



Selenge Area Development Programme Mongolia

In Selenge, about 30% of the population live in poverty. The community faces persistent unemployment after an economic downturn. Families struggle with job loss and limited opportunities for businesses and self-employment. They also face challenges in child protection, economic development and education. Poor environmental hygiene and sanitation issues have also led to epidemic outbreaks and put children's lives at risk. World Vision Singapore started work in Selenge in 2017 in a bid to empower vulnerable families and the community with interventions and life skills for sustainable child well-being.

Brief Information

Impact Area Population: **17,793 people**
Children Available for Sponsorship
(as of Nov 2017): **150**

Geographical Location

Selenge is located in northeast Mongolia near the Russian border. It is between the Orkhon and Selenge river basins and the hills and mountains in the forest steppe regions. Selenge is named after the largest river in Mongolia, River Selenge. The climate is harsh, with winter temperatures as low as -50 degrees Celsius, and sometimes, there is flooding in the area due to snowmelt.

Realities

Economic Poverty

Mongolia's harsh climate, poorly developed infrastructure, persistent poverty, and nomadic herding lifestyle increase risk of loss of livelihood due to natural hazards. In an area riddled with unemployment, families are dependent on livestock herding, wheat plantation and bee farming for survival. 30% of the population are herder families with their herds often destroyed by "dzuds", deadly snow storms with temperatures reaching lows of -50 degrees Celsius.

Recurring dzuds and droughts over the past decade have devastated Mongolia's herder population. On average, 30% of the population in our target areas live in poverty. Driven by poverty, many children work illegally in surrounding mines, raising school dropout rates and huge child protection concerns.



Child Protection Challenges

In Mongolia, the most common child protection issues are violence against children, corporal punishment, child labour, trafficking, and sexual and other forms of abuse. According to a report by the General Police Department (2014), 378 children were reported to be victims of domestic violence. In a Child Labour Survey Report, 15.9% of 5-17 year old children were engaged in some form of work. 18.8% of the children engaged in labour were between the ages of 5-9 years old.

Poverty is certainly a driving factor behind increasing vulnerability to the worst forms of child labour, a cycle that is perpetuated as children are taken out from school and therefore have limited means to improve their lives. Child protection violations usually occur in problematic, vulnerable families with alcoholic parents. Here, children risk being exposed to violence, sexual abuse and economic exploitation.

Programme Goal

To strengthen communities economically, to build resilience against disasters, to protect vulnerable children and provide good access to clean water and sanitation facilities.





Key Challenges and World Vision's Key Initiatives

Challenge: Children are vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse



Initiative: Empower parents, teachers and communities to protect children and provide a safe and nurturing environment

World Vision adopts a unique community engagement model to address the complex root causes of problems that rob children of their childhoods. We engage all stakeholders from families, to teachers, schools and community leaders. Our interventions focus on improving social services and support, catalysing behavior and attitude change, and strengthening child resilience.

This involves training community partners to conduct home visits to identify child protection issues and cases. Parent support groups are established to share positive parenting skills and positive discipline skills as well as provide support to caregivers. Reporting systems for incidents are set up and strengthened. Children's clubs in communities provide a platform for youth leaders to advocate for child rights and peace-building among their peers and in the community through child-initiated activities. Schools are also equipped with psychosocial support services and child-safe schools are established.

Challenge: Poor food security as herders and farmers are affected by low productivity and workers by job insecurity



Initiative: Enhance economic resilience of families within disaster-prone Selenge

World Vision equips vulnerable families to be self-reliant. Besides providing food to the most vulnerable families during a disaster, we equip families with effective agriculture production and processing skills to strengthen livelihoods. Business groups are empowered with technology, information and know-how training, to run sustainable businesses. Alongside, savings groups are established and equipped with the necessary tool kits. Advisory services are provided to facilitate credit access for business growth. Youths are empowered with entrepreneurship, life skills and vocational skills to stay market-ready as they enter the workforce or start market-relevant businesses. Household disaster preparedness training is conducted with disaster protection simulations to increase families' resilience against dzuds or drought.



“Now I am much closer to my mother and have learnt to help the elderly, for example by fetching water. I have become more open minded.”



How you can help

Sponsor a child in Selenge or give towards **Gift Catalogue** items which benefit vulnerable children!

Through these interventions, World Vision will be able to strengthen the community leaders and raise a generation of children that can break the cycle of poverty.