

**Project reference**

ECHO/MNG/ 2004/01001  
and  
ECHO/MNG/2005/01001

**EC Partner**

- Action contre la Faim

**Facts and Figures**

- Duration: **2 years**
- EC contribution:  
**€1.4 million** invested  
(80% of total) granted in  
**2005- 2006** for food  
security and nutrition  
activities
- **2843 children** treated  
for chronic or severe  
acute malnutrition
- **1 treatment unit** for  
severe acute malnutrition  
set up during the project
- **1048 medical  
professionals** trained on  
detection/ prevention of  
malnutrition
- **128 health institutions**  
equipped for detection of  
malnutrition



**EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION**

## Health

### Preventing malnutrition and improving the status of malnourished children in Ulanbaatar city

*"I have been working with ACF for three years. I am proud of my job and I am happy to help family clinics to detect and treat malnourished children and to give advice to their caretakers in order to improve their nutritional status."*

Delgertsetseg, measurer  
and nutrition educator,  
May 2007



#### **Context: Malnutrition and vitamin and mineral deficiency, a major public health issue in Mongolia**

According to the third National Nutrition Survey conducted in 2004, stunting affects close to 20% of children under five and vitamin D deficiency (rickets) affects just over 41% of children aged 6-23 months in Mongolia. This worrying situation has several underlying causes ranging from growing poverty and insufficient access to health services, to non-diversified eating habits or insufficient childcare practices.

#### **Objective: Preventing malnutrition through the empowerment of local health structures**

The project aimed at building up the capacity of local health structures for prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition. The project set up nutrition and health education sessions with local health structures, trained medical staff on nutrition and malnutrition; on regular screenings, enabling early detection; and on treatment of malnutrition.

#### **Impact: What has been achieved?**

Throughout the project, 1048 medical professionals from 186 health institutions, kindergartens and local NGOs were trained on the detection and prevention of malnutrition. More than 125 health institutions were provided with equipment. This enabled them to refer malnourished children to nutrition promotion units, set up in local health structures. In these units, 2835 children under five were treated for chronic malnutrition. Their carers as well as 600 pregnant and lactating women received nutrition and health education organised initially by project staff and subsequently by local health volunteers. More than 90% gained weight, 50% showed improvement in their weight-for-age index.

A treatment unit was set up for severe acute malnutrition and 75 medical professionals were trained on detection and/or treatment of this type of malnutrition.

## Preventing malnutrition and improving the status of malnourished children in Ulanbaatar city

### Tulgudur, 6 months, treated for severe acute malnutrition



*Before the treatment*

Tulgudur was admitted in November 2006 in the Therapeutic Feeding Unit (TFU) set up in the Maternal and Child Health Center in Ulanbaatar city. He was extremely weak, weighing only 4kg for a height of 63 cm. He was also suffering from pneumonia, anaemia, rickets, oedemas, fungus and diarrhoea. He came from a very vulnerable family, the 6 members of the household were not registered as UB citizens, which impeded them benefiting from adequate access to social and health services.

Tulgudur's mother was working full-time in an illegal factory and could not breastfeed him. His grandfather took care of him and gave him cow's milk and black tea. He stayed in the Unit for 37 days receiving specialised treatment. At the time he was discharged, he weighed 5.86 kilograms and his height was 64.2 cm.

An ACF social worker obtained all official papers for him and his mother enabling them to have access to all basic public services. At a monitoring visit in May 2007, his mother explained: *"Our situation has completely changed since Tulgudur was admitted in the TFU. He is now healthy and lively. Thanks to the papers obtained by the social worker, we gained access to child allowance which helped us a lot and I also found a better job than before, that enables me to care for Tulgudur more frequently and to cover most of the household needs."*



*5 months after the treatment*

### Maral-Erdene, 29 months, treated for chronic malnutrition



*Maral-Erdene 12 months after being discharged from the programme*

Maral-Erdene was 29 months old when she was referred to a Nutrition Promotion Unit (NPU) in January 2006 due to a low height for age ratio ( $<-3$ ). She weighed 10,6 kilos for 82.3 cm at that time. Her family was very poor, both parents being unemployed with three young children and no help from any family. She followed the NPU program for four months. She benefited from food supplementation and her mother followed ten nutrition and education sessions. By the time she was discharged from the program, she had gained 2.2cm and 1.1 kg. At a monitoring visit in May 2007, she weighed 13.6 kg for 92.3 cm.

Her mother explained the impact the program had on her family's life: *"At the time, Maral-Erdene was admitted in the NPU, life was very difficult for us. Now, my husband has found a job, Maral-Erdene is healthy as well as her brother and sister. We are cooking the recipes that were taught to us in NPU as we understood the importance of a good diet for our health and our children's health."*