

THE NOMADS

ADRA Mongolia Official Newsletter

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Celebrating HOPE @ 30!

ADRA



YEARS OF
JUSTICE, COMPASSION, LOVE



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This quarter, our primary focus is on advancing the implementation of key projects during the off-season period. With a reduced demand for our core services, this is an ideal time to invest in strategic initiatives, enhance operational efficiencies, and lay the groundwork for upcoming peak periods.

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The Nomads, launched in 2022, is the official quarterly newsletter of the ADRA Mongolia Country Office.

Editorial

As we approach the end of the year, we take this opportunity to reflect on the progress we've made in addressing some of the most pressing challenges. This quarter has been an exciting one for our organization, as we've seen significant advancements across multiple areas of our work, all of which contribute to creating lasting change in the communities we serve.

In this edition of our quarterly newsletter, we are proud to share updates on our projects that focus on food security, economic development and livelihoods, health and education. Through dedicated efforts and collaboration, we continue to make meaningful strides in these vital areas, helping vulnerable communities build resilience and improve their quality of life.

As you read through the stories shared in this issue, you'll see how these thematic areas have intersected to strengthen the resilience of communities and empower individuals to thrive. We are particularly proud of the ways in which our work is deeply rooted in community engagement, fostering local leadership and ensuring that the solutions we implement are both sustainable and relevant to the communities' needs.

This quarter has been a reminder of the importance of flexibility and innovation in responding to the ever-evolving challenges we face. By remaining adaptable, and committed to our core values of transparency, respect, and human dignity, we continue to find new ways to create lasting, positive impact.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated teams, partners, and supporters for their unwavering commitment to our mission. It is through our collective efforts that we are able to continue making a difference. As we move into the new year, we look forward to deepening our impact and building on the successes of the past year.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Warm regards,
The Editorial

CLIMATE ADAPTED NUTRITION-SENSITIVE AGRICULTURE PROJECT

The leaves are turning yellow, and the autumn days continue...

