



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## Mongolia

Belgium's contribution through the  
Special Fund for Emergency and  
Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) –  
Anticipatory Action window



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### Protecting vulnerable livestock owners from anticipated winter hazard (*dzud*) impacts

Mongolia's climate of short dry summers and long cold winters coupled with dependence on grassland makes the extensive grazing system susceptible to extreme weather events. The agriculture sector is the second largest economic pillar in the country, with the livestock sector contributing to most of the agriculture gross domestic product. The frequency, intensity and unpredictability of weather extremes such as the harsh winter (*dzud*), drought, snow and dust storms, heavy rainfall and flooding have tripled in the last decade, heavily impacting traditional livestock-based livelihoods.

*Dzud* is a natural hazard unique to Mongolia wherein high livestock mortality in winter and spring leads to the loss of livelihoods of many herder households, causing enormous socioeconomic damage to communities across the country. The livestock mortality is usually associated with a combination of cold stress and prolonged starvation due to limited access to productive pastures and forages as an impact of the summer drought. In 2022, according to the National Agrometeorological Services, 50 percent of the country's territory, in particular the western and southern parts of the country, experienced a moisture deficit in the summer season. Coupled with early snowfall and below-average temperature forecasts, this resulted in 59 percent of the country being at high risk of *dzud* according to the national *dzud* risk map (December 2022).



Following these early warning signs, and thanks to the Government of Belgium’s contribution to the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) – Anticipatory Action window, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) together with the Government of Mongolia put in place Anticipatory Action measures to mitigate a potential massive livestock mortality in 11 provinces at high risk of *dzud*. FAO will provide cash transfers to 510 households to help them procure fodder at reduced government rates and ensure their livelihood is protected during *dzud*. The reduced rates will come in the form of a 50 percent discount on about 1 170 tonnes of hay and 8 024 tonnes of fodder from the state emergency reserve to vulnerable herder households in 158 soums/administrative divisions. This will help herders who could otherwise not afford to pay the full amount to ensure the survival of their core breeding herd.

FAO will also work in close collaboration with government institutions to provide on-site training to herder households on best practices to overcome the harsh seasons with minimal livestock loss.

Acting early alongside government partners through the provision of hay and fodder at half price, cash transfers and training on best practices will support vulnerable herder households to protect their livelihoods from the expected *dzud*.

#### REQUIRED CITATION

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