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The Mongolia Monitor

News from USAID Mongolia

No. 75

October 2007

Mission News:

In early October, USAID Mongolia: a) bid farewell to Intermittent Senior Program Advisor, Mr. Jon O'Rourke, who has provided outstanding support to Mission operations over the past year; and b) welcomed the return of Mr. Jeffrey Goodson, the Mission's Senior Program Manager, who recently completed a one year assignment to Afghanistan. During the 3rd week of October, USAID Mongolia successfully carried out its annual performance review as the initial step in completing the Mission's FY 2007 Performance Report due in USAID/W by mid November 2007. In this intensive exercise, USAID Mongolia staff were joined and assisted by the following visitors: Ms. Mary Alice Kleinjan, Regional Legal Advisor, USAID RDMA Thailand; Ms. Claire Johnson, Regional Controller, USAID Philippines; and Mr. Ray Edler, Regional Contracting Officer, USAID Philippines. During the 4th week of October, USAID Mongolia Representative Barry Primm attended USAID/Washington's World Wide Mission Director Conference and the ANE Bureau's Regional Mission Director Workshop.

Program News:

PROGRAM AREA: PRIVATE SECTOR-LED ECONOMIC GROWTH

Economic Policy Reform and Competitiveness Project (EPRC)

Chemonics

www.eprc-chemonics.biz

Economic Policy Support

Tax reform implementation support – The project assisted the Mongolian Tax Authority (MTA) with completion of an application to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

International Visitor Program. Submission of the application is pending USAID Mongolia, USAID/W and/or Embassy resolution of their potential involvement in the submission process and follow-up with the IRS.

Trade Policy Support

Single electronic window for trade facilitation – EPRC held a series of meetings to develop a schedule for the visit of the *Société Générale de Surveillance* (SGS) team of experts scheduled for 27 November through 4 December. SGS will conduct a *pro-bono* feasibility analysis for the establishment of a single electronic window (SEW) for trade and has a strong interest in being a lead investor and strategic partner in a private-public partnership (PPP) company that would run the SEW.

Grant award ceremony held for trade policy analyses proposals – At a brief ceremony held at the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) on 23 October, the award committee consisting of representatives from MoIT, GTZ and EPRC/USAID announced the five winning proposals. Mr. Nyamsuren B., State Secretary of MoIT, Mr. Fernando Bertoli, COP-EPRC, and Mr. Albert Gierend, Project Coordinator, GTZ, congratulated the winning teams and provided the initial half of the grant. The remaining half of the grant will be given upon successful completion of the papers. EPRC/USAID and GTZ are co-funding and administering the grant awards designed to support former Summer Trade Seminar participants' analyses of Mongolian foreign trade policy issues.

Competitiveness Support

Credit Information Bureau – The process of privatization of the Credit Information Bureau (CIB) that EPRC began two years ago moved forward on 29 October when the Mongolian Bankers Association (MBA) signed an agreement with the IFC to conduct a feasibility analysis and prepare a business plan and business model for the proposed private sector-led CIB. The MBA and IFC will share the cost of the technical assistance on an equal basis. Project efforts to establish a private sector-led CIB began two years ago at a meeting organized with Mongol Bank. This was done with the participation of private sector banks and financial institutions where Mongol Bank declared its willingness to transfer the CIB to the private sector. Since then, the project conducted a pre-feasibility analysis for the new CIB, teamed up with the MBA for the drafting of a new law on credit information services, and initiated discussions with IFC to provide specialized technical assistance. An initial IFC mission came to Mongolia in early spring and made a proposal for the feasibility analysis and business plan for the CIB to the MBA. Over the last few months, EPRC worked closely with the MBA and banks to develop consensus on raising and assessing from members the fifty percent co-funding required by IFC.

Mongolia Mortgage Corporation (MIK) – MIK continued intensive due diligence efforts to select a uniform mortgage portfolio for its first transaction.

Energy Sector Support

GoM/external partners meetings – The Energy Working Group (EWG), co-chaired by USAID, met for a fifth time on 18 October. ADB attended and was welcomed as a new

permanent member. EBRD is expected to become a permanent member at the November meeting at which time all major donors will have representation at the EWG. At the meeting, the EWG finally approved its Operating Procedures; discussed the status and progress of the energy sector disaster scenario analysis; reviewed progress on the Public Information/Public Education (PI/PE) campaign; reviewed execution of a current Performance Agreement with a licensed energy company; and discussed subsidies in the sector. The next meeting will be on 17 November in Baganuur.

Electricity and heating disaster scenario – Following meetings with power plants, the UB heating company, National Dispatch Center, UNDP and the National Emergency Management Agency, EPRC has produced a final draft of potential heating sector disaster scenarios. The focus of the report is to provide relevant information and support to the APCSS for their use in their emergency preparedness event to be held in UB in March 2008.

Public Information/Public Education (PI/PE) campaign – The project will present the salient features of the campaign strategic plan at the EWG November meeting and seek endorsement of all parties. With MoFE's support, the project is also planning a television program, sponsored through the *Open Government* website, focused on the heating sector of Ulaanbaatar.

Fuel/Coal sector –According to the MoFE, there will be a coal price increase for the Sharyn Gol coal mine in November and an amount of a mere 2,000 Togrogs per ton was mentioned. Although MoFE also announced a 7.5 billion Togrogs debt relief program for the Baganuur and Shivee Ovoo coal mines, the Cabinet has yet to approve the program. By all accounts there is an adequate supply of coal for the winter at all coal mines and it appears that transport issues have been resolved. All power plants have increased their stockpiles and are now close to the required amount of 15 days supply.

Performance Agreements – The half year numbers are in on the performance agreement in effect with an electricity distribution company. The licensee has met and exceeded all targets and is eligible for a 60 million Togrogs reward so far. ERA plans to use the success of this pilot as an example that other licensee companies can emulate and thus get reward for improvements in performance.

National Dialogue Support

Private-public dialogue meetings held on future location of logistics facilities in Ulaanbaatar – Pursuant to agreements reached during the technical meeting of the Transit Mongolia National Committee held on 25 September, freight forwarders, the Ulaanbaatar Railways (UBTZ) and EPRC met on 5 October to discuss plans for the location of logistics facilities in relationship to proposed plans for railway bypasses of Ulaanbaatar. The project also organized a meeting of the Ulaanbaatar Municipality, the JICA Transport Technical Mission for Ulaanbaatar and freight forwarders at the USAID Resource Center on 11 October. Mr. B. Munkhbaatar, Head, City Development Policy Department, participated in representation of the municipality. Agreements were reached concerning continued dialogue between UBTZ, the municipality and freight-forwarding

companies to involve the private sector in decisions of the municipality about land zoning and use for logistics facilities and wholesale businesses and decisions concerning the location of proposed railway bypasses. Freight forwarding companies declared that they cannot invest in much needed logistics facilities until these decisions are made and manifested that they want to be involved in the process of making these decisions.