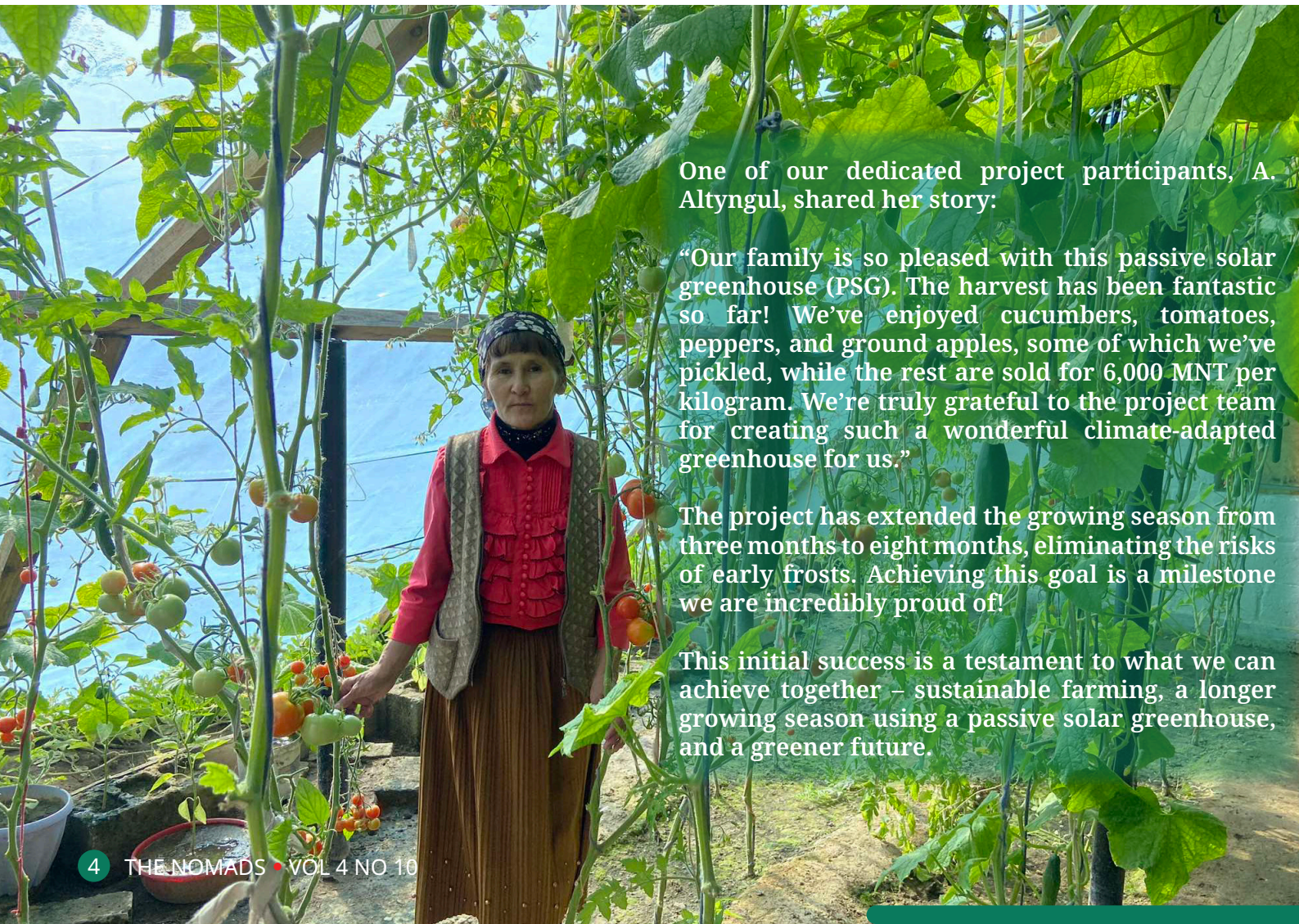
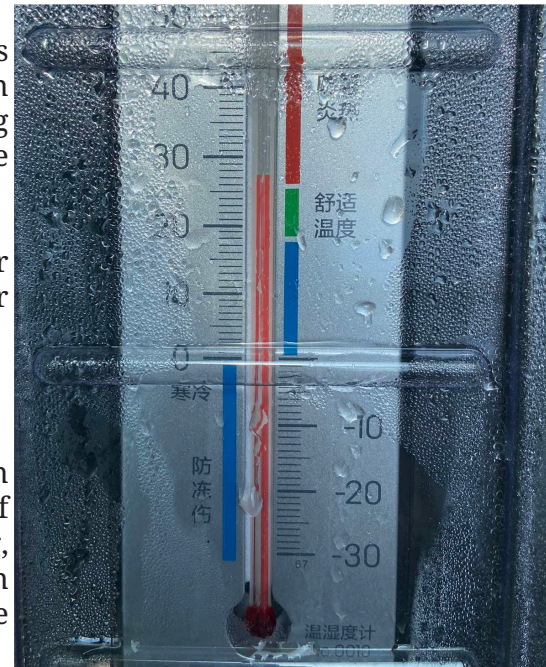
As the seasons change, bringing warmer, cooler, or colder weather, along with rain and winds, these natural phenomena remind us of the cycle we cannot alter. Yet, with human intelligence, we can adapt and manage the challenges these changes bring.

In our province, known for its extreme climate, gardening has always been a difficult task. But at ADRA Mongolia, we've steadily broken that barrier. Through our home gardening projects, we are proving that resilience and adaptation can overcome harsh conditions, one step at a time.

Previously, we shared exciting news about our passive solar greenhouses, tested as part of our agricultural project designed for extreme weather.

Sustainability in Action

In most parts of the province, summer greenhouses covered in plastic were closed by August 20th due to early frosts. Yet, as of October 1st, our passive solar greenhouse is still green and thriving, producing abundant crops! While daytime temperatures range from +10°C to +13°C and nighttime drops to 0°C to -3°C outside, inside the greenhouse, it remains a balmy +28°C to +32°C!



One of our dedicated project participants, A. Altynkul, shared her story:

“Our family is so pleased with this passive solar greenhouse (PSG). The harvest has been fantastic so far! We've enjoyed cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, and ground apples, some of which we've pickled, while the rest are sold for 6,000 MNT per kilogram. We're truly grateful to the project team for creating such a wonderful climate-adapted greenhouse for us.”

