

Direct aid program awards 10 organisations to assist Mongolian development

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On Thursday 17 November 2016, Ambassador John Langtry awarded grants to ten organisations selected under the Direct Aid Program (DAP). Each project (see attached list) will contribute towards the development of Mongolia and be implemented in areas including youth development, women empowerment, environment, public health, poverty reduction, agriculture, and improving governance. The organizations will mainstream disability inclusiveness and gender across the grants to ensure the benefits of grants outreach equally to people with disability and men and women.

Since 2003, over 100 Mongolian NGOs and organisations have implemented a total of 114 projects. A total of 120 applications were received for the 2016-2017 DAP grants.

“DAP is a good opportunity for Mongolian organisations particularly civic and non- profits to address social and environmental issues. Demand for this competitive grant is getting higher as the number of organisations applying for has been increasing. I congratulate the organisations who won the grant for 2016-2017 and I am sure that they would do a great job. In the meantime, I thank all the organisations which participated and urge them to apply for the next round of DAP in June 2017,” said Ambassador John Langtry.



Tsenguun Tumurkhuyag, Program Manager for Mongol Ecology Centre said “We are happy to receive the Australian Government funding to implement our Junior Ranger Program. 200 students in 4-7th grades from Hatgal and Khankh secondary school will learn to protect Mongolia’s environment and learn natural history of Hovsgol area, its geological features, biological diversity, hydrologic cycle, forestry, soil composition and climate change impacts.”

ABOUT DAP

DAP is a flexible small grants program funded from Australia’s aid budget. DAP funding is designed to advance developmental outcomes with projects primarily focused on practical and tangible results. This may include projects which support good governance, human rights and those with a strong advocacy component.

1. Establishing a Classroom for Orientation in Surroundings at School #116 for Visually Impaired and Blind Children

Around 8,000 Mongolians are either blind or visually impaired. They are unemployed and poor. School #116 is the only school in Mongolia for the visually impaired and the blind. With DAP funding, School # 116 will establish a special classroom on Orientation and Surroundings with the aim to develop the skills of the students. Direct beneficiaries of the project will be 120 current students as well as their parents and future students.

2. Expanding Paper Craft Production Using Waste Newspapers

In 2005, a group of Mongolians with mobility disability got together, to form the Mongolian National Association for Wheelchair Users (MNAWU). Today, the MNAWU serves over 700 members, a half of whom are women. The

Women's Department of the Mongolian National Association for Wheelchair Users wants to ensure equal participation in employment for women with a mobility disability and women whose child with disability. The project will establish a business cooperation overseeing a production and sales structure, and train 50 women to produce and sell souvenirs on a regular basis and increase their family income in a more sustainable way.

3. Human Papilloma Virus in Mongolia

One of the most challenging public health issues facing women in Mongolia, irrespective of age, education and wealth, is cervical cancer. At least 300 new cases are diagnosed each year and 85% are at the late stage. Cervical cancer is the 2nd most common malignancy among women in Mongolia. Mongolia implemented a pilot project in 2012 and vaccinated 9,111 girls aged between 11 and 15. However, the program was unsuccessful in the face of anti-vaccination lobby groups.

The Cancer Council of Mongolia will conduct a study among 19 to 20 year old women in Selenge and Umnugobi provinces. Their research will evaluate particular types of HPV (16, 18 and 45) among 500 vaccinated and 500 unvaccinated young women. Moreover, other types of HPVs (31, 33, 35, 39, 51, 52, 56, 58, 59, 66 and 58) will be assessed. The findings will be important evidence to inform and design a nationwide vaccination program.

4. Enhancing the Capacity of Mongolian Scouts to Support Youth

The Scout Association of Mongolia in collaboration with Scouts Australia will establish a national campground on its recently secured land, which is 85km north of UB. As a result, 6-25 years old Mongolians, volunteers and leaders will be able to benefit from this open-air activities shelter. Asian regional Scout Jamborees will be held in Mongolia in 2017.

5. Engage Future Stewards of Conservation by Developing a Junior Ranger Program in Gateway Communities of Lake Hovsgol National Park

In 2014-2015, some 45,000 international and domestic travelers visited Lake Hovsgol, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Mongolia. The tourism season is short and lasts for only two months; the majority of locals in Hankh and Hatgal soums try to benefit from the influx of tourists by engaging in a variety of tourism services, ranging from setting up ger camps to working as drivers and tour guides and selling crafts.