Workshop for GoM webmasters held at USAID Resource Center -- In cooperation with ICTA, the EPRC project conducted a four-day hands-on training workshop on the official release of Joomla!Mongolia Content Management System (CMS) version 1.0 and information system security. During October 25-30, fifty-one webmasters and network administrators from ministries and agencies attended the workshop that provided fully Mongolian-based tools to improve their websites through the use of Joomla!Mongolia CMS and presented fundamentals and best practices for information system security. Participants will conduct security audits of their IT installations using the tools provided during the training before attending the next scheduled workshop where low-cost, appropriate solutions will be presented and discussed for implementation. Lack of awareness of solutions and prevalent practices currently undermine the security and functions of GoM agencies' websites and efforts to provide public information to citizens and engage them in a public dialogue. In preparation for the next workshop, the project has scheduled regular technical sessions to assist webmasters with the redesign of their websites and the conduct of IT security audits in their organizations.

Private-public dialogue to be held on draft of new Customs Law – At the request of the Director of the Mongolian National Customs Administration (MNCA), Mr. B. Battumur, the project held a series of meetings to assist with the design of a public information campaign and dialogue on the proposed new law. The campaign will include newspaper summaries of the proposed law, television programs sponsored through the *Open Government* website, presentations to MPs, and meetings with the private sector. The first meeting with the private sector is currently scheduled for on or about 14 November.

Private sector position paper for January 2008 GoM-Donors Meeting – At the request of the Mongolian National Chamber for Commerce and Industry (MNCCI), the project began work on a private sector “white paper” to include two to four key decisions government can take in each of selected business sectors during 2008 that will improve the business environment and facilitate investment in the framework of its private sector development strategy. To develop the paper, the project has entered into discussions with the Mongolia Business Council and other representative business associations to work together to survey key business decision makers, hold interviews, and conduct focus groups.

Design of new Open Government television program series – Based on the success of the *Open Government* national multimedia *Open Talks* series, the Cabinet Secretariat and the project began work on the design of a new national television program tentatively entitled “Facts, Figures and Opinions.” The proposed new program will complement the *Open Talks* series and is designed to enhance the quality of public dialogue by providing user-friendly, easy-to-understand, issue-specific information to educate citizens on issues of

public concern. The programs would be of short duration, fast-paced, with lots of graphics to summarize complex technical information in a comprehensible way. The format would depend on the issue and may include one or more of the following: short individual presentations, interviews with experts and/or the public, panelists/presenters, panelists and journalists, question and answer, informational pieces, site visits, etc. The project has completed the concept paper and will hold meetings with the Cabinet Secretariat to discuss and finalize the design. It is anticipated that the first program will focus on energy issues.

Project Portfolio Review

EPRC participated in the USAID/Mongolia project portfolio review held on 17 October.

Gobi Regional Economic Growth Initiative

Mercy Corps

www.mercycorps.org.mn

Gobi Initiative uses sales generated from new business activities outlined in the formal business plans developed under the project as an indicator of success. Total sales for herder and non-herder businesses for October reached MNT 178.8 million (\$151,528) and MNT 150.5 million (\$127,533) respectively.

This puts total sales for herder businesses in 2007 (by Oct. 2007) at MNT 1,387.8 million (\$1,176,118) and for non-herder businesses at MNT 1,493.9 million (\$1,266,078). This gives a CY2007 total sales up to October end of MNT 2.9 billion (\$2.4 million), the sales target for CY2007 for all GI clients is MNT 3.82 billion (\$3.24 million). Many herder businesses make a large part of their sales in the autumn and the sales are on track compared to the expected sales for the first 10 months of 2007. Total sales generated by business clients under the Gobi Initiative Phase II from Jan. 2004 to date is MNT 7.8 billion (\$6.6 million) vs. total USAID funding for the Gobi Initiative (less the sub grant to Pact) of the cooperative agreement to date of \$4.4 million.

Mercy Corps in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Mongolian President's Office organized a National Workshop on Local Economic Development in Mongolia on 25th and 26th of October 2007. The main goal of the workshop was to foster a climate of greater understanding between stakeholders involved in local socio-economic development planning in Mongolia. The workshop was held in the Government Palace. A number of high ranking officials attended this event including the Head of the National Committee for Regional Economic Development Mr. Tseveenjav; Mr. Batsengel, Officer for Rural Development from the President's Office; and Aimag and Soum Governors from the Gobi Initiative and RASP aimags.

During the workshop the national and regional government, and a number of organizations including Mercy Corps and the Open Society Forum, presented their methodologies and lessons learnt with regard to developing local socio-economic

development plans at soum level. As a result of the workshop the participants identified opportunities and next steps to enable all organizations (national government, aimag governments and donor funded projects) to begin to develop a common methodology for future local economic development planning that is in line with the national governments strategic development plans. The participants also identified constraints including the centralized government decision making and a lack of Aimag level fiscal autonomy.

Over the course of the year the Gobi Initiative has assisted 14 soums to develop their socio-economic master plans and ten of them have been approved by their respective citizen's representative's Khurals. The remaining 4 soum socio-economic master plans are now being reviewed by their citizen's representative's Khurals in Bayan-Undur soum in Bayanhongor aimag, Tugrug soum in Govi-Altai, Arvaiheer soum in Uvurhangai and Gurvansaihan soum in Dundgovi aimag. The next stage of the process will involve providing support/assistance for the implementation of the plan. This is quite a challenge, taking into account the constraints of a centralized government structure and decision making and the fact that the aimags and soums have limited access to financing.

New clients

The selection of new clients for CY2008 in Gobi Initiative aimags has been completed. A total of 493 applications have been received from the 6 target aimags. Gobi Initiative aimags have selected 337 clients including 210 herder and 127 non-herder clients. 46% of all selected clients are new clients who have not received assistance from Gobi Initiative previously. The selected clients are expected to attend Business Plan training in November and develop a business plan by the end of December 2007. All clients will begin implementation of their business plans in 2008.

Training

Business Plan training was held in Ulaanbaatar for local consultants from all six Gobi Initiative aimags. This training was an excellent opportunity for local consultants to acquire additional technical skills in business planning and build local capacity to ensure that program activities can become sustainable beyond the end of Gobi Initiative phase II. A total of 28 participants attended this training including 15 Mercy Corps staff and 13 local consultants. As a result of the training the participants improved the Business Plan template that will be completed by the program clients.

A Value Chain Program Design Training has been organized on 18-20 October in Zavhan aimag and on October 23-25 in Ulaanbaatar. A total of 6 local consultants and 30 Mercy Corps staff participated in the training from 11 target aimags. The goal of these trainings was to teach participants the latest methodologies and theory for designing subsector and value-chain programs that incorporate strategies for sustainable impact. Participants learned how to design programs that result in commercially viable solutions to rural business constraints such as market access, input supply, technology/product development, management training, and access to finance.