The project has extended the growing season from three months to eight months, eliminating the risks of early frosts. Achieving this goal is a milestone we are incredibly proud of!

This initial success is a testament to what we can achieve together – sustainable farming, a longer growing season using a passive solar greenhouse, and a greener future.



SUCCESS STORY

My name is Kuliman Japan, 62 years old, retired, and I live with my husband and grandchildren. I started growing vegetables in the early 2000s, and the French people implemented one project. Only a few types of vegetables were planted at the beginning. My true growth story begins with ADRA in 2011.

During this project, I participated as a home gardener and cooperative member. The project activities and training taught us many new things, opening a new chapter in my gardening activities. I was encouraged by the new things that I and the other participants learned.

I mostly like the permaculture and Mitleider planting methods that the project team taught us. Also, we are home gardeners learning from each other. Based on the knowledge and experience I have gained, I have been selected to be one of the Master Gardener Trainers (MGTs). Besides that, I participated in several cooking classes, where I was taught different methods of food preservation and preparation.

Now with the new CANSAP project, I am learning to grow vegetables in a passive solar greenhouse newly built with the help of project team members. I am still harvesting and expecting to harvest until the end of October. This passive solar greenhouse encouraged me, and I am very excited about the harvest.

During my previous cooperative project, we faced many challenges working on a big plot. But with the home gardening project, it is easier to work and maintain. You don't need to go far; you don't need big equipment and techniques for your plot. The methods, growing in raised boxes and passive solar greenhouse that the project team is teaching us - are more efficient and easier to handle.

The result of this project is enormous as it is helping us change our lifestyle and livelihood by extending our harvesting and planting duration by 7 to 8 months. People used to eat only potatoes and carrots, but now we are eating all types of leafy green vegetables essentially with passive solar greenhouse helping us to harvest vegetables even in Bayan-Ulgii's harsh climate.

Pickled vegetables brought me more profit than selling them at a lower price during the peak of summer. This year I introduced my pickling and preserves at the "Autumn Green Day" exhibition. All my products were sold quickly. After this event, I received orders from more than 20 customers and pickled 200 glass cans of cucumbers, 150 cans of vegetable salad, 90 cans of cabbage, carrot kimchi, and 40 cans of beetroot jam. I earned 2,280,000 MNT (683 USD) from my products.

While participating in this project, I made many new friends, and learned how to grow vegetables, how to preserve them, and how to increase my income, and now I am sharing my experiences with the older and younger generations and teaching them the methods I learned.

I keep recommending this project to others because it teaches us how to improve the quality of life through the experience and ability we gain from here, the friendly team, the new friends we will make, and finally, because of how this project is greatly community-based and providing a sustainable source of livelihood for Bayan-Ulgii residents.

Ensuring long-term storage of homegrown vegetables

One of the challenges faced by farming families is storing healthy, homegrown vegetables for long-term household needs without compromising their quality. To address this issue, the “Climate Adapted Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture Project (CANSAP)” project organized a specialized training program for farming families on how to construct effective storage cellars. Additionally, the project proposed with 15 trainers to support the construction of cellars tailored to household requirements.

As part of this initiative, five cellars were successfully constructed and utilized in the project’s first year. Among these, one was a kitchen floor cellar, while the other four were basement root cellars without heating systems. Each cellar was designed with an average size of 4 m², based on the household’s vegetable yield and storage needs throughout the year. These cellars not only store harvested vegetables but also preserve pickled produce, ensuring families have access to nutritious food even during the off-season.

