



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



Mongolia: UN airlifts emergency supplies to children amid severe winter



School children in Mongolia

2 March 2010 – As temperatures in western Mongolia continue to hover around -40 degrees Celsius, the United Nations is sending woolen blankets, warm footwear, hygiene kits and other emergency supplies to nearly 4,000 school-age children living in poor rural areas of the country.

“We are redoubling our efforts to provide essential emergency items and educational materials for school children who are living in remote dormitories as they lack access to heating facilities, food and medical treatment. Protecting children from diseases and malnutrition will be key to our planned interventions over the coming weeks,” said Rana Flowers, Representative of the UN Children’s Fund (**UNICEF**), in a news release issued today.

A joint monitoring team from UNICEF and the Government of Mongolia is currently on the ground to ensure that the assistance quickly reaches the neediest children living in the remote countryside in the west. That region has suffered the most from the “dzud,” a Mongolian term for severe winter with heavy snows, strong winds and lower-than-normal temperatures.

The UN assistance is specifically aimed at children and families living in poorly heated and equipped dormitories, as identified by local and national government authorities.

The initial dispatch of emergency assistance will be followed by six overland truck convoys during the next few weeks, which will fan out to school dormitories in 22 villages in the six hardest-hit provinces of Khuvsgul, Uvs, Zavkhan, Gobi-Altai, Khovd and Bayan-Ulgii to reach children of rural families.

In total, the airlift and six convoys will carry combined supplies worth \$137,000.

In addition, UNICEF last month provided more than \$45,000 to repair broken heating systems in 18 educational institutions nationwide housing more than 17,000 children.

The agency's work is part of a larger UN response in Mongolia organized in collaboration with the Ministries of Education, Culture and Science (MECS) and of Health (MOH), and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

The UN allocated \$3.7 million for humanitarian assistance to Mongolia from its Central Emergency Response Fund (**CERF**) last week.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

As severe winter spreads death and shortages in Mongolia, UN appeals for funds