and Economic Challenges:

By 1 February 2023, the dzud risk map indicated an extreme risk level of 35 per cent and a high risk level of 41 per cent. This extreme risk level was the highest since the dzud risk map of January 2020, prompting MRCS to initiate forecast-based action through IFRC-DREF. Adding to the challenges, the inflation rate for 2022 stood at 13.20 per cent, six times higher than the rate observed in 2020. This substantial inflation eroded the purchasing power of herders and undermined their ability to cope with the impending dzud situation.

Ordinarily, livestock graze extensively on pastures. However, the insufficient vegetation due to the drought left limited pasture for livestock to feed upon. As winter arrived, herder households had already depleted their reserves of hay and fodder, leaving their livestock without adequate sustenance. The pastures were covered by thick layers of snow, particularly in the provinces affected by drought, where pastures were absent.

A History of Dzud Events:

In the winter of 2016-2017, Mongolia experienced one of the major Dzud conditions across the country, resulting in the loss of 1.1 million livestock, equivalent to 1.9 per cent of the overall livestock. In response, the Mongolian government declared a state of emergency and requested international assistance (MDRMN004IFR). This event was among the major Dzuds since the 2009-2010 Dzud, which caused up to 8.4 million heads of livestock to perish.

According to MoFALI, between December 2022 and May 2023, 2 million livestock perished, representing 1.4 per cent of the total livestock in Mongolia. While the 2023 Dzud was a significant event with comparable livestock losses to the 2016-2017 Dzud, it was notably less severe in terms of percentage compared to the devastating 2009-2010 event, thanks to support from partners. Severe Dzuds typically occur once every 5 or 6 years; however, the severity of their impact is decreasing due to humanitarian efforts.

National Society Actions

<p>Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Please provide a brief description of those additional activities</p>	<p>In partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund, MRCS distributed cash assistance to 400 families (80 families in every 5 counties) in Khovd and Uvs provinces, areas with a very high risk of dzud. People targeted were selected based on specific criteria, including ownership of 50-500 animals, pastoral migration due to drought, households with pregnant or lactating women, single-parent families with three or more children under 18, or families with five or more children under 18 in March.</p> <p>Additionally, in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development's Humanitarian Aid Bureau, MRCS provided cash assistance to 850 herder households in 17 dzud affected provinces in on March 21.</p> <p>A total of 550 herder families in Uvurkhangai, Uvs, Tuv, and Khentii provinces were assisted by MRCS with food parcels and hygiene kits with support from the Swiss Development Agency in May, 2023.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

<p>Secretariat</p>	<p>MRCS has been updating the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for East Asia (CCD EA) in Beijing since the drought conditions in July 2022. IFRC CCD EA and APRO provided extensive technical support and quality assurance for MRCS in developing the application for both the Imminent IFRC-DREF and top-up IFRC-DREF.</p> <p>From 6 to 19 February 2023, two delegates from CCD EA and APRO were deployed to Mongolia, where they assisted MRCS in conducting the Lessons Learnt Workshop for the Imminent IFRC-DREF operation, meetings with key stakeholders and affected herder households.</p> <p>To ensure that the procedure for selecting the financial service provider (FSP) for cash distribution was in line with IFRC procurement policies, IFRC APRO and CCD EA supported MRCS in developing an exception approval request for FSP for the IFRC-DREF operation and securing the approval to proceed with the cash transfer to the targeted households.</p> <p>From 5 June to 9 June 2023, the Mongolian Red Cross Society undertook IFRC-DREF Training as part of the operation. This training involved the par-</p>
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	<p>participation of 18 members from the National Society, including individuals from the National Headquarters who are engaged in various areas such as disaster management, health, PMER, international humanitarian law, volunteer management, PRD, youth development, safety & security, IT, finance, safety and security (fleet manager), and stock management. Additionally, the Under Secretary General also took part in the training. The training session was organized and led by the DREF Coordinator (Asia Pacific), Operations Coordinator (Asia Pacific – East Asia & the Pacific), and IFRC-DREF Capacity Strengthening Delegate (Global DREF).</p>
Participating National Societies	Not available