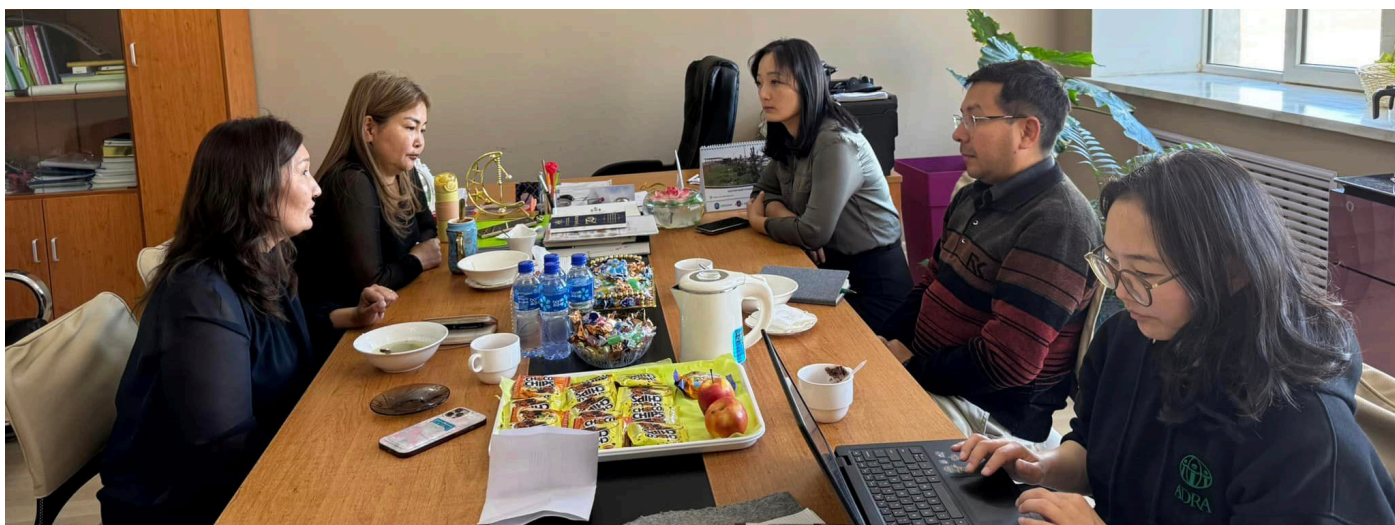
By providing practical solutions and training, the project empowers farming families to manage their resources better, reduce waste, and enjoy the fruits of their labor year-round.



BENEFITS OF USING A CELLAR:

- Prevents potatoes and vegetables from freezing during harsh winters.
- Stop vegetables from sprouting, maintaining their quality.
- Reduces the risk of rotting, keeping produce fresh.
- Ensure vegetables can be stored and consumed until the next harvest season.

NEXTGEN CELEBRATIONS MONGOLIA (NCD) PROJECT

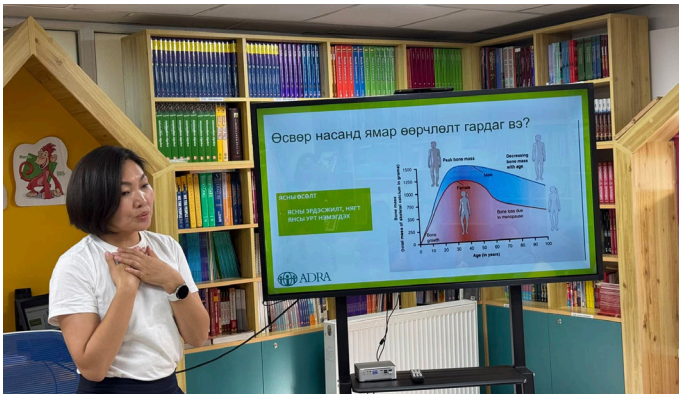


Together with Mr. Josue Orellana, the Health Director at ADRA International, our dedicated team members from the NCD project participated in a field visit to Nalaikh District. The primary purpose of this visit was to provide an in-depth introduction to the ongoing processes and activities involved in the implementation of the project. By engaging directly with key selected school and stakeholders, the team aimed to share updates on progress, address any challenges, and further strengthen collaboration with local partners to ensure the project's success and sustainability in the region.