Each aimag has chosen a specific subsector and the aimag program staff will now conduct a value chain analysis which will enable them to identify constraints to

competitiveness, identify market solutions (that address those constraints), assess various targeted solutions, and design future Gobi Initiative program interventions. Examples include: the Uvurhangai aimag which will conduct value chain analysis on yak hair and Dundgovi and Umnugovi aimags which will conduct value chain analysis on camel milk.

Trade fair

A trade-fair "One soum one product" was organized in Ulaanbaatar on October 12-14. Fifteen (15) Gobi Initiative clients participated in this national event. Their combined sales exceeded MNT 22,860,000 (\$19,622). A number of clients won prestigious awards, Ih Halbaganat LLC from Bayanhongor won the 'Best Dairy Product Award' for its camel milk products, and felt products from Hongoriin Sor cooperative from Bayanhongor were selected as the 'Best National Product of the year.' The Hongoriin Sor cooperative generated sales of MNT 2,600,000 (\$2,230) during the Trade Fair. Camel wool products of Govi Zulganai cooperative from Umnugovi aimag won the 'Special Prize'.

Gobi Initiative client Tugsats herder group from Umnugovi aimag has concluded a contract with Ivanhoe Mines to supply vegetables. In October they sold a total of 6,736.6 Kgs of vegetables including: potatoes 2,427 kg, tomatoes - 2,152.3 kg, cucumbers 50 kg, watermelons 183.1 kg, carrots 690 kg, onions 194.2 kg, green cabbage 1,037 kg; with a total value of MNT 6.5 million (\$5,508) to the Canadian company.

Ben Shell, XAC bank franchising service manager, has traveled to Govi-Altai and Bayanhongor aimags with Gobi Initiative staff to visit Gobi Initiative supported cooperatives. Mr. Shell also explored the possibility of working with the Aimag Program Officers and aimag-based consultants trained by Gobi Initiative and provided technical assistance to the XAC bank franchised savings and credit cooperatives (SCC). XAC bank has four franchised Saving & Credit Cooperatives (SCC) in these two aimags. XAC bank and Mercy Corps will develop a joint action plan in November.

A large number of rural businesses need to improve their knowledge of the existing legislation and standards related to public health and safety and how to comply before they start their business. As a result Mercy Corps has developed an information awareness campaign in all target aimags. The campaign will be implemented from October 2007 until December and focus on existing standards related to public health and safety for rural businesses and residents. The campaign aims to clarify existing legislation and standards, to clarify responsibilities of both businesses and local government, to address any apparent contradictions, and to encourage businesses to comply with existing government legislation and standards.

Mercy Corps is collaborating with the State Professional Inspection Agency and National Standard and Measurement Center in both Ulaanbaatar and at the aimag level to run the campaign. During October, the implementation plan for the campaign has been developed in cooperation with the partner organizations. To prepare for campaign activities, the contents of a brochure, videos, posters and stickers have been prepared, along with an agenda for the trainings, which will be provided to businesses and government officials.

Mercy Corps organized a workshop to promote the Gobi Forage project, review activities implemented and discuss future plans. Fifty (50) representatives from collaborating and partner organizations such as Research Institute for Animal Husbandry (RIAH); Institute of Botany, Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC); Ministry of Food & Agriculture; the Agency for Land Administration, Geodesy & Cartography (ALaGaC); the Geoinfo project (Dutch Govt.) and Agricultural University (School of Agrobiology) attended the workshop. The workshop also provided the opportunity for the project to announce plans for potential Mongolian host organizations to bid competitively to house the Gobi Forage project. The workshop participants developed a set of selection criteria that potential host organizations should meet in order to bid on hosting the project. The Gobi Forage project team will develop a comprehensive information and application package and announce the tender in mid November inviting interested organizations to tender and present proposals as to how they would carry forward and host the Gobi Forage project.

Future events

Mercy Corps is organizing a Leadership Conference during November 14-15. Gobi Initiative and RASP Aimag Reps and Ulaanbaatar program staff will meet in Ulaanbaatar for two days to develop their work-plans and monitoring plans for CY2008 through a participatory process. The participants will also discuss the recently completed new client selection process, Business Plan development of new clients and a plan on how Mercy Corps will work with new and existing BDS providers at the aimag level. This will facilitate direct interaction between providers and clients. By supporting these BDS providers the program aims to support the continuing provision of training and expertise initiated under the Gobi Initiative program, independent of donor funding.

Gobi Initiative offices in all 6 aimags will organize Business Plan Development trainings for newly selected clients during November. Gobi Initiative plans to use local aimag-based consultants to provide the business plan development trainings. Business Plans of all program clients for next year are expected to be developed, revised and approved by the end of December. Ulaanbaatar based Gobi Initiative staff will travel at the end of November to the aimags to help clients and aimag-based staff develop the clients' Business Plans.

Mercy Corps activities will continue to enhance the skills and build the technical and training delivery skills of local business development providers. This includes private individuals, private sector companies, Gobi Initiative program staff, local government officials and NGO staff. Mercy Corps is also planning to conduct a Training of Trainer (ToT) session for local aimag-based consultants and dairy producers from all Mercy Corps aimags on "Aaruul technology." Local consultants will learn the latest technology on aaruul (dried milk products) production. They will also study how to package products and what types of equipment are used for aaruul production. This ToT session will be held in Ulaanbaatar during the first half of November and will last for three days.

Mercy Corps will also be organizing a Training of Trainers (ToT) session for local aimag-based consultants in the beginning of November for ten days in Ulaanbaatar.

Seventeen consultants are expected to attend the training from six aimags. The purpose of this training is to evaluate the technical and training skills and certify the best local aimag-based consultants. Participants will learn about adult teaching methodology and psychology.

GER Initiative

CHF International

www.chfmongolia.org

In October, GER helped to improve or expand 116 businesses, create 28 new startups, match 106 people to jobs, and generate 210 new job placements.

Financial Services

Seventy-eight loans valued at over \$123,400 were facilitated and 37 CAF loans valued at \$66,400 were funded. The Sharkhad branch organized a meeting with Ag bank's "Da khuree" branch. GER advisors and bank loan officers exchanged their opinions on collaboration and talked about expanding their relationship in the future. After the meeting bank officers agreed to advise their clients to access GER services.

Training and Consultancies

416 trainings were held with 219 clients participating and 196 consultations provided to 171 clients. This included:

- The Ger Initiative branch office at the 4th bus stop holding a meeting entitled "Start-ups need money" for clients, who want to start their own businesses. Advisors introduced GER services and training which includes start-up, business plan, bookkeeping, market research, loan preparation and costing and pricing to the participants. After the meeting, four clients participated in packaged business trainings in conducting market surveys, developing business plans, improving customer service, improved bookkeeping and loan preparation. Next month the same clients will develop business plans with assistance of the responsible advisors and apply for CAF loan.

- The governor of Sukhbaatar soum has asked the GER Initiative to conduct business trainings for business owners and trainings on possible start up businesses. Because of this request, on October 17 and 18, Sukhbaatar GER advisors organized "Start Up" and "Marketing" trainings for nine people. The trainees learned about how to start up a business, including analyzing risks associated with different business ideas and how to promote their business activities. As a result, three participants have decided to start businesses including a mobile phone repair, a hair salon and a sewing business.