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

Not available

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	<p>From October 2022 to 3 March 2023, there were in total five dzud risk maps published by the NAMEM, in order to inform the assessment of dzud risks across the nation.</p> <p>During February 2023, a task force led by a Member of Parliament, a Member of the State Special Commission, and the Minister of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry conducted visits to several provinces, including Arkhangai, Zavkhan, Khentii, Dornod, and Sukhbaatar. This visit was aimed at evaluating the situation based on the risk assessment. In light of the findings, the Mongolian government allocated 325 tons of fodder from the national reserve to Arkhangai province, offering it at a 50 percent discount. Moreover, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry provided 10 million MNT to support fuel and provided computers for experts overseeing grazing and fodder matters within the Food and Agriculture Department of the province.</p> <p>For Zavkhan province, the government supplied 50 tons of fodder along with MNT 42 million to assist herders in at-risk soums affected by dzud, with financial support from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.</p> <p>In the case of Dornod province, the government made the decision to offer a 50 percent discount on vehicles with good driving capability, as well as 220 tons of bran, fodder, and silage. This was intended to ensure the uninterrupted provision of government services to soums facing severe winter conditions and heavy snowfall.</p> <p>Across the dzud-affected provinces, local authorities took on the task of clearing snow-covered roads that were obstructing remote herders' access to the soum centers.</p>



UN or other actors

In response to the dzud situation, the Food Security Cluster, the Health Cluster, the Cash Working Group, the Nutrition Cluster, the Education Cluster, and the Protection Clusters under the UN coordination system led by the different organizations were activated.

Concerning food security and agriculture as well as cash, UNFAO Mongolia provided cash transfers to 510 households in 11 provinces to assist them in procuring fodder at reduced government rates and ensuring the protection of their livelihoods during the dzud. Save the Children Mongolia offered unconditional cash assistance, fodder, hygiene kits, and soum hospital support in five provinces. World Vision in Mongolia provided herders in seven provinces with unconditional cash transfers of USD 90 per household for 1,772 households, distributed food packages including flour, rice, and animal feed to 300 households, and provided warm clothes and hygiene packages to 450 children from high-risk areas. The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International in Mongolia extended cash assistance to 150 herder households in Bayan-Olgii and Zavkhan provinces.

Regarding health and nutrition, UNICEF Mongolia supplied Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers in three provinces (Khovd, Sukhbaatar, and Uvs). UNFPA Mongolia distributed dignity kits to women and young girls affected by the dzud, as well as to those at the frontlines responding to the dzud in 11 provinces. WHO Mongolia provided support to deliver healthcare services for herders and the affected population, especially vulnerable people living in 'otor' camps and citizens in seven affected provinces.

Are there major coordination mechanisms in place?

MRCS maintained close bilateral relationships with key stakeholders, including NEMA, NAMEM, the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industries, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. Notably, MRCS holds membership in the State Emergency Commission, while its branch managers are integral members of the provincial Emergency Commission.

The Humanitarian Country Team is co-led by the UN and the Government composed of those organizations that undertake humanitarian actions including the MRCS demonstrated an active presence and facilitated regular information sharing among its members. MRCS actively engaged in information exchange with various agencies achieved through coordination meetings with the UN and other organizations situated in Mongolia. Further details on the 5W framework can be accessed via the Mongolia – UNOCHA 5Ws resource. This coordinated effort effectively prevented duplication of initiatives, particularly in terms of household targeting, within the humanitarian country team.



Needs (Gaps) Identified

Livelihoods And Basic Needs

Dependence on Livestock: The livelihoods of herders are intricately tied to livestock production, particularly those who own between 50 to 400 animals. This makes them highly vulnerable to the low recovery rate associated with dzud. From 1 January to 3 March 2023, a staggering 483,593 livestock perished due to dzud, marking twice the toll compared to February 2022.

Livestock Health Challenges: Due to limited nourishment and the harsh cold, livestock health had significantly deteriorated, leading to an expected surge in mortality. Furthermore, the outbreak of a disease had worsened the situation, resulting in the death of 3,607 animals across 15 provinces by 3 March 2023. In Dornod province, cold exposure and malnourishment had heightened livestock susceptibility to diseases. Mongolia had been grappling with a national shortage of zoonotic disease vaccines, adding complexity to prevention efforts.