Update on our Health Club Activities

On Nutrition:



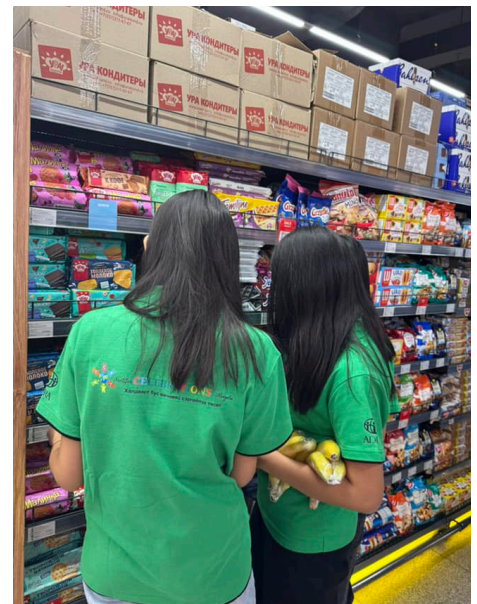
We focused on nutrition, specifically on empowering adolescents with the knowledge and skills to accurately interpret food labels. By understanding how to read labels correctly, they can make more informed choices about their diets, leading to healthier eating habits and a greater awareness of the nutritional value of the food they consume.



After the lesson, our team accompanied the adolescents from our health club at Tusgal School on an educational visit to the State Department Store.

The purpose of the visit was to emphasize the importance of checking food labels and ingredients before making purchasing decisions. During the activity, students were given a budget and tasked with selecting healthy snack options. They engaged actively in the process, making thoughtful and informed choices.

This hands-on experience reinforced the importance of making educated decisions about food and nutrition, helping the students apply what they had learned in a real-world context.



Update on our Health Club Activities

On Emotion:

Our team hosted a workshop titled ‘Controlling Impulses and Regulating Emotions,’ featuring Mr. J. Gantulga, a psychiatrist and health trainer. The workshop was a great success, with active participation from the adolescents in our Health Club, who collaborated effectively as a team.”



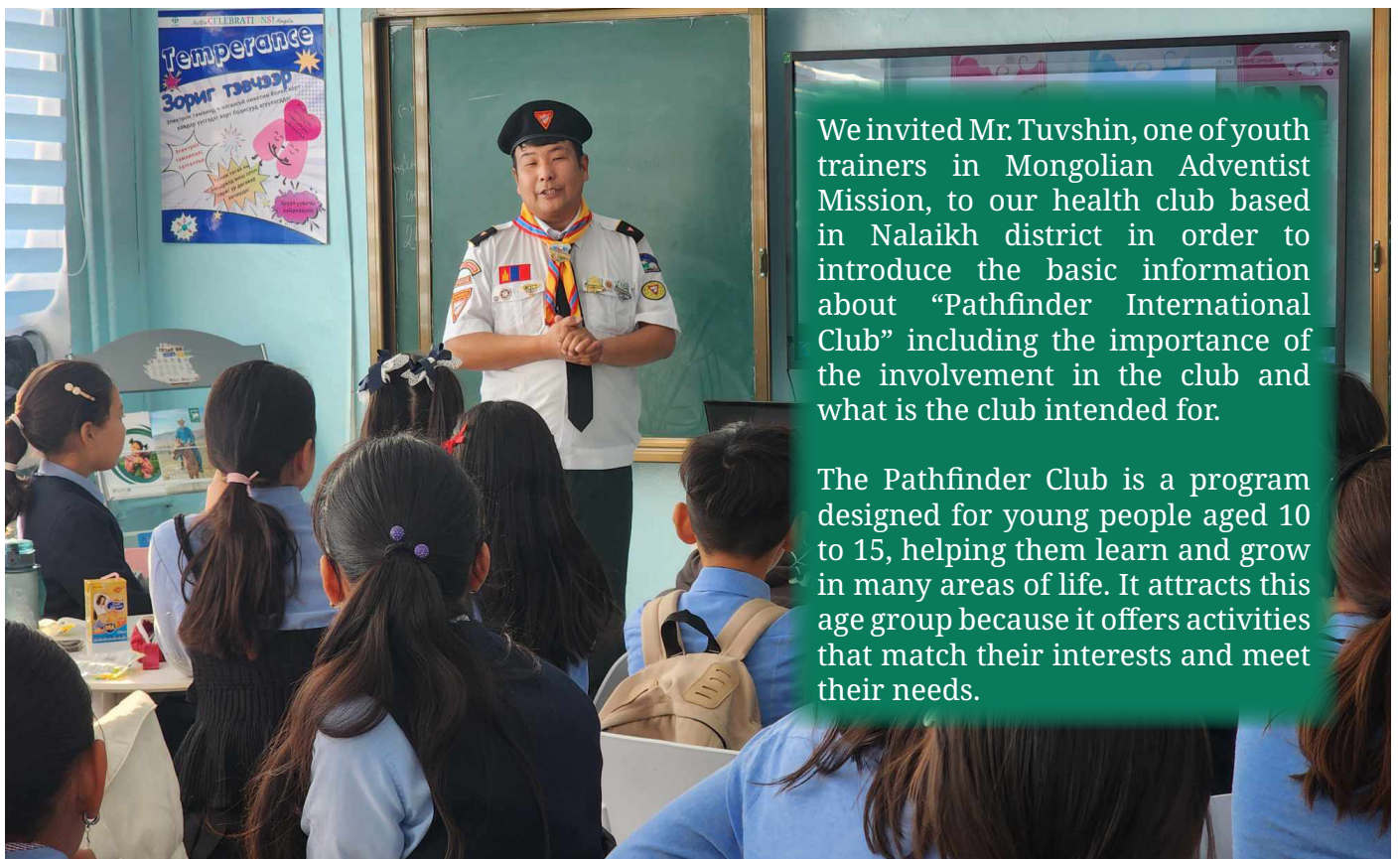
On Smoking:



