

SDC's strategic objective is to contribute to improved and securer livelihoods of herders and ex-herders in rural areas focusing on improving sustainable use and rehabilitation of natural resources and supporting ecologically-oriented social and economic development

Development Context

A recent report on Food Security and Livelihoods in the small urban centers of Mongolia published by Mercy Corps Mongolia with support from USDA and SDC provides clear empirical evidence of food insecurity among aimag center residents in Mongolia. The most pressing issues relate to the access dimension of food security. One-third of households in the survey population were found to be food insecure (and one-quarter moderately or severely). In addition, information collected on seasonal patterns of food security suggests that the situation worsens considerably during the spring months when both food and employment are scarce. (www.sdc.mn - Publications)

The Ministry of Nature and Environment has circulated a draft report on Environmental Indicators of Mongolia. The Environmental Indicators of Mongolia will allow people:

- To be informed about the actual condition of the environment and natural resources,
- To be aware of critical changes affecting the environment and human wellbeing,
- To observe the effectiveness of natural protection and management measures; and
- To assess the progress towards achieving environmental targets and commitments.

The Environmental Indicators are grouped into the seven most important environmental factors. The list contains the 42 main indicators which provide basic information for a quick overview of the environmental conditions of Mongolia.

Strengthened resilience of herders to vulnerabilities in the livestock sector and improved disaster preparedness and environmental stewardship

SDC's 'Coping with Desertification' Project started pilot actions in formal and informal eco-education, promoting ecological awareness and education among the public, especially children and youth. The project introduced a training manual specially designed for teachers to enable them to teach a range of environmental topics to selected secondary schools in Khovd aimag. The Mongolian Nature and Environment Conservation NGO set up three Eco-schools in Ulaanbaatar and five in Khovd aimag. Eco-schools cooperate with the Project in creating more environmentally and child-friendly schools. Some schools have established green spaces on their compounds and in their classrooms. Each eco-school has formed an Eco-Council, which mobilises children to make their schools greener by planting trees, growing green plants and educating their schoolmates on ecology.

This initiative, which is supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, is to be replicated in other schools in Bayankhongor and Gobi-Altai aimags from next autumn, and eventually in other aimags as well. The next step will be to connect the Mongolian eco-schools to the global network of eco-schools.

The Ministry of Nature and Environment, supported by the Swiss Government, organised an Inception Workshop within an Integrated National Chemicals and Waste Management Programme on May 26, 2008, in Ulaanbaatar. This was a significant contribution towards the implementation and further development of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

About 80 international scientists, policymakers in rangeland management and herders' representatives gathered at a five-day workshop to address the question of how community-based rangeland management will strengthen Mongolian herders' resilience to climate changes. The workshop was aimed at developing a conceptual framework, methods and institutional relationships to launch research and a science capacity-building programme. The workshop was jointly organised by the Mongolian Society for Rangeland Management, Colorado State University, SDC, UNDP and the World Bank, in cooperation with the Mongolian Academy of Science and the Research Institute of Animal Husbandry and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.



Children plant trees in their school yard, Khovd aimag



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Increased income of herders and ex-herders in targeted areas based on improved productivity of their livestock and income diversification

The Mongolian Potato Programme, in cooperation with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), imported 150 tonnes of high-quality potato seeds of the "Sante" variety from Holland to expand the growing of potato seeds nationwide. The programme selected five companies engaged in growing potato seeds to plant the

seeds on 50 hectares in the central agricultural region for multiplication. About 800 tonnes of potato seeds are expected to be harvested. This contribution from the MoFA accelerates the goal of establishing sustainable high-quality potato-seed production systems across the country.

Deepened Swiss-Mongolian relations, and improved governance and gender equality

1998 marked the start of the Swiss Surgical Team (SST) in Mongolia, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary. Each year since then, the SST has grown, attracting an increasing number of volunteer surgeons and anaesthetists, and recently nurses. Their main goal is to train their Mongolian counterparts in surgical techniques and patient management. The training they provide is hands-on, with Swiss and Mongolian surgeons working together as a team with patients from diagnosis through to post-operative care. Each year they treat more than 200 patients with a wide range of medical conditions. In recent years, the SST has focused its attention on the difficulties facing medical practitioners in rural hospitals and is training local doctors and surgeons. Many of these doctors were left to their own devices and relied on the training and knowledge gained from their studies during Soviet times, more than 20 years ago. Together with the Health Science University of Mongolia, the SST began to organise trainings in the Regional Diagnostic Centres in the western and eastern aimags, in Arvaikheer, Khovd, Altai and Sainshand. To ensure the sustainability of the SST's work and to support further training of local doctors, the SST's most recent project is the establishment of "telemedicine" in Mongolia - online communication between urban and rural hospitals, linked to an international network of hospitals. The SST-project is a true partnership



Swiss - Mongolian surgeons at consultation

programme. Not only do Swiss doctors come to Mongolia, but Mongolian doctors are also given a chance to work and learn in Swiss hospitals. Through the support of the SST and the Swiss Government, every year three to five doctors are given the opportunity to work for up to six months in one of Switzerland's prestigious hospitals.

In June 2008, Switzerland and Mongolia signed an agreement on One-Stop-Shop Project Implementation, represented by Walter Meyer, Head of the East Asia Division of SDC, and Kh. Narankhuu, the Minister for Trade and Industry in Mongolia. Under the agreement, both parties will contribute to good governance by supporting key government service providers in delivering administrative services in a fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and efficient manner to all citizens.

Programme Management

We congratulate N. Batbayar for his nomination as head of the Mining Department in the MRPAM. N. Batbayar was the Deputy Coordinator of the SAM project and the Head of the ASM Division of MRPAM. We also congratulate B. Dashbal for his nomination in Batbayar's place.

We also extend our thanks to Ch. Enkhzaya, who worked as National Project Director for the SAM Project. She stepped down from the position at the end of May 2008 to focus on different challenges.



Swiss - Mongolian surgeons in operation

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"Once medical students leave the Mongolian university there is little training for them. Telemedicine opens doors for advanced training. Doctors in any town in Mongolia with an internet connection can access new knowledge and exchange information with medical professors and doctors from all over the world while working in their hospitals."

Dr. Beat Kehrer,
SST Leader

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