Countermeasures for Livestock Mortality: In response to the rising livestock mortality, effective measures were implemented, including the distribution of livestock care kits. These kits help mitigate the impact of winter and contain essential resources such as hoof ointment and digestive system support. However, accessing these supplements proved challenging in rural areas, requiring journeys to provincial centers and incurring road and cost-related issues.

Multi purpose cash grants

Initial Needs Assessment and Herders' Preferences: The initial needs assessment conducted in November 2022 revealed that herders favored multipurpose cash as an intervention. Their income, primarily dependent on seasonal livestock production, had been affected by drought-related livestock weight loss, resulting in financial strain. Herder households considered multipurpose cash grants essential for meeting immediate needs, particularly for allocating more funds to hay and fodder to protect their livestock during the harsh winter. Escalating inflation, which increased from 2.3 per cent in 2020 to 13.8 per cent in 2021 and remained at 13.2 per cent in 2022, compounded their challenges, making it increasingly difficult to address necessities while caring for their livestock.□

Cash Assistance Amount Determination: MRCS adopted a cash amount of MNT 370,000 (approximately CHF 108) per household, guided by 2019 consultant's recommendations. This decision took into account a survival minimum expenditure basket (SMEB) and herder household income. Different international organizations had varying approaches to cash assistance, with FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) linking values to livestock needs and World Vision aligning with food needs.

Adaptation to Inflation: In February 2023, a Lessons Learnt Workshop prompted some MRCS mid-level branches to suggest increasing the cash amount due to high inflation. The National Statistical Office of Mongolia (NSO) estimates the Minimum Subsistence Level (MSLP), defining it as "a minimum consumption level expressed in monetary value, and minimum consumption level refers to a scientific estimation of the quantity of consumption to satisfy basic survival requirements defined by food and non-food consumption basket." As discussed, the calculation methodology of MSLP and MEB (Minimum Expenditure Basket) is similar. Therefore, MRCS is recommended to ensure that the cash transfer amount aligns with the annual MSLP and includes consumption items that meet minimum humanitarian standards when implementing multipurpose cash transfer programs under the Disaster Prevention Program.□



Data Sources and Estimation:

To estimate the MEB for the target group, actual consumption data are required, primarily household expenditures. NSO publishes the Household Socio-Economic Survey (HSES) quarterly, which is a potential source that can be used to estimate the MEB in general.

Raw data from HSES-2019, the latest complete HSES data available to the public, were utilized to estimate MEB and income for a family of five. The difference between MEB and the household's income determined the cash grant amount, which was estimated at \$89.2 for an urban household and \$130.5 for a rural household. Additionally, the average household income was calculated based on a 60-household survey, and the difference between average income and MEB was identified. This difference amounted to \$115.8 for urban households and \$123.9 for rural households, representing the monthly gap required to meet the MLSP for each household. The gaps identified based on raw data from HSES 2019 and the data from the 60 households were found to be similar. Consequently, it was considered statistically significant to use the estimation based on the HSES 2019 survey of 11,197 households as the cash transfer amount.

Despite data limitations, MRCS decided to retain the current cash value for ongoing interventions and committed to conducting a comprehensive cash value analysis post-operation.

Health

Emotional Toll of Dzud: During Dzud in Mongolia, individuals and families endure significant psychological distress, marked by anxiety, grief, and trauma resulting from the loss of livestock, harsh living conditions, and economic hardship. This emotional strain can lead to conditions such as depression, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Social isolation often exacerbates these issues, as affected individuals may withdraw from their communities, intensifying feelings of loneliness and depression. Notably, children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable, grappling with mental health challenges as they navigate disruptions to their daily lives and social activities. Therefore, comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) are imperative in addressing the emotional impact of Dzud.

Mobilizing Support: Based on interviews conducted with households affected by the dzud, it became evident that the herder community was grappling with significant distress, stemming from concerns about losing their livelihoods and the challenging economic circumstances. In response, MRCS mobilized trained volunteers stationed at each midlevel branch to offer MHPSS to affected households, including children residing in dormitories. This support was provided through both in-person visits and mobile phone communication.

Expanding the MHPSS Effort: Given the expanding scope of the dzud situation, there arose a need to ensure an adequate number of personnel trained in MHPSS. The expansion of the training effort aimed to provide more comprehensive and enhanced support to households struggling with the effects of the dzud.