- The Bulgan BDC and Bulgan Aimag Employer Association co-conducted an HR management training for six of Bulgan's largest employers. The training was provided by the employment coordinator Sumya.

- In Ulgii, the project conducted another four days of training for 22 members of eight cooperatives, who are beneficiaries of ACF French Humanitarian Organization, between 22-25th of October. Training was on bookkeeping, loans, consumption and savings, business startups and business planning.

Information and meetings

516 information services were provided to 331 clients and 10 meetings with the GoM were held with 363 clients participating. The Zuunmod branch organized an ‘Open Day’ with collaboration of Tuv aimag’s Real State Department and Land Office. The purpose of the Open Day was to advertise GER and its services, especially the information service; to encourage residents to privatize their khashaa(s); and how to shorten the related paper work process. The event lasted three days and numerous residents obtained their land title shortly thereafter.

“Initiative” newspaper

Advertisements for the newspaper were placed in the “TV program” newspaper which is published and sold in all big cities and towns in Mongolia to improve our newspaper sales and public awareness. Sixty thousand copies of the TV program newspaper are printed each week. Also, the project published 500 posters for the “Initiative” newspaper. It will be distributed at specific sales points, some public places and in GER Initiative office branches.

BUILD Project

The Better Urban Infrastructure – Lending for Development (BUILD) Project trained construction advisors on how to assist clients to prepare construction budgets based on the results of the BUILD survey. The client manual with recommendations on construction techniques/budgeting is currently being edited and will be completed in November.

Khashaa Valuation Survey

KVS 2007 survey training was organized for all staff that will be participating in the 2007 survey. CHF is involving more staff in the survey this year in an effort to complete the survey sooner. The project will also be employing a sampling method this year rather than a direct census type survey. This should improve the timeliness of the survey while maintaining an acceptable error rate. Approximately 10% of the surveys have been completed in the initial few weeks of the survey period.

Employment

Eighty-one clients were matched to jobs and five clients entered vocational training programs; 175 employment trainings were held for a total of 146 clients; and 113 jobs were generated in October.

- The GOM Central Employment Office organized a meeting for all organizations providing employment matching services. Private employment matching companies (EMCs) are required to make a cooperative agreement with the Labor Bureau of Ulaanbaatar city. Based on the agreement, private EMCs will be paid 3,500 to 10,000 per job placement based on the characteristics of the placement. Since many of the GER Initiative job placements occur outside of UB, GER is discussing with the Ministry of Labor how best to report non-UB job placements.

- Labor days were held in Baganuur and Bayankhoshuu branches. This was the first Labor Day for the former branch and the event included representatives from the District Government Office and District's Welfare Employment Office.

- Bayangol advisors are in contact with several large employers regarding job placements. Twenty-one GER clients who received Soft skill, CV and Interview trainings were sent to these potential employers. Twelve of the clients have passed first requirements of the companies and will now be given a second round of testing.

- In Darkhan, a "Labor Fair - 2007" was organized by GER and the aimag Dept. of Labor and Social Welfare. As well as introducing the GER initiative's employment service, selling newspapers and distributing brochures, the project also provided information on 41 employment opportunities to 31 people. Nineteen people have been registered as clients and 10 were introduced to employers after the event. Information on job vacancies was also gathered and relationships were established with other participating organizations such as "Darkhan" Hotel, "Us Suvag" LLC, "Center to Change Children's Worlds" NGO and the "Lemour" Vocational training center.

- Also in Darkhan the GER Initiative has packaged a number of resume and interview trainings into one consolidated training. This newly packaged service was promoted at the Labor Fair and 5 people signed up for the training. GER staff and PCV conducted the training later in the month for 6 attendees. As a result of the training, the participants have learned to write a basic resume and CV and are able to answer interview questions. After the training, 3 participants requested employment matching services.

Linkages

GER facilitated linkages between businesses worth approximately \$20,700 this month. The GER Initiative in Ulgii organized two trade fairs around the annual Eagle Festival. The first was a short "mini" trade fair in the main square of Bayan-Ulgii and included a variety of handicraft business. Sixteen GER clients participated in the fair and sold products worth approximately \$783.00. The second fair was held at Sayat Hill, one of the Eagle festival sites. The two day event included 20 clients for the first day and 25 clients during the second day with total sales of over \$2,700.

Business Associations

There were 82 active groups this month. One new group was formed, and no groups disbanded. The new group was a souvenir transactional group whose members sold products together at the Eagle festival in Ulgii. The "Darkhan-Setgemj" Cooperative is continuing to supply gloves to the Darkhan Metallurgical Plant. In October, they supplied 500 pairs of work gloves worth approximately \$510.00. The cooperative has also completed orders of 1,000 pairs of specialty gloves worth approximately \$255.00 from another customer. As a result of these sales, the group was able to pay back its CAF loan and purchase a new cutting machine to increase efficiency.

Other

The SEED Inc program's report for UB was completed this month. Based on the report it was learned that 147 clients purchased 2,651 packets of seeds and 42 clients planted vegetables for commercial purposes. As a result of purchasing seeds from SEED Inc., seven individuals and one business group started farming businesses, six temporary jobs

were created, sales income exceed \$2,300 from SEED, and some farmers stored vegetables valued at approximately \$2,000 for off season marketing. Most of the SEED clients already received GER agriculture and business related trainings. The UB results will be combined with the results in Darkhan and Erdenet for the final report to SEED.

PROGRAM AREA: MORE EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNANCE

The Judicial Reform Project (JRP) *National Center for State Courts (NCSC)* www.ncsc.com

Courts

On October 19, the General Council of Courts (GCC) approved case flow procedures for criminal, civil and administrative cases. The purpose of the new procedures is to implement the strategic objectives defined in the new management concept to unify cases resolving internal events/stages, to clarify the responsibilities of judicial staff in the case processing system, and to improve the timeliness of case dispositions. The new procedures are based on a new case numbering and indexing system that will have a single number for a case throughout the system to avoid duplication and complication in searching for cases via the internet or public access terminals.

On October 22-26th, approximately 70 judicial staff received training on newly approved case flow procedures for consistent understanding and unified application. The specifics of the training included processing and decision making events, stages of case filing, the new numbering system and the timeframes for case processing. This new system of using a single number for a case throughout the system should improve the transparency and accountability of the courts.

The JRP, in collaboration with the GCC, organized computer training for regional computer specialists and judicial officers in charge of the court equipment. More than 40 people were trained on the application system of MS Windows Server 2003, MS SQL that monitors the information database, principles of internal computer networks and its sharing system, Internet connection service, websites, anti-virus software, and operation of the Judge software.

The JRP continues to assist the Judicial Discipline Committee (JDC) in developing software that will assist in creating an electronic database of complaints and investigated cases, and will assist with producing reports. It will allow the JDC to improve efficiency by establishing a monitoring system to track all complaints, their status and decisions.