One of our training sessions focused on the harmful effects of vaping and smoking. The event brought together students from two health clubs from our selected schools, where they worked on real-life scenarios, created posters, and developed key messages to inspire their peers to avoid vaping and smoking, and make healthier choices.

Project related activity: Meeting with teachers

We held meetings with teachers from Erdmiin Orgil School in the Nalaikh district and Tusgal School in the Chingeltei district. Understanding that teachers are essential role models for their students, we believe that engaging the community, particularly children, through educators is crucial. As a result, we invited teachers to collaborate with us and seek support in our shared goal of promoting healthier lifestyles among adolescents.



We invited Mr. Tuvshin, one of youth trainers in Mongolian Adventist Mission, to our health club based in Nalaikh district in order to introduce the basic information about “Pathfinder International Club” including the importance of the involvement in the club and what is the club intended for.

The Pathfinder Club is a program designed for young people aged 10 to 15, helping them learn and grow in many areas of life. It attracts this age group because it offers activities that match their interests and meet their needs.

FINEWOL SHEEP BREEDING PROJECT - PHASE 2

From 14th October, in Tsagaannuur soum in Selenge Province, partnering with the Governor's Office, 260 ewes underwent artificial insemination (AI) with Merino rams deep frozen semen imported from Australia being led by Brendon Irvine, ADRA Asia Technical Lead, Livelihoods, Agriculture & Climate Change through the facilitation of the project's Manager, Altantsetseg Sukhbaatar.

The AI has improved fiber diameter, fleece weight, and overall wool quality, critical factors in the fine wool market. Also, owners of the ewes were present during the activity, seeing and learning how artificial insemination is done to their ewes. AI is transforming the way fine wool sheep are bred, offering significant improvements in reproductive efficiency, genetic selection, and flock health. Accessing elite genetics without natural mating is a game-changer for the industry, particularly for Mongolia, where fine wool sheep breeds per head number decreased due to the absence of systematic breed upgrading initiatives.



The overall goal of the FWSB project is to establish an elite nucleus flock to develop fine wool of good quality that will provide a sustainable means of livelihoods amongst the herders in Selenge and Darkhan provinces and can be replicated throughout the country.

Project field activity

Within the framework of Fine Wool Sheep Breeding (FWSB) Project Phase – 2, project team purchased 33 tons (1,320 sacks) of wheat bran and 50 boxes (200 pieces) of mineral blocks containing calcium, sodium, iron, manganese, potassium, and selenium. These were distributed to 23 families whose 630 ewes were involved in the Artificial Insemination (AI) activity for 2024. Additionally, 24 ram lambs, ewes at the Genebank, and 14 rams in Tsagaannuur soum also received additional fodder supplies.