Objective and Strategy Rationale



Overall objective of the operation

Through the Imminent DREF, MRCS supported 4,860 people from 1,000 herder households in 13 provinces including Arkhangai, Bayan-Ulgii, Bayankhongor, Govi-Altai, Uvurkhangai, Uvs, Umnugovi, Tuv, Khovd, Dornogovi, Dundgovi, Sukhbaatar, Zavkhan which were identified as areas with a very high risk of cold wave in the dzud risk map. MRCS allocated MPCA and provided PSS to prepare for the approaching dzud situation.

As the dzud risks continued to increase, MRCS requested a top-up to the IFRC-DREF operation to minimize the impacts of the severe winter on them and their livestock. With the additional funding, MRCS assisted another (target: 6,800 people/actual: 7,204 people) from 2,000 vulnerable households, providing them with MPCA, animal care kits, and PSS support.

Response strategy implementation

MRCS received timely information and updates regarding the weather forecast and on-site impacts from the State Emergency Commission and primary mid-level branches. Analyzing the low-temperature forecast by the Meteorology office regarding the summer situation and economic recession, the MRCS internal team decided to submit the operational plan for Imminent IFRC-DREF and started discussing the possibility with CCD EA and APRO.□

In January and February 2023, MRCS conducted surveys involving 126 herder households who had received assistance through the Imminent IFRC-DREF. The prevailing sentiment among the majority of households was appreciation for the multi-purpose cash assistance provided, noting it as both effective and timely. The provision of MPCA had enabled herder households to promptly address their urgent requirements, encompassing essentials such as hay, fodder, medicine, warm clothing, and sustenance.

Due to exposure to cold weather and insufficient nutrition, the health of livestock had significantly deteriorated. Building upon insights gleaned from the Lessons Learnt Workshop held in February 2023, it was recommended that livestock care kits be incorporated into the top-up intervention. This addition was deemed effective and highly necessary, with the aim of mitigating livestock mortality rates. With additional support from IFRC-DREF, MRCS assisted 2,000 households or 7,204 people with MPCA and livestock care kits.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

For both Imminent and response operations, the same socio-economic criteria were applied but in the Imminent IFRC-DREF, the herder household had to be a permanent resident of the location indicated as at very high risk of dzud. MRCS used the following 2 staged criteria:

1st stage-criteria:

- Must have min. 200- max. 400 livestock in sheep head number;

2nd stage criteria: must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be a single-headed household with three or more children under 16;
- Household with disabled members;
- Household with lactating or pregnant woman;
- Senior herder (older than 60) who herd his livestock by himself;
- Household with five or more children under 16.

After a vulnerability analysis had been conducted by MRCS in 2019, it was determined that the herder population with less than 400 livestock had been the most exposed to the impacts of the dzud. Conversely, herders who had more than 400 livestock were deemed to have a higher likelihood of recovering from dzud-related damage due to an increased chance of retaining animals after the dzud event.



Additionally, households comprising fewer than 200 individuals were found to have a greater probability of falling into the category of idle herders. These households were characterized as urban dwellers who owned livestock but assigned the responsibility of livestock care to others.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

MRCs employed a two-phased eligibility criteria for its programme. The initial phase focused on whether the herder household actively tended to their own livestock and relied solely on them for their livelihood.

Historical analysis highlighted that the herder population, owning up to 400 livestock, was most vulnerable to Dzud's impact. Initially, the beneficiary threshold was set at 50-200 livestock, but after extensive deliberation and research, this was revised to include up to 400 livestock.

The raised threshold to 400 livestock aimed to distinguish genuine herders, excluding those with livestock registration but no active involvement, thereby enhancing program efficiency. However, acknowledging the risk of excluding smaller herders (less than 200 livestock), assistance allocation could be subject to an official request from the county governor and verification by the primary-level branch.

In the second phase, socio-economic vulnerability criteria included single-headed households with three or more children under 16, households with disabled members, those with lactating or pregnant women, senior herders (above 60) who personally managed livestock, and households with five or more children under 16.

Feedback from the Lessons Learnt Workshop prompted MRCs mid-level branches to suggest reviewing certain criteria's practicality today and proposing the creation of a targeted household database for vulnerability analysis. MRCs would assess this recommendation, supported by additional data, to refine the criteria.

