

Rehabilitation of boarding Schools and provisions of refresher training courses for headmasters and teachers in the *dzud*-affected Gobi desert provinces in Mongolia



UN Trust Fund for Human Security



Fast Facts

Country: Mongolia

Duration: November 2003 to May 2006

Implementing UN Agencies: UNESCO

Other Implementing Partners: UNICEF; Tokyo Institute of Technology; Ministry of Education, Culture and Science; State University of Education

Budget: \$504,563.01

Key Words: Access to education; climate-related insecurity; capacity-building

BACKGROUND

Mongolia is a large, landlocked country with a relatively small yet dispersed population. Its shift from a centrally planned socialist system to a capitalist democracy, which began in 1990, forced a vast reduction in public expenditures, leading to the degradation of education and other social services. Compounding the hardships felt by the population was the *dzuds* of 2000-2002, a local weather phenomenon characterized by severe summer time drought followed by an unusually cold and dry autumn and an extremely snowy winter. These conditions caused significant loss of livestock, robbing rural herders of

all their assets. The extreme climate also put significant strain on the Government's ability to sustain public services, including the provision of education. After experiencing years of underfunding, the effects of the *dzuds* pushed the education system to the breaking point as the heavy snow destroyed many school facilities in the extended periods of the cold weather. As a result, underpaid teachers lost motivation, boarding schools became overcrowded, and due to increasing poverty, some children were taken out of school by their parents to contribute to work at home.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In the context of extreme weather conditions, the overarching goal of the project was to assist Mongolia to restore adequate education and withstand the impact of future *dzuds*. To this end, the project sought to (i) rehabilitate school facilities and dormitories in order

to improve the learning environment; (ii) upgrade teaching techniques and classroom management; and (iii) increase community involvement in the management of the education system.

BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiaries were pupils and teachers in 20 targeted schools who were able to study and teach in rehabilitated school buildings with proper heating systems and WASH facilities. In addition, teachers

benefited from capacity-building trainings, which helped improve their teaching methods and classroom management practices.