The calculation for the ewes is based on feeding an average of 330 grams per day for 150 days. For the 2022 AI rams, 2023 embryo transfer (ET) ram lambs, and ET ewes, the daily wheat bran requirement was calculated to be 250 grams per animal. The mineral and salt blocks were selected for their key ingredients, which are necessary during pregnancy and to endure harsh winter conditions.

In addition to the transportation and delivery of the fodder supplements, we organized instructional training sessions for the herders. The training covered the importance and procedures of lamb ear tagging, weighing, and recording. We also introduced the calculation method for feeding ewes during pregnancy and lactation.





UPSCALING PARTNERSHIP FOR ORGANIC AGRICULTURE PROJECT

The “Selenge Golden Autumn” Fair Trade 2024, was successfully held on September 20-21 at the center of Sukhbaatar Soum, Selenge Province. This event was a collaborative effort involving the Provincial Governor’s Office, Department of Food and Agriculture of Selenge Province, the National Association of Mongolian Agriculture Cooperatives, the Development Solutions NGO’s BEST Program, and ADRA Mongolia’s “Upscaling Partnership for Organic Agriculture” Project.

During the fair trade, 17 cooperatives from Selenge Province showcased their products, which included 20 certified organic vegetable varieties, honey, and various value-added preserved goods, all benefiting from the “Upscaling Partnership for Organic Agriculture” Project.

Additionally, over 70 members from 28 cooperatives across 16 soums in Selenge Province participated, generating a total sales value of 27 million MNT.

Also, they participated in the “Autumn Green Days - 2024” event that took place in the Central Stadium of Ulaanbaatar city, featured a diverse array of agricultural producers, farmers across the nation.



Project field activities

On October 24, the UPOAg project team organized a meeting titled “Current Conditions and Future Collaboration of the Cooperative-based Organic Agricultural Sector” in Darkhan City.

The purpose of the meeting was to assess the current state of organic agricultural production, identify key challenges, and develop strategies to strengthen future collaboration. The event brought together 70 participants, including representatives from the Governors’ Offices of Darkhan-Uul and Selenge provinces, the Food and Agriculture Department, NAMAC, and 41 project-targeted cooperatives, all working toward fostering effective local partnerships.

This event served as a valuable platform for stakeholders to collaborate and align on shared objectives of economic prosperity, sustainability, and community development. Participants from both government and cooperatives actively engaged in exchanging ideas and demonstrating a commitment to enhancing cooperation. This collaboration lays the groundwork for the ratification of relevant documents and strategic planning for future initiatives.



Training on Women's Leadership, Human Rights-based Approach and Gender Mainstreaming

The project team organized the “Women’s leadership, human rights-based approach, and gender-mainstreaming ” training from Oct 28-29, 2024, in Darkhan City aiming to empower female cooperative members by enhancing their leadership skills and encouraging active participation in decision-making processes involving 70 female members of project-target cooperatives.



This training on women’s leadership was conducted by inviting 1 referent from the National Human Rights Commission and 2 lecturers from the Soyombo Academy which provided comprehensive knowledge of human rights, gender equality, leadership, personal development, and financial management to the participants.



The project team organized the “Upscaling Partnership for Selenge and Darkhan-Uul Provinces Organic Agriculture Forum” on November 17th in Darkhan City. The event aimed to foster a productive dialogue about the current challenges, issues, and future strategies for organic agricultural production. It was attended by 70 representatives from the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry (MOFALI), Governors’ Offices of Darkhan-Uul and Selenge provinces, the Food and Agriculture Departments of the provinces, the Selenge and Darkhan-Uul branches of the Mongolian Agency for Standard Metrology, the Cooperative Union, and project-target cooperatives.

The forum addressed key topics such as the legal framework for organic food, the existing policies and structures of regional authorities, and facilitated an exchange of innovative ideas between cooperative members and government organizations. These discussions are intended to promote sustainable cooperation, ensuring the development of an efficient and sustainable organic products supply chain in the region.



Off-season Activity



A vocational training titled “Learning and Creative Approaches to Quilted Fabrics” in Darkhan-Uul Province in December. The training gathered 40 female members from 24 cooperatives across 12 soums.