Total Targeted Population

Women:	3,166	Rural %	Urban %
Girls (under 18):	2,851	100.00 %	0.00 %
Men:	3,153	People with disabilities (estimated %)	
Boys (under 18):	2,490	3.00 %	
Total targeted population:	11,660		

Risk and security considerations

Please indicate about potential operational risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
The current economic situation and the Ukraine crisis which caused severe inflation in Mongolia as its market is heavily dependent on imports. Most of the livestock kit contents are produced locally in Mongolia but the ingredients of the contents and the fish oil are imported. Due to the reasons mentioned above, the supply chains are restrained causing the limitation of the goods available on the market.	MRCs has existing pre-agreements with the suppliers that reduced the risk and the existing bi-lateral collaboration with the Mongolian Customs General Administration fastened the progress of the procurement.



The security framework of the National Society and IFRC is not fully applied in the operation.

The National Society's security framework was applied throughout the duration of the operation to their staff and volunteers. There were no cases required to request any personnel under IFRC security's responsibility, including surge support and integrated PNS, the existing IFRC country security framework would be applied if the deployment has happened. All IFRC must, and RC/RC staff and volunteers were encouraged, to complete the IFRC Stay Safe 2.0 e-learning courses.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

There was an assumption of risks that delays in the transportation of the items due to the snow and storm as more precipitation was anticipated according to the initial assessment. However, although the anticipated precipitation has occurred, the MRCS was able to deliver the humanitarian assistance as planned. To mitigate the potential risk, MRCS pre-agreed with NEMA and local emergency management authorities on the utilization of their vehicles in anticipated transportation vehicle challenges occurring at the time of the implementation period.



Implementation

	National Society Strengthening	Budget	CHF 47,735
		Targeted Persons	98
		Persons Assisted	98
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of lessons learnt workshop conducted		2	2
# of DREF training conducted		1	1

Narrative description of achievements

Lessons-Learned Workshop (February 2023):

A lessons-learned workshop was conducted in February, involving 35 representatives (14 male, 21 female) from relevant Red Cross branch managers and staff, as well as volunteers for Imminent IFRC-DREF. Two IFRC delegates contributed to the workshop to address the challenges and successes of the operation.

Top-Up IFRC-DREF Workshop (May 2023):

The lessons learned workshop for the top-up IFRC-DREF was organized in May 2023. A total of 45 people (16 male, 29 female) from relevant branches gathered at the MRCS Youth camp.

IFRC-DREF Training (5-9 June 2023):

From 5 to 9 June 2023, IFRC-DREF training was organized with the support of three IFRC delegates from APRO and HQ. The training was attended by 18 NDRT members (7 male, 11 female) at the MRCS Youth Training Center. The training aimed to help NDRT members:

- Understand roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes during anticipated or unfolding emergencies within their National Society (NS) and IFRC structure.
- Engage with existing IFRC tools and mechanisms, such as the Go online platform (field reports, DREF request) and the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) mechanism.
- Simulate core emergency activities, including needs assessment and analysis, operational planning logic, translating operational logic to interventions, budget planning and development, monitoring plans, interim and final reporting, and lessons learned.
- Assess the existing NS capacity in operational planning and mobilization.
- Develop recommendations for next steps of improvement through the PER mechanism.

Lessons Learnt

- During the lessons learned workshop, some representatives said that the criteria of households with 5 or more children are becoming less relevant as today's households no longer have that many children, and MRCS needs to reduce the number of children in the criteria.



• The cash amount is based on calculations from 2019 and may not be compatible with present market prices. Therefore, there should be another evaluation to determine the value.

Challenges

• N/A

	Community Engagement And Accountability	Budget	CHF 11,226
		Targeted Persons	11660
		Persons Assisted	5278
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of people reached with CEA activities		11660	5278

Narrative description of achievements

Hotline Phone Number Dissemination and Feedback (Cash-Grant Certificate):

The MRCS hotline phone number was printed on the cash-grant certificate and disseminated to 3,000 households targeted for feedback. By receiving the certificate, the beneficiaries were able to learn how to give feedback to MRCS, and it helped prevent fraud or missing items, as the contents of the aid are described in the certificate.

Phone Call Outreach and Engagement:

MRCS reached 5,278 people (2,456 male, 2,822 female) by phone calls. The phone calls were made to deliver psychosocial support to the beneficiaries and provide operational information to the public.

