**Overview**

*Dzuds* are extreme winters characterised by freezing temperatures, heavy snow and ground so frozen that animals cannot reach pasture. These conditions are commonly preceded by a dry summer with equally scant grazing. Livestock struggles to build up the stores of fat they need for winter. The poorest herders cannot afford extra fodder to ensure the survival of their livestock and livelihood. In early 2020, forecasts of a *dzud* triggered the release of funding to protect vulnerable herders.

**Partners**

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**
- **Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS)**
- **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**

**Timeline 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Early warning</strong></td>
<td>early January</td>
<td>Annual <em>dzud</em> risk map from Mongolia’s National Agency for Meteorology and Environmental Monitoring shows 50 percent of herders at very high risk of a severe winter season. Impact-based forecasting confirmed the trigger, allowing FAO and MRCS to act early to reduce the impacts of <em>dzud</em> on vulnerable herders, ahead of the peak in April.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Automatic funding** | mid-January | - **USD 126 000**
FAO Early Action Fund  
- **CHF 211 000**
IFRC ex-ante funding |
| **Anticipatory action** | February | - **MNT 240 000–275 000**
Animal care kits  
- **FAO targeted 450 families in 4 provinces**  
- **MRCS targeted 1 000 families in 8 provinces** |

**Why anticipate disasters?**

- Anticipatory action saves livelihoods and money.
- Acting on forecasts offers an opportunity to reduce disaster impacts.
- Partners can help more people more effectively and quicker.
- Saved time can be spent reaching the most vulnerable.

**Why collaborate?**

FAO and MRCS/IFRC aligned triggers, funding times and anticipatory actions. This collaboration:

- avoided duplication
- effectively increased the reach of early actions
- had a larger impact on the most vulnerable
- changed mindsets from reaction to anticipation by advocating with one voice
- ensured timely delivery of inputs through coordinated transport and distribution costs

**Return on investment**

For every USD 1 spent on anticipatory action can have up to USD 7 in avoided losses and added benefits.

Read more: www.fao.org/3/ca2181en/CA2181EN.pdf

**Contact**

- **Early Warning Early Action**
  - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
  - ewea@fao.org | www.fao.org/emergencies/fao-in-action/ewea
  - @FAOemergencies
- **Mongolian Red Cross Society**
  - dm@redcross.mn | www.redcross.mn
- **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**
  - IFRC CCST Beijing | eastasia.delegation@ifrc.org
  - IFRC APRO Regional FbF Coordinator | raymond.zingg@ifrc.org

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