Prosecutors

The JRP provided materials to assist the General Prosecutors Office (GPO) in producing a manual on victims issues and Dr. Gramckow also developed a booklet entitled “An international survey of the legal framework for implementation of victim services by prosecutors’ offices” to assist the GPO.

Training

On October 15-17, JRP conducted a Trial Skills Training for 26 prosecutors, advocates and judges. The training included lectures on basic trial skills, teamwork, and mock trials performed at the Capital City Court. The attendees also watched a videotape of their performances during the mock trials and analysis was provided by the trainers to improve the techniques of the participants.

Public Education

The broadcast of a new season of the award winning TV series “Legal Hour” continues and can be seen on TV 9 Tuesdays and Thursdays at 20:00. The series informs citizens of changes in the Criminal and Criminal Procedures laws through a drama program using recurring characters.

The JRP television program “Blue Notebook” is being broadcast on Mondays at 20:00 on TV 9. The TV program provides education to citizens on criminal laws and trial procedures by dramatizing real life trials. The program also includes expert commentary to ensure the laws and procedures are understood by the viewers. This is especially important in Mongolia as many citizens represent themselves in court.

The JRP continues to broadcast a radio drama series on civil law entitled “Victims”. The program broadcasts on Mongol Radio at 7:30 on Mondays and at 21:15 on Saturdays. Each episode is rebroadcast the following morning as well. The radio program allows JRP to reach the audiences that do not have access to television broadcasts.

At the request of the Gobi Initiative, JRP printed an additional 300 copies of the booklet on “Benefits of Written Contracts” for herders. It will be distributed to herders through Gobi Initiative aimag representatives who will attend the Gobi Initiative Business meeting that will be held on November 14-15, 2007 in Ulaanbaatar.

The JRP assisted the GCC in developing/printing two posters: a poster on the new amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code relating to Courts and a poster on the new GCC rules for court Public Access Terminals. The posters’ electronic version was delivered for printing.

The JRP monthly newsletter “Rule of Law” (Mongolian version) October 2007 issue was distributed to 83 courts plus about 20 Mongolian legal institutions. The newsletter compiles the activities of all Mongolian courts and allows courts and other legal institutions to share experiences and keep updated on current events. The JRP monthly electronic newsletter (English version) October 2007 was published and included news about the JRP team: automating prosecutor’s offices in Zavkhan and Khuvsgul aimags;

conducting training on trial skills for judges, prosecutors and advocates; and organizing training courses for newly appointed judges' assistants and secretaries. The newsletter is delivered to more than 20 international organizations and local legal institutions.

Police

Per JRP recommendations, the General Police Department (GPD) delivered an official letter specifying the activities and recommendations that they view as priorities for implementation, in particular, automating two pilot police stations, training on forensics, and creating a change agent for implementing the JRP recommendations relating to the pilot automation of police stations. In connection with the review of its procedures, the GPD requested relevant recommendations/materials which were given to the courts and GPO. The requested material was submitted to the GPD with an article on findings from a US national study on "Police Attitudes toward Abuse of Authority" conducted by the US Dept. of Justice and the Police Foundation with the support of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Future Activities for November

A legal clinic expert from Ukraine will arrive in Ulaanbaatar and assist Otgontenger University in developing policies and procedures for its legal clinic to meet international standards. The JRP will begin automating two police stations and developing new case tracking/management software. The JRP also plans to hold trainings for the Special Investigative Unit and the Police in mid to late November. The JRP will continue to broadcast "Legal Hour," "Blue Notebook" and the radio program "Victims."

The Mongolian Electoral and Parliamentary Support Project (MEPS) ***International Republican Institute***

www.iri.org

Campaign Finance Law Inconsistencies Identified and Addressed

Throughout 2007, IRI (in cooperation with the Voter's Education Center) conducted an Assessment Study on Campaign Finance related provisions of the parliamentary election law passed by the SGH in December 2005. The findings outlined in the report of the Assessment Study were discussed by participants at a roundtable discussion held in Ulaanbaatar on 4 October 2007. Representatives of political parties, state electoral organizations, NGOs and civil movements attended the roundtable discussion. The participants of this event supported the conclusions and recommendations of the Assessment Study and agreed to submit a request to make appropriate amendments in the parliamentary election law to law makers and other relevant organizations.

This idea was also reflected in the closing remarks of Merited Lawyer of Mongolia, Professor B. Chimid, who moderated the roundtable discussion. Mr. Chimid said "the majority of the attendees of the roundtable accepted that the current parliamentary election law contains a number of conflicting provisions. In light of this fact, it is suggested that the conflicting and other faulty provisions of the law should be closely

analyzed and specific proposals to amend those provisions should be submitted to the law makers.” Also, the Chairman of General Election Commission of Mongolia Mr. B. Battulga suggested to the attendees of the roundtable that they clearly spell out and list all amendments that need to be made in the parliamentary election law and have it signed by every attendee of the roundtable discussion. Chairman Battulga assured that he will sign the proposed list of amendments and help the attendees to submit them to the SGH.

IRI believes that it is very important to draw the attention of law makers to this issue and undertake advocacy activities aimed at amending the election law and improving campaign finance practices. For this reason, IRI is cooperating with the Voter Education Center (VEC) to further address the issue. Specific activities include drafting and delivering a letter addressed to law makers and leaders of political parties based on the findings of the Assessment Study and the roundtable discussion. IRI and the VEC are also currently drafting amendments to the current parliamentary election law. Once this is completed, we will jointly focus on gaining the support of members of the General Election Commission of Mongolia, political parties and civil society organizations for these changes and submit the amendments to the SGH.

Strengthening Women’s Voices in the Political Process

IRI is coordinating with the “Citizen’s Will Party” women’s organization to conduct a campaign skills training seminar in December in Ulaanbaatar. This seminar will be the final in the series of trainings to prepare women candidates for the 2008 parliamentary elections.

Assist the SGH in Adopting and Implementing Committee Rules

During October 2007, IRI continued to advocate the passage of committee rules by the four remaining standing committees that have not yet done so. Particular attention was placed on the chairs of the Committee on the Economy and the Committee on Security and Foreign Policy. The chairs of these committees have previously indicated that they were prepared to pass the rules.

Ethics Legislation Developed and Passed

In October, IRI continued to meet with MPs to advocate the passage of ethics legislation for MPs and high-ranking officials. The draft legislation had its first-reading in the State Structure Committee on Oct. 16. The legislation was then scheduled to be discussed by the full session of the SGH on Oct. 18-19. However, the full session failed to bring the legislation up for debate. In November, IRI will continue its advocacy efforts to ensure that this legislation is re-scheduled for debate by the full session of the SGH.