Production of Certificates and Media Articles:

A total of 3,000 certificates were produced, and 7 media articles generated;

- <https://redcross.mn/news/PageClick?page=5>
- <https://redcross.mn/News/NewsDetail/4099>
- https://m.facebook.com/MongolianRedCrossSociety/posts/6640731789275993/?locale=hi_IN
- <https://gogo.mn/r/8nnd6>
- <http://khural.mn/n/223214>
- <https://twitter.com/newsGoGomn/status/1655520589354872833>

Lessons Learnt

- The community actively engaged and communicated with the Headquarters through the hotline. However, there are more communication channels such as messaging or voice message services need to be established to ensure the MRCS can receive every feedback.
- Appointing a volunteer to run a hotline service is required to sustain communication with the community over the operation period.
- The challenges regarding the hotline number, MRCS will seek the opportunities in using automated call response service.



Challenges

- The hotline is only able to receive one call at a time.
- No voice messaging system is available if the calls are missed.
- The hotline phone is incapable of storing a large number of calls or messages.
- When there was a missed call, it was sometimes hard to reconnect with the person who called.

	Livelihoods And Basic Needs	Budget	CHF 136,435
		Targeted Persons	6800
		Persons Assisted	7204
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of household receive livestock care kits		2000	2000

Narrative description of achievements

Procurement and Distribution of Livestock Care Kits:

On 15 March 2023, an open tender was announced for the contents of the animal care kits. In response, a working group was established to oversee the procurement process. The selection of a supplier for the animal care kits was completed with due diligence, and contracts were finalized on 24 March 2023.

Subsequently, the contents of the animal care kits were transported to their designated locations. In April 2023, a total of 2,000 herder households, benefiting approximately 7,204 people, received these essential animal care kits.

The distribution of essential animal care kits had a multifaceted impact on herder households, positively affecting their livelihoods, economic stability, food security, resilience to environmental challenges, and overall well-being. This support played a crucial role in helping these communities thrive despite the often-harsh conditions they face.

Lessons Learnt

- According to the interview with the households during the monitoring, several items were suggested which could be included in the animal care kits. The included items are "baby animal products", "Zoodoi fodder (hand-prepared fodder)", livestock medicine.
- It is identified further research has to be done to identify potential livestock care contents which could be included in the kit.

Challenges



• The number of suppliers for animal care kits' is limited. There are only two companies which produce mineral blocks, a few companies who produce livestock care kit contents. Due to scarcity of the producers, it is impossible to compare the quality of items.

	Secretariat Services	Budget	CHF 10,650
		Targeted Persons	0
		Persons Assisted	63
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of monitoring visits conducted		5	8

Narrative description of achievements

Monitoring Visits:

Monitoring visits were conducted through BDRTs and NDRTs in collaboration with IFRC. These visits occurred during the following periods: January 19-29, February 10-13, March 1-4, March 9-15, April 17-21, April 24-29, May 2nd, and May 9-13.

During the monitoring visits, MRCS and IFRC aimed to assess whether the aid provided met the needs of the affected community and to gain a clear understanding of the on-site situation.

The monitoring activities were organized through a combination of field visits and phone calls within the selected regions. The monitoring teams reached out to randomly selected individuals from the target population.

In total, eight monitoring visits were conducted, exceeding the original target of five monitoring visits. This proactive approach allowed for a more comprehensive assessment of the aid's impact and the community's needs, demonstrating a commitment to effective humanitarian assistance and response.

Lessons Learnt

- It was essential to consider and pre-assess the road condition more accurately to visit the randomly selected households in the target region. Also it is necessary to have a backup plan in case of unexpected incidents such as being stuck in the snow or time management.
- The road travel needs good time management factoring in the weather, road access, and the destination.
- For monitoring purposes, sometimes households were randomly selected. The households would be sometimes away on pastural migration or unavailable to locate.

Challenges

- The road access was worse than expected and required at least two off-road vehicles to reach the soums and herder households. Due to the density of the snow and snowblocks from the snowstorms, the road was not visible enough. Therefore, the MRCS vehicles got stuck in the snow several times during each visit and had to be pulled out by another vehicle. This situation challenged the planned number of visits to the households within the timeframe. Remote households were not reachable by road, necessitating a change in the selection of households within reachable distance.



