OVERVIEW

Mongolia is currently experiencing harsh winter conditions which are severely impacting herders. The impacts of an unusually dry summer, late autumn rains and early, followed by heavy snowfall in September to November 2016 have combined to create an unfolding humanitarian crisis. The Government of Mongolia is reporting dzud or near dzud conditions in 127 soums of 17 provinces, and two districts of Ulaanbaatar City. It is estimated that 165,282 people (43,579 herder households) are at risk. One quarter are children, pregnant women, people with special needs and elderly people.

The extreme winter weather, following on from a drought during the summer of 2016, has depleted herders' reserves of hay and fodder. Heavy snow and ice cover in the north of the country, means grazing and the movement of animals has become increasingly difficult. With temperatures dropping to below -40 degrees, weakened livestock are at significant risk of ill health and death with humanitarian impacts on herder families.

The most vulnerable to the impacts of the severe winter weather are herder households with less than 200 head of animals, who have limited coping mechanisms. The poor health and death of their livestock places them at risk of decreased incomes, indebtedness, difficulties in purchasing essential items, and negative coping mechanisms such as withdrawing children from education.

A Joint UN-NEMA Rapid Assessment conducted in December 2016 found many herder households in affected areas were unable to meet their basic needs including food, clothing, fuel for heating and cooking fuel, hygiene products, livestock feed and emergency communications.

As well as the impact on vital livestock, the severe winter weather is also cutting people off from accessing essential services such as healthcare and education. According to the Ministry of Health, 2,479 pregnant women, 26,166 children under five and 12,813 elderly people are wintering in areas with no or limited access to basic services.

KEY NUMBERS

- 127 soums of 17 provinces affected
- 157,000 people affected (37,000 herder households)
- 12,600 people targeted with CERF funded projects

IMPACT

- 10% Price of essential food items (non-meat) has increased by 10% since summer 2016.
- 50% Price of meat has dropped 50% as herders attempt to sell off their animals.
- 6% An estimated 6%* of livestock have died in dzud affected regions since October 2016.
- 200 The most vulnerable are herder households with less than 200 head of animals.

FUNDING OVERVIEW (US$)

- Total amount required for the response: $6,671,000
- Non CERF allocation: $3,143,745
- Funding Gap: $2,419,641

SECTORS

- Education
- Early Recovery
- Nutrition
- Health
- Agriculture
- Protection
- Food Security
- Cash

Feedback: jess.garana@one.un.org     Creation date: 27 Feb 2017
In response to the unfolding situation, the Government of Mongolia allocated 3.7 billion MNT (USD 1.5 million) to assist the affected populations and implement responses at national, aimag and soum levels. NEMA allocated 1.1 billion MNT (USD 458,000) for emergency response activities in the most severely-affected aimags.

With the early onset of the harsh winter weather, prepositioned stocks of animal feed in country have not been sufficient to meet the need. To meet this need and the humanitarian needs of affected herder families, the humanitarian community in Mongolia have requested $6.67 million to provide Agriculture, Early Recovery, Food, Nutrition, Health, Protection and Education support.

In January 2017, the UN allocated $1.1 million through the CERF to support 3,500 of the most vulnerable herder households with Agriculture and Early Recovery activities. This funding is being used to distribute animal feed and veterinary first aid kits in 36 districts of 13 provinces, and provide multi-purpose cash grants to most vulnerable herder families to purchase essential, life-saving items such as food, fuel and health care.