Training to Build Research Capacity and Legislative Drafting Ability in the SGH

IRI is coordinating with the Policy Analysis Institute (PAI) to organize a research capacity training that will take place in December. Mr. Scott Palmer, who served Chief of Staff to Speaker of the US House of Representatives Dennis Hastert, was previously scheduled to serve as the trainer for this event. Unfortunately, Mr. Palmer’s plans no longer allow him to take part. However, IRI has identified other highly qualified candidates to serve as the trainer for this event. IRI is also coordinating with the SGH

Secretariat regarding the organization of a legislative drafting training course in December.

The Mongolia Anti-Corruption Support Project (MACS)

The Asia Foundation

www.asiafound.org

IAAC Institution-building

Between October 6th and 13th, The Asia Foundation (TAF) mobilized Mr. Tony Kwok, ex-Deputy Commissioner of Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption, for a fourth visit to the Independent Agency Against Corruption (IAAC) to provide technical assistance and consultancy advice to the Agency. Mr. Kwok serves as both TAF Consultant and International Honorary Advisor to IAAC. During his visit, he conducted series of consultation sessions with senior officers and with their respective departments, where he evaluated IAAC's performance against the recommended action plan.

The sessions enabled the department heads and staff to better understand and appreciate their roles, and do their job effectively. In the final session, Mr. Kwok presented a summary of findings and recommendations raised out of the consultation sessions. These included the need for urgent legal action on:

- Illicit enrichment - making it easier for IAAC to come up with "Big fish" cases;
- Making false declaration of assets a criminal offence (it is ludicrous that there is no penalty for making a false declaration);
- Making soliciting a bribe an offence (the IAAC Director of Investigation advised that if a public officer asked for a bribe but did not receive it, there is no offence);
- Amending the Banking Act to allow IAAC to obtain bank documents. Despite such power given in the Criminal Code, a corresponding amendment was not made in the Banking Act. Hence, the banks have refused to provide the bank documents to IAAC;
- Mounting promotional poster boxes and road signs around the building to raise the visibility of the IAAC, increase public awareness of IAAC, and promote the Reporting Center and hotline campaign;
- Producing a DVD introducing the cost of corruption and the IAAC. Copies can be distributed to all government departments and to civil society organizations. It can also be shown to foreign investors, and in the baggage collection area at the airport;
- Operating the corruption reporting hotline 24/7, with adequate staff available to answer a high level of reports. The IAAC should handle the increased number of reports by simply acknowledging receipt, and picking the most promising cases as investigation priorities. The increased number of reports can be used to pressure the government to provide more resources for IAAC;
- Transferring the hotline for administrative complaints, currently operated by an NGO, to the 24 hour Reporting Center. Otherwise this will cause confusion in the public and reports of corruption will go to the NGO, breaching confidentiality;

- Encouraging the Investigation Department and the Intelligence Section to work together to establish a central computerized name index on persons involved in IAAC investigation and intelligence, and design a computerized case tracking system. The case tracking system will record all complaints received, showing which complaints are being investigated, and which are not. This will also show the progress and end result of all investigations. Such program will be extremely useful for case management, and will also make possible political interference difficult;
- Urging the Prosecutor General to treat as priority the five cases already submitted for prosecution by IAAC;
- Urging the Chief Justice to nominate special selected judges to form a panel to take up all legal applications (e.g., Arrest warrants) from IAAC, and to take up corruption trials. At present, some individual judges have been refusing IAAC applications for arrest warrants without good reason;
- Building partnerships and signing memorandums of understandings with the police, Prosecutor General and Judiciary;
- Establishing a telephone interception facility; and
- Reviewing the asset declaration system to reduce the reporting by middle ranking government officers and above. Revise the Income and Asset Disclosure form (IAD) form to include declaration of remittance, and the declaration should be sworn to the effect that all assets owned by the officer, his family and any other person holding the asset on his behalf, have been declared.

The Commissioner was receptive to the recommendations. Mr. Kwok also conducted trainings for the MOJHA officials and Supreme Court Judges on the “Role of Law Enforcement Agencies and Judiciary in Combating Corruption.”

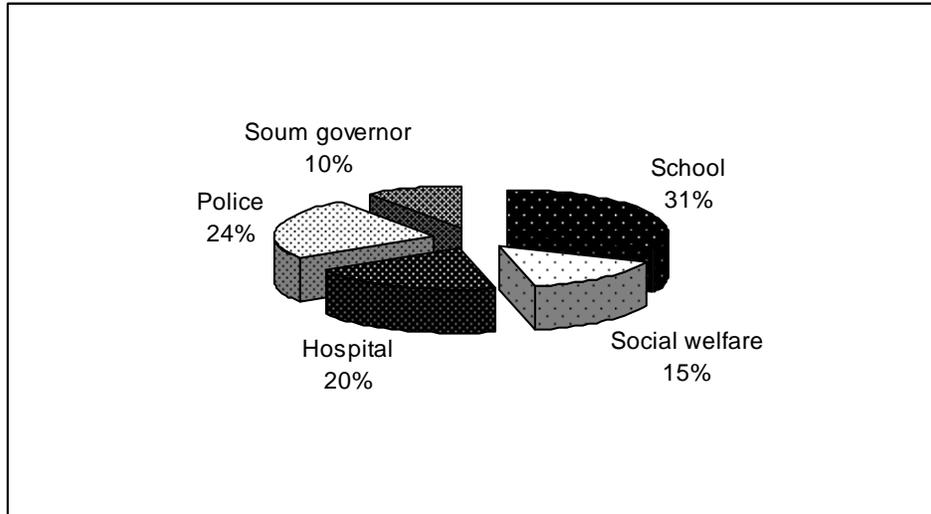
Over the past three months, the press has reported on a growing number of cases involving grand corruption perpetrated by individuals and institutions. Such cases are being investigated by the IAAC under the anti-corruption law. The opening of investigations is an indication of growing capacity and GOM commitment to combat corruption.

Sadly, IAAC Commissioner, Mr. Dangaasuren, passed away in Oct. 24th while traveling in Australia. TAF staff met with IAAC Dep. Commissioner Sunduisuren to express condolences. According to the IAAC, a process exists to replace Mr. Dangaasuren though no timeline was discussed for reasons of cultural sensitivity. The President now needs to nominate a candidate for Parliamentary approval who possesses at least 15 years of prior government service experience, is at least 55 years of age and a lawyer by profession, and possesses relevant managerial and professional experience. The candidate should not have held a political position for at last 5 years as required by ACL.

Eradicating Administrative Level Corruption

The Academy for Political Education (APE) operates 10 hotlines in nine aimags, and in Ulaanbaatar. The nine aimags are: Darkhan Uul, Dornod, Dundgobi, Uvurhangai, Khovd, Husgul, Orhon, Umnugobi, and Selenge. In October, APE received 81 calls for a total of 2,460 in the hotline’s first year of operation. By region, Dornod (24.7%), Khovd (19.8%)

and Uvurhangai (18.5%), received the most calls. The UB call center closed in October as a result of the establishment of IAAC’s official corruption reporting center and hotline. The APE will continue to operate the other nine hotlines in rural areas. The latest breakdown of corruption complaints is illustrated in the table below.