- To address these challenges, the monitoring team decided to complement the monitoring results with phone interviews with the remaining selected households in the monitoring visits.
- Local authorities took necessary measures, such as cleaning the road and transporting households when required. However, the cleaning efforts were hampered by additional precipitation and snowstorms, necessitating the mobilization of the local team every day after snowfall or a snowstorm.

	Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery	Budget	CHF 17,213
		Targeted Persons	11600
		Persons Assisted	12064
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of people who received key messages on Climate smart agriculture		11600	12064

Narrative description of achievements

Incorporating Climate-Smart Agriculture Messages:

The key messages on climate-smart agriculture were printed on the cash grant certificates, which were subsequently disseminated to the affected community. The design of these certificates aimed to convey crucial messages aimed at reducing disaster risks and promoting a healthy lifestyle while sustaining a sustainable livelihood.

Climate-smart agriculture includes the following five key messages on know-how knowledge sharing;

1. Improving the quality of the livestock breed
2. Health care and registration of livestock
3. Pasture management and utilizing the rotation
4. Increasing harvest
5. Household water treatment and storage

These key messages not only impart practical knowledge but also empower the herder community to sustain their livelihoods in an environmentally friendly manner, particularly in rural areas. Additionally, they encourage the adoption of hygiene practices at the household level, contributing to the overall well-being of the community and the long-term health of the environment.

Lessons Learnt

- The key messages required Kazakh language since the Kazakh ethnic group is one of the major ethnicities of Mongolia which was affected by Dzud. During the monitoring visits, the monitoring team recognized that most Kazakh community are unable to read in Mongolian. Therefore, the team took immediate action to translate the key messages into Kazakh and distributed them again.

Challenges

- Assessing the impact of climate-smart agriculture messages on the beneficiary community is complex due to time, baseline data gaps, behavior change measurement challenges, and resource limitations. To address this,



a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, community engagement, and a focus on long-term effects are crucial for accurate impact assessment.

	Health	Budget	CHF 1,727
		Targeted Persons	11660
		Persons Assisted	583
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of people who received PSS services		11660	583

Narrative description of achievements

Psychosocial Support through On-Site Visits:

During the course of the operation, MRCS provided direct psychosocial support to 201 individuals. This assistance included support for 92 males (comprising 70 men and 22 boys), 109 females (comprising 91 women and 18 girls), and 9 individuals with disabilities (comprising 4 men and 5 women). These visits were conducted by midlevel branch staff and volunteers through door-to-door outreach.

The on-site visits aimed to address the psychosocial needs of the affected population, ensuring that both adults and children received support during challenging times. This personalized approach helped in providing emotional assistance where needed.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS):

MRCS also offered MHPSS through phone consultations. A total of 382 people benefitted from this service, including 126 males (comprising 112 men and 14 boys), 256 females (comprising 241 women and 15 girls), and 19 individuals with disabilities (comprising 8 men and 11 women).

The phone-based MHPSS provided a convenient and accessible way for individuals to receive support and guidance during the operation. This service helped in addressing psychological and emotional needs, ensuring a more comprehensive response.

Mandatory Vaccine Schedules:

Unfortunately, the schedule for mandatory vaccines for school-age children could not be printed as the government's schedule was not approved in time.

Lessons Learnt

- Conducting private individual interviews is highly effective when family members are distressed and tend to remain silent. This one-on-one interaction offers a secure and confidential space for individuals to express their feelings, concerns, and experiences without the presence of others. It allows them to open up and share their thoughts and emotions more freely, especially when dealing with trauma, grief, or anxiety, and they are hesitant to discuss it openly in private settings. Additionally, the continued use of MHPSS appears to be more effective in the long term.
- Recognizing the significance of timing in both in-person and phone call support involves understanding that



offering assistance or having conversations at the right moments can greatly enhance the effectiveness and impact of the support provided. It necessitates a thoughtful and considerate approach to ensure that the support genuinely meets the needs of those in distress.

Challenges

- Traditionally herder families live in Ger which has no compartments to interview each member one by one. It has been observed that private places were required to release the stress when there were other family members.
- Talking outside was not recommended since it was cold. Therefore, it was preferable with no one around if it was an interview.