The Mongol Ecology Center was established in 2010 with a goal to transfer best practices to preserve environment and natural resources and cultural heritage of Mongolia. They proposed to implement a Junior Ranger Program in Hovsgol province. 200 students in 4-7th grades from Hatgal and Hankh secondary schools will learn to protect Mongolia's environment and learn about the natural history of the Hovsgol area, its geological features, biological diversity, hydrologic cycle, forestry, soil composition and climate change impacts.

6. Partners for Protection Network

According to the National Statistics Office, 764 crimes involving domestic violence were recorded in the first half of 2016, demonstrating an increase of 178 cases or 34% from the previous year. In a sparsely populated country of 3 million, over 90 victims have lost their lives between 2011 and 2015 due to domestic violence. Half of these victims had referrals to justice and public service providers, although protection services were not available. Systematic and technical problems exist in health care, police and judicial sectors. The National Centre against Violence (NCAV) has 22 years of experience and inclusive child protection and social works services have been provided to a total of 19,700 clients, including psychological counselling, legal assistance, advocacy and protection. Under DAP funding, the NCAV aims to enable a timely protection services framework for support of survivors through strengthening capacity building of and fostering supportive partnership and cooperation amongst government, multi-disciplinary officers and specialists who provide services to domestic violence victims.

7. Hope for the Future

Mongolia's rural population of around 1.4 million is closely linked with semi-nomadic livestock herding and limited livelihood opportunities exist outside of this sector (UNDP, 2007). Livestock herding is becoming increasingly tenuous and risky due to a combination of small herd sizes, high overall livestock numbers resulting in overgrazing, loss of seasonal movement patterns, increased numbers of unskilled herders, and increased frequency of severe winters (dzud). Through its activity, Family Agricultural Resources Mongolia (FARM) will work with severely affected dzud area like Arvaikheer soum of Uvurkhangai Province. The activity will be implemented for one year with a goal to provide a sustainable livelihood of vegetable production that improves food security, gardening education and knowledge for 25 vulnerable women headed households in rural Mongolia.

8. Providing Rights of Well-being and Playing Basketball with Local Youths

Herlen and Bayan-Adarga soums in Hentii province have high poverty rate and have no sport clubs or designate facilities for youth development. The Trainer of Basketball B (TOBB), a local NGO proposes to build a basketball open court and provide training clothing for 30 children (15 girls and 15 boys) from poor families in basketball. This will help the youth to become self-confident and lead a healthy life-style. Local governments of both soums, Och Manlai LLC and Durvun-Uliral Hentii LLC will also provide in-kind and financial support for the project.

9. "Green Way" Waste and Recycling Education Centre

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Ulaanbaatar, the Rotary Club of Khangarid will address municipal waste management issues by offering training on waste management and recycling to teachers at the Mongolian National University of Education and students at the Secondary School #9. Keep South Australia Beautiful (KESAB), South Australia's not-for-profit organisation that delivers world-class environmental sustainability education program, will

provide an engaging and interactive platform to the project beneficiaries. Selected classrooms will be at both schools will be redesigned as “Waste and Recycling Centre/Hub.”

10. Improving Public Services through “Check My Service” Mobile Application

Public services are an integral part of our lives. Governments throughout the world have been increasingly paying attention to improving the services for which they are responsible. The goal of “CheckMyService” is to create a mobile application that facilitates direct communication on service issues between citizens and the administration of Ulaanbaatar city. This application encourages citizens to report issues in their neighbourhood, share and discuss problems, and monitor the authorities’ reactions. According to the report of the Information Communications Technology Agency (2014) 45% of UB habitants were online every day and more than half of the UB population used internet at least once a week.

The Democracy Education Centre (DEMO) was established in 2002. In 2012, DEMO launched the Check My Service initiative and assessed the transparency and accountability of 84 public services by service recipients through a Community Score Card tool. Their past work was recognised with an Integrity Award by the Anti- Corruption Agency of Mongolia (2013) as well as selected as one of the best innovations in Asia and Pacific region by the Open Government Partnership in 2014 and 2016 respectively.

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