Public Awareness and Education

TAF has developed a campaign strategy to promote the IAAC’s newly-established Corruption Reporting Center and hotline 1969. TAF secured co-financing from the World Bank to implement the campaign strategy, and is now producing print materials and Public Service Announcements (PSAs), including three TV PSAs. The PSAs will be “focus-grouped” during the week of November 5th. The campaign launch is planned for November 15th.

In response to the IAAC’s request for assistance, TAF’s communication team will work with IAAC staff to craft and implement an event/awareness plan for December 9th, which is International Anti-Corruption Day. The contract with C1 TV for broadcast of the “PULSE” expired at the end of August, and TAF is currently negotiating terms with C1 to improve design and format of the program with IAAC cooperation.

Curriculum Development

In October, the ethics and anti-corruption curriculum was approved by the IAAC and the Civil Service Counsel, which resulted in official decision by the Cabinet Secretariat to introduce the curriculum at the Management Academy and at the National Law Faculty.

Benchmarking Survey

The fourth of the semi-annual Corruption Benchmarking surveys was completed in late September, and was presented on October 31st at the Mongol News. Sumati, Director of Sant Maral, was invited to speak at the press conference. The press conference attracted coverage from all major print and broadcast media.

CENTRALLY (USAID/W) OR REGIONALLY (USAID/RDMA) FUNDED PROJECTS

Eastern Steppe Living Landscape Project - Sustaining Wildlife and Traditional Livelihoods in the Arid Grasslands of Mongolia *Wildlife Conservation Society*

www.wcs.org

October has been spent collating information and analyzing data collected during the 2007 field season in preparation for the production of discussion papers, reports and the final versions of a series of training and wildlife management tools for the Eastern Steppe. Stakeholders on the Eastern Steppe continue to be directly involved in the development of these wildlife management tools. In October the WCS/USAID Eastern Steppe project staff worked with the Eastern Mongolian Community Conservation Association, the Eastern Steppe Protected Area Authority, and the local and national offices of the State Border Defense and State Specialized Inspection Agencies.

Living Landscapes Program (LLP)

Efforts have begun to write up the Eastern Steppe project as a Living Landscapes case study. This write up will include a summary of the steps involved in selecting landscape species, building biological, human and conservation landscapes and lessons learned from applying the LLP conservation planning tools to Mongolia's Eastern Steppe region. The conservation planning case study will be distributed to both Mongolian and international conservation practitioners. An abstract has been submitted to the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) for presentation at the XXXI conference schedule for July of 2008 in Beijing, China. ISPRS promotes the application of GIS and RS to the "well being of humanity and sustainability of the environment."

Siberian Marmot

WCS/USAID Eastern Steppe staff are working with our New York-based LLP coordination unit to finalize population models of the Siberian marmot. The marmot is an Eastern Steppe landscapes species of ecological and economic importance. The models will assist wildlife managers in their efforts to conserve and bring back the marmot in regions of the steppe where populations have been decimated by over hunting.

Mongolian Gazelle: Data continues to be downloaded via an Argos satellite link from the Argos-GPS collars placed on nine Mongolian gazelle in September of 2007. Efforts are underway to recover two of the collars from animals that may have died since collar deployment. The cause of death will be investigated if the carcasses are located when the collars are recovered. This study of gazelle population movements is part of a joint effort with the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Maryland. The study is designed to better understand the requirements for the conservation of Mongolian gazelle.

Community-Based Conservation

Community Conservation Partnership Database: Resource maps from three of the community conservation groups on the Eastern Steppe (Bayan-Ukhaa, Zegstei, and Yeson-Erdene) were updated with boundary, well information and wildlife sightings collected throughout the summer/fall of 2007. These resource maps are a key tool for community-based wildlife management and conservation work on the Eastern Steppe.

During the past month, WCS/USAID Eastern Steppe project staff worked to finish reports on summer trainings and activities. Reporting forms were sent to the Volunteer Rangers from 14 active herder community groups. These forms will be used to monitor impacts and/or threats to wildlife and natural resources in their community-managed areas over the next three months. Progress was also made in finalizing outputs from the summer 2007 Ugtam Focused Survey, an activity designed to strengthen the cooperation between staff of nationally protected areas and the herder community conservation groups operating in the same region.

Collaborative Wildlife Protection Program

Wildlife Law Enforcement Training, Nomrog Strictly Protected Area: The final reports from the second phase of the WCS/USAID Eastern Steppe wildlife law enforcement training, which took place in Nomrog Strictly Protected Area (SPA) in Sumber soum of Dornod Aimag between September 16th – 25th, 2007, were distributed in October. The report outlines a series of follow-up activities which includes the finalization of the training manual. Both the State Border Defense Agency and the State Specialized Inspection Agency will assist with the finalization of the manual that they hope to use in similar protected areas where there is overlapping jurisdiction for wildlife protection in the Eastern Steppe and other regions of the country.

Wildlife Trade Law Reform: WCS attended a two-day (24th-25th October, 2007) workshop organized by the Ministry of Nature and Environment and the WWF-Mongolia program office to review proposed amendments to the Mongolian Law on Hunting. Twenty individuals attended the meeting representing government agencies, NGOs and the private (hunting companies) sector. There is broad support for the revision of the law but no consensus on the specific changes necessary. The WCS review of wildlife management and trade law (funded by the World Bank's Netherlands-Mongolia Trust Fund for Environmental Reform) will be used as the starting point for a final analysis of the needed changes and identification of the specific amendments and additions necessary to ensure that the revised law addresses the challenges of wildlife management and trade control in a market-driven economy.

WCS Field Veterinary Program

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) Study: Analysis of serum samples from livestock and Mongolian gazelle calves collected in May, June and August 2007 in the Eastern Steppe for FMD testing was initiated at the Immunology Department of the Mongolian Institute of Veterinary Medicine. All serum samples from gazelle calves were negative for the FMD O-type virus, however, the virus was found in samples from cow calves. Statistical

analyses of data collected over the summer are underway, and reports are being drafted for this study.

Avian Influenza-GAINS: The WCS avian influenza 2007 field surveillance activities, which began on April 6th, were completed on 28 October 2007. The 2007 work focused on the aimags of Hovsgol and Bulgan, with additional surveys in Arkhangai and Sukhbaatar. The focal activities have included: 1) Live bird captures: Main target species included ducks, geese, swans and shorebirds using techniques including mist net capture and spotlighting from motor boat and the shore; 2) Monitoring at Erhel Nuur, Hovsgol aimag: Thirteen surveys were performed throughout the season (twice monthly), each including counts of live birds on the lake, surveys for dead and sick birds, measurement of water quality (pH, temperature, salinity, conductivity) and human and livestock use. Samples were collected from all sick and dead birds found; and 3) Surveys at Ganga Nuur National Park, Sukhbaatar aimag: From 30 September to 2 October 2007, surveys took place at three lakes within the Ganga Nuur National Park. Surveys included counts of live birds present, transects for sick and dead birds, collection of water quality data and collection of fecal samples from congregatory waterbirds.