	Multi-purpose Cash	Budget	CHF 345,664
		Targeted Persons	11660
		Persons Assisted	12064
Indicators		Target	Actual
# of households who received cash assistance		3000	3000

Narrative description of achievements

Distribution of MPCA and Cash Grant Certificates:

A total of 3,000 households received MPCA via bank transfer. The BDRTs distributed cash grant certificates directly to 3,000 affected households, encompassing 12,064 people (male 5,897. female: 6,167). These certificates contain essential information about the aid, including the monetary amount, its source, and a hotline number. This initiative enhances transparency, mitigates the risk of fraud, and bolsters the overall effectiveness of CEA elements in the operation.

Monitoring Efforts and Household Surveys:

In the affected regions, including the Northern, Western, Eastern, Southern, and Central areas of the country, five on-site monitoring visits were conducted jointly by MRCS and IFRC. On-site monitoring visits allowed for real-time assessment of the situation, enabling prompt adjustments to relief efforts and ensuring that aid reaches those in need effectively.

Household Surveys and Interviews:

A total of 180 households were surveyed via phone, and 44 households participated in on-site interviews conducted by BDRT and NDRT, with household selection based on simple random sampling. A total of 224 households were surveyed through both on-site visits and phone calls.

These surveys and interviews provide valuable insights into the needs and concerns of affected households, aiding in the tailored delivery of assistance and better understanding the impact of the disaster on the community.

Market Analysis and Assessment:



Market analysis involved conducting brief assessments through midlevel branches, focusing on commodities' prices in relevant provinces and Ulaanbaatar markets. However, a formal report for this assessment has not been developed. MRCS concentrated on the prices of hay, fodder, and livestock-related products, including meat and dairy foods.

PGI in Emergencies Training and E-Cash Usage:

During BDRT refresher training, a session on PGI in emergencies was introduced to the participants. MRCS implemented an e-cash system, enabling women, men, and people with disabilities to receive cash directly into their private bank accounts.

The PGI training promotes inclusivity in disaster response, ensuring that the unique needs of various groups are met. Meanwhile, the use of e-cash facilitates efficient and secure financial aid delivery.

Lessons Learnt

- The value of the cash is insufficient to meet the needs of the people reached due to high inflation versus low income. Therefore further assessment of the cash value is required to be conducted.

Challenges

- Verification of the people targeted list provided to the bank consumed a large amount of time. Despite the challenge, midlevel branches kept close connection with the social welfare offices to correct the mismatches which accelerated the process. □

- The main reason for this is the mismatch of data between the bank registration information and the identification cards provided by the National Registration Office of the people targeted. Currently, MRCS is seeking to establish framework agreement with financial service provider, before that, MRCS will conduct feasibility assessment, through the assessment, MRCS will be able to identify better ways and solutions to address such problems.



Financial report

DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022/12-2023/9	Operation	MDRMN017
Budget Timeframe	2022/12-2023/6	Budget	APPROVED

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Prepared on 26/Sep/2023

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRMN017 - Mongolia - Cold Wave 2022

Operating Timeframe: 07 Dec 2022 to 30 Jun 2023

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	570,620
DREF Anticipatory Pillar	149,826
DREF Response Pillar	420,794
Expenditure	-563,170
Closing Balance	7,450

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods	136,435	131,558	4,877
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	345,664	257,264	88,400
PO04 - Health	1,727		1,727
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	17,213	130,723	-113,511
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability	11,226	13,510	-2,285
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
Planned Operations Total	512,265	533,056	-20,791
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	10,620	10,721	-100
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	47,735	19,393	28,342
Enabling Approaches Total	58,355	30,113	28,242
Grand Total	570,620	563,170	7,450



[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

Please explain variances (if any)

A total of CHF 570,620 was allocated from IFRC to support MRCS in the cold wave response. By the end of the operation, an expenditure of CHF 563,170 had been recorded, representing 98.7 per cent utilization. The remaining balance of CHF 7,450 will be returned to the IFRC-DREF pot.

Savings were realized due to favorable exchange rates in cash assistance. Throughout the intervention, the operation team identified a need to conduct monitoring visits and mobilize volunteers for these visits. Following discussions with IFRC, MRCS allocated the remaining balance to be used for monitoring visits.

Contact Information

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

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[Click here for the reference](#)

