

Mongolia observes the UN's first World Statistics Day

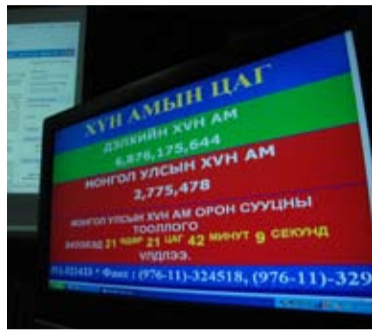
On October 20, the world celebrated the first World Statistics Day to mark the importance of data for development. World Statistics Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly to recognize the importance of statistics in shaping our societies.

"Data and statistics form the basis for all decisions about planning, the allocation of resources and policy directions. If we want to improve peoples' lives, we need to know their special needs, their individual and group characteristics as well as the trends and forces that affect their lives," said Ms. SezinSinanoglu, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mongolia.

This year alone, around 3 billion people will participate in population censuses around the globe. Mongolia will conduct its 10th Housing and

Population Census from November 11-17 and preparations are going at full speed. The Census is a nationwide survey which collects, processes, analyses and publishes demographic, economic and social data on a 10 year basis. It will help the Government of Mongolia get a vital and accurate picture of the demographic situation of the country to guide analyses for all national work on policy and programs.

In addition to large surveys, statistics on a variety of topics at the national and sub-national levels are collected, analyzed and disseminated on a daily basis. They are an essential tool for economic and social development, including the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. "For development to succeed, we need data collection and statistical analysis of poverty levels, access to



Current data is important for every kind of development



UN's World Statistics Day is being recognized as the census is taking place around the world



1st World Statistics Day in Mongolia

education and the incidence of disease. Statistics are a central consideration in justifying almost every aspect of budgets and programs that enable hungry children to be fed or that provide shelter and emergency health care for victims of natural disasters", explained UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon.

In Mongolia, the United Nations has been collaborating with the National Statistical Office (NSO) since the 1970s and its support consists of capacity building, improving methodology and ensuring the attainment of international norms and agreements on statistics. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) works with NSO to improve the analysis of population data in terms of disaggregation by sex, age and region. In addition, UNFPA is working with NSO in the preparation and execution

of the 2010 Housing and Population Census. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the NSO continue to work on the improvement of 'DevInfo', a nationwide statistical database and the Multiple Cluster Indicator Survey (MICS) which is another important tool for monitoring the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) directs its support to improve the collection and analysis of poverty statistics to identify pockets of poverty and advocate for appropriate policies and programs to improve lives of the poor.

"NSO has been working hard to promote World Statistics Day along with the 2010 Population and Housing Census of Mongolia. The generous support of the UN is appreciated very much and we look forward to continue cooperation", says Mr. Mendsaikhan,

Chairman of the National Statistical Office.

World Statistics Day will be launched with a series of events including opening remarks by the Deputy Head of NSO and the United Nations Resident Coordinator, messages from the President and the Parliament Speaker, an award ceremony for exceptionally dedicated staff from soums, baghs and khoroots and the dissemination of bulletins developed by various NSO departments. The event, themed 'Service, professionalism and integrity' will be held in the Mongolia-Japan center on October 20 and start at 9.30 a.m.

For more information on World Statistics Day and the celebrations in Mongolia, refer to <http://unstats.un.org> or www.nso.mn

Citizen participation fosters urban development

'Pleasant City, Happy Life' Fair supported for implementation across Mongolia

On October 18, "Pleasant City, Happy Life" Fair was held at School Number Three of Ulaanbaatar under the auspices of Ts. Elbegdorj, the President of Mongolia.

Darkhan, Bulgan, Sukhbaatar, Tuv, Selenge, Khentii Province, as well as Ulaanbaatar city's Sukhbaatar and Baganuur District representatives and students of School Number Three participated in the fair, organized on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Urban Development Information and Research Center and World Habitat Day.

As a way of supporting people living in Ger districts who established a savings group and worked together in order to improve their living conditions, a garden with 108 trees was established at School Number Three and a "Pleasant City, Happy Life" painting competition was held among the students.

Participating in the fair was the Head of the Office of the President of Mongolia, D. Battulga, who said, "Many people representing more than 150 Savings Groups throughout the country, as well as children who understand and support their deeds through their paintings have gathered here today.

Our President met with similar kinds of people during his visit to Bayanchandmani Soum of Tuv Province, and noted, "We must show support to people who have put their joint efforts and established savings groups to improve their living conditions." I wish you the best on your endeavor and congratulate you for initiating new ideas and making them a reality. The President and his Office will fully support your



D. Battulga, Ts. Enkhbat and L. Erkhembayar at "Pleasant City, Happy Life" Fair

initiatives."

Head of the Office of the President of Mongolia, D. Battulga, also read the President's Letter of Gratitude dedicated to the Urban Development Information and Research Center, congratulating them on their fifth anniversary as well as on their Savings Group initiative—a voluntary organization—and granted the Letter to Ts. Enkhbat, Head of the Center.

Moreover, L. Erkhembayar Urban and Rural Development Policy Advisor to the President of Mongolia read the President's Order to the

audience, supporting the Savings Group initiative as well.

People living in the same community collected Tgs 100-300 everyday for the Savings Group fund, with which they put in the garden, made their neighborhood better; planted vegetables and engaged in small-scale businesses and made need-based loans to members. Seeing how well the system has worked in Bayanchandmani Soum, President Ts. Elbegdorj supports countrywide implementation of the initiative. Such loans help those who cannot provide

loan collateral to get back on their feet, decrease unemployment and the poverty rate, and improve living conditions of citizens.

Once the initiative's work is in full operation and settled, the members propose various small to medium size projects with which they find support from domestic as well as foreign citizens, organizations and banks. The Savings Group initiative exemplifies that a good deed is never too little and the possibility of not waiting for somebody else to provide funds improves one's living conditions.

USA helps fight foot and mouth disease in Mongolia

On October 19, the US Embassy released a statement that the United States Government has allocated Tgs 41,610,253 (USD \$30,000) for the purchase of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine as a contribution to the Government of Mongolia's efforts to control the spread of FMD.

The FMD outbreak, which began in Eastern Mongolia in May 2010, continues to spread across large portions of Dornod and Sukhbaatar provinces affecting herder families and thousands of livestock. A shortage of resources to purchase and distribute vaccine has put herder livelihoods, local economies and over 5 million livestock in neighboring provinces at risk. US Government aid will support the purchase of FMDV-O vaccine that would be used strategically in targeted areas to strengthen the effectiveness of FMD control measures.

The US Government's support for the purchase of FMD vaccine for livestock was coordinated by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in collaboration with the Veterinary and Animal Breeding Agency (VABA) of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MoFALI). Mongolian gazelle have also been affected by this FMD outbreak but WCS and conservation partners have advocated against the culling of gazelle in response to the FMD disease outbreak. This US Government support for livestock vaccination underscores the importance of directing FMD control measures at the livestock sector and implementing the best international practices which emphasize FMD control through livestock vaccination and quarantine measures and not wildlife culling.