No signs of unusual mortality were detected at any site, suggesting that no outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza occurred at locations visited during the survey period. Swabs from individual birds will be screened for Influenza A using rRT-PCR at the University of California Davis. Positives will then be submitted for viral isolation at the United States Department of Agriculture – Agriculture Research Service, Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory in Georgia. Survey findings and details of samples collected will be posted on <http://www.gains.org>. As results of laboratory analyses are received these will be shared immediately with partners at the Mongolian Central Veterinary Laboratory and the Veterinary Department, Ministry of Agriculture. With their approval, laboratory results will then be shared with the wider influenza community through <http://www.gains.org>.

Support for this work was provided through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and an award from the National Institutes for Health and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Last Mile Initiative Mongolia (LMI)

AED

http://www.dot-com-alliance.org/activities/activitydetails.php?activity_id=116

Connecting Rural Mongolia

LMI Successfully deployed four rural voice and data communications systems in two soum centers and two bagh communities. The pilot demonstrates the sustainable use of Internet based systems using Voice over IP (VoIP) to enable communications where there was previously only one under-performing Mongolia Telecom connection or nothing at all.

The key advantage to using this service is to connect rural communities where it would be cost prohibitive or physically impossible to otherwise deliver. Other major advantages for using VoIP based telephony is the affordability and the flexibility to upgrade to a data network that enables email, chat and Internet access. There are now 27 new phones deployed and an additional 25 expected in the next 30 days. Uptake is exponential as services are available to roughly 5,000 rural residents. The phones are available to the public at the local Incomnet service center funded initially by USAID. Operators report regular foot traffic and steady demand.

The program follows a business methodology funded by USAID.org that helped local contractor Incomnet continue the delivery of services and the expansion of the Internet in Saikhan soum, a community that has never had this service before USAID's intervention. The project will be completed July 1, 2008.

The Training, Advocacy and Networking Project (TAN)

Mercy Corps

www.mercycorps.org.mn

Bagh Assessments Completed in New Soums in all Five TAN Aimags

Having completed the bagh assessment in the central bagh of Sant Soum (Uvurkhangai Aimag) in September, TAN moved into the new baghs of the other four TAN aimags this past month. After already establishing contacts with community members and local officials, TAN CSO members and TAN trainers went to Tamir Bagh of Tsenker Soum (Arkhangai Aimag), the central bagh of Batnorov Soum (Khentii Aimag), Achuut Bagh of Bulgan Soum (Bulgan Aimag), and Sangiindalai Bagh of Erdenedalai Soum (Dundgobi Aimag) to carry out assessments. The assessments were carried out via focus groups, with more than 100 local residents participating in each bagh. Each assessment brought to light a number of community concerns; with drinking water, alcoholism, school repair and environmental concerns among the most common. The assessments were carried out by CSO staff members together with TAN community trainers. Mercy Corps helped with preparations for the assessments, but only played an observational role during the assessments themselves. This was done to continue building the capacity of CSO members and trainers as the TAN program reaches its conclusion in year five.

Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation Training Carried Out in all 5 TAN Aimags

Following the assessments, Mercy Corps TAN staff carried out training for CSO members on project design, monitoring and evaluation. Most of the CSOs who carried out the assessments have not previously received TAN grants. As a result, this training was designed to help them formulate project proposals based on the assessments already carried out by CSO members.

Computer Distribution

In October the TAN program completed most of the distribution of 113 total computers received through Mercy Corps' Material Aid department. The computers were distributed

to local CSOs and schools, which had previously provided TAN with proposals for their use. As part of the distribution, it was made clear to all recipients that after six months they must demonstrate to TAN that they have been using the computers as laid out in their original proposals. According to the signed agreements, failure to demonstrate such use would be grounds for Mercy Corps to repossess the computers. Only after the initial six-month probationary period will the computers (officially) be handed over to the recipients.

Civic Education TOT Carried Out for TAN Trainers and Staff

This month saw TOT civic education training carried out for TAN staff, trainers, CSO representatives, and government representatives. The training was carried out by the local NGO Center for Civic Education. In year five, TAN will be carrying out civic education training in all aimags as part of its efforts to increase understanding of the need for greater citizen's participation in decision making. TAN also plans to sponsor television and radio broadcasts covering topics related to civic education. These broadcasts will initially take place in Arkhangai and Bulgan, with the possibility of expansion to the other aimags.

Improving Service of Family Clinic” Project Concludes in Khentii

This October saw the completion of the “Improving Service of the Family Clinic” project in Khentii. This project was driven by the local CSO “Democratic Women’s Association.” The project addressed the community-identified priority of the prevalence of diseases among citizens in Bagh no. 2 of Kherlen soum by improving the health education offered by the family clinic. TAN furnished the training room amounting to 410,500 MNT in the process. After the training room was established, training was provided to 195 people and health information was provided to 335 more people. A seminar entitled “Movement for Long Life” was facilitated for 20 elderly people and covered exercises for reducing blood pressure and improving blood circulation. Other educational materials such as “Let’s Prevent Infectious Stomach Diseases,” “Proper Eating,” “Let’s Prevent Kidney and Urinary Tract Diseases and Sexually Transmitted Diseases” were also published (2250 pamphlets in all) and were used in the promotional activity. Trainings were assisted by, and in some cases facilitated by, an informally organized “Elders Group” of retired medical workers, who plan to continue using the space for future health training activities.

Upcoming activities

- Review project proposals submitted by CSOs;
- Select new social entrepreneurs in all targeted aimags;
- Experience sharing conference in Bulgan of working groups from all aimags;
- Continued capacity building training, with the addition of media training in Arkhangai and Bulgan;
- Training in radio and television production for future civic education programming;
- Monitoring of existing projects in all aimags; and
- Finalization of the 2008 work plan.

Innovating, Measuring and Promoting Poverty Alleviation through Cooperatives in Transitional Societies (IMPPACTS)

CHF International

www.chfmongolia.org

CHF facilitated the third community meeting to discuss issues facing coops and the draft cooperative law. The meeting was held in Sukhbaatar aimag and included 80 participants from cooperatives in five eastern aimags: Dornod, Dornogovi, Hentii, Govi sumber and Sukhbaatar. Also in attendance were the UB City Cooperative Development Department, Secretary of Nationwide Cooperative Development Program, Central Production Union and Production and Service Union, and representatives from the Mongolian Cooperative Training and Information Center (MCTIC). In general the comments from the Sukhbaatar meeting reflected those from the other two meetings:

- Laws affecting cooperatives are unclear and inconsistent
- Difficult and costly for cooperatives to obtain commercial financing
- Coop Unions are not responsive to local coops needs
- More training for local coop leaders needed

After the Sukhbaatar meeting, CHF met with the Nationwide Cooperative Development Program Secretary and Cooperative Law Working Group Leader – Bayanmonkh to discuss the outcome of the three community meetings. The comments from the community meetings will be presented and discussed in the next cooperative law working group meeting.