Risk, Vulnerability and Adaptive Social Protection – Mongolia Dzud 2023/24

Spotlight 1: Promoting climate resilience livelihood outcomes of vulnerable households through social safety net programs

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Dzud as a structural climate risk.

2023/24 Dzud:

- 90% of Mongolia under high/extreme dzud risk

- 9.12 million livestock lost (12.86% of national herd)

- Estimated economic losses: USD 821 million

Dzud is a structural climate risk embedded in Mongolia's pastoral livelihoods, with climate and pasture pressures intensifying vulnerability.

Structural vulnerability

- Low education levels

- Limited cooperative participation

- Low livestock insurance coverage

- Inadequate winter preparation

2023/2024:

- Only 9.7% engage din winter preparation

- Only 17.4% insured

- 67.4% indebted

From asset-based to risk-informed targeting

- Resilience Capacity Index (FAO RIMA): 67.89 (2021) → 48.08 (2024)

- Livestock holdings: 67.39 LLU → 31.55

- Winter preparation reduced mortality to ~21%

- Without preparation, mortality reached up to 60%

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➢ **We measure resilience by herd size.**

➢**But loss outcomes are driven by behavior.**

Why prevention outperforms compensation.

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Post-disaster transfers:
- Protect short-term consumption

Adaptive interventions:
- Protect productive assets
- Reduce livestock mortality
- Lower fiscal exposure

➤ **Prevention changes the loss curve.**

➤ **Compensation changes the recovery curve.**

Integrated trigger-based systems

Current system:
- Reactive
- Parallel agriculture, DRM, SP systems

→

Required shift:
- Trigger-based activation
- Integration of insurance and social protection
- Incentives for winter preparation behavior
- Risk-informed budgeting

➢ **Managing structural climate risk requires integrated, anticipatory systems – not reactive compensation.**

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Conclusion

- Resilience is not herd size — it is the capacity to anticipate and manage risk.

- Social protection must reward adaptive behavior.

- Anticipatory systems protect assets and livelihoods, and public finances.

- Integrated, risk-informed systems are essential for climate-resilient and fiscally sustainable development.