Organized in collaboration with the “Shine Zamnal” NGO, the training introduced participants to techniques such as log cabin quilting and guided them in crafting hand-quilted fabric products.

Qualified trainers delivered a combination of theoretical and practical sessions, demonstrating how to repurpose materials into household and souvenir items such as sofa cushion covers, fabric bags, yo-yo flowers, and decorative designs for upcycled clothing. Participants gained hands-on experience alongside conceptual knowledge.

The cooperative members who attended the training will apply their new skills to foster creativity, effectively manage their free time, and improve their livelihoods. Through quilting techniques, they also gained insights into sustainable practices that contribute to environmental conservation.

This knowledge will empower participants to adopt a more creative, sustainable, and resourceful lifestyle, fostering positive change in their communities.



Meeting on Organic Product Supply

In collaboration with the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry, an organic product supply meeting was organized in Darkhan-Uul Province. On December 9, 2024, the Upscaling Partnership for Organic Agriculture project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry, successfully convened a meeting and discussion with the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry of Darkhan-Uul Province to explore the supply of organic products.

The meeting was attended by representatives from various organizations, including the Selenge and Darkhan-Uul Province Governor's Offices, soum governor's offices of Sukhbaatar, Shaamar, Mandal, Yeruu, Orkhon, and Bugant village, General Education Schools and Kindergartens, and Vocational Training Center affiliated with the Mongolian University of Life Sciences, Tenger Plaza LLC, Idye children's food brand, Nogoodoi Juice Factory, Selenge Tavan Khairkhan cooperative union, and primary cooperatives. A total of 31 individuals participated in the meeting.

The primary objective of the meeting was to stimulate the sales of organic products from producers engaged in organic agriculture and to foster mutually beneficial and sustainable partnerships. Ch. Dolgorsuren, Officer in Charge of Policy and Regulation of Innovative Organic Products at the Department of Policy Planning of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Light Industry, briefed the participants on the current state of the organic industry in Mongolia, the ongoing legal framework reforms, and future aspirations. The UPOAg project team outlined project activities, while the Selenge Tavan Khairkhan cooperative union showcased organic products from Selenge and Darkhan. The meeting concluded with a general discussion focused on the sales, supply, and potential collaborations for organic products.

The meeting provided participants with insights into the newly approved Law on Organic Products, which will come into force on January 1, 2025. Participants also gained knowledge about the significance of organic products and the types of organic products available for supply. As a result of the meeting, two entities agreed to collaborate and formalize a contract for the supply of certified organic vegetables.



IN-THEIR-SHOES PROJECT

Since 2021, ADRA Mongolia has been implementing the In-Their-Shoes project to support the most vulnerable communities and families in Ulaanbaatar. The initiative involves distributing essential food items to selected families and providing winter boots to children aged 6 to 16 from single-headed households. Funding for the initiative comes from the voluntary wage deductions of ADRA employees, as well as contributions from their families and kind-hearted donors.

This year, we partnered with the 41st Khoroo of the Songinokhairkhan District, where the Ulaanchuluut Waste Disposal site (UB dumpsite) is located. Through this partnership, we were able to distribute 100 food packages and 50 pairs of warm boots to households facing extreme hardship—families who struggle to afford necessities such as food, clothing, and other essential living expenses, including their children.



News Bits

Lessons Learned Workshop



We conducted our yearly Lessons Learned Workshop, which provided a valuable opportunity for teams to reflect on the past year's experiences, milestones, challenges, and to develop strategies for improvement. Key takeaways included the importance of proactive communication, flexible project management, and strategic planning.

The lessons learned from this workshop will serve as a foundation for our work in the coming year, ensuring that we are better equipped, more adaptable, and more resilient as we move forward.

Our ADRA staff participated in a capacity-building training organized by the Mongolian Evaluation Association (MEA) on Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL). The training was designed to enhance our evaluation skills, deepen our understanding of MEAL processes, and foster the sharing of valuable expertise. By engaging in this session, our team gained new insights and practical tools to improve the effectiveness of our programs, ensuring they are more impactful and accountable to the communities we serve. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from experts in the field and look forward to applying these insights to strengthen our work in the future.



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