International Organization for Migration (IOM)
The UN Migration Agency

DTM

MOBILITY MONITORING FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN MONGOLIA

BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT: UVS AIMAG

Round 1 2018

IOM Development Fund
DEVELOPING CAPACITIES IN MIGRATION MANAGEMENT

Photo: Yondonjamts Nyamdavaa

UVS AIMAG BASELINE ASSESSMENT

JANUARY - MARCH 2018

INTRODUCTION

Short and long term internal migration has a long-standing tradition in Mongolia. However, data on short term movements (< 3 months) is not systematically collected. In addition, recent trends indicate that rural to urban migration, particularly towards Ulaanbaatar, has been fostered by a number of factors principally related to better employment opportunities, healthcare, education and climate change[1].

Mongolia's unique geographical location, as well as the rural population's dependence on animal husbandry, make the country particularly vulnerable to environmental changes and severe weather events. The increasing trend of rural to urban migration in Mongolia has been linked to factors resulting from climate change, such as declining livelihood opportunities in rural areas that have been amplified by increasing incidences of severe droughts and winter storms (*dzuds*[2]).

If the trends continue, the increasing incidences of disasters will drive higher rates of rural to urban migration into Ulaanbaatar where government officials are already facing significant challenges to accommodate new arrivals. In order to prepare for coming disasters and respond accordingly, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) will need to have precise information on population mobility and the number of people at different sites.

In response to the increased occurrence of severe weather events in the country, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) began implementing its Mobility Monitoring for Disaster Preparedness in Mongolia through the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) with the objective to support the Government of Mongolia in establishing a comprehensive system to collect data on displacement caused by climate change and in the event of a natural disaster in the country. DTM will also provide a unique set of data, as for the first time information on short term movements will be collected and analyzed.

METHODOLOGY

The data collection tools and strategy implemented by NEMA are based on the DTM global methodology and have been adapted to the context and the displacement patterns in the country. The information collected will contribute to the creation of a comprehensive profile of the population in Mongolia.

For this baseline assessment, IOM distinguishes between two types of populations: residents (any person living at the given location/site) and mobile population (individuals who moved in/out of the soum within 1-3 months).

NEMA and IOM define population mobility as the movement of people from one place to another, temporarily, seasonally or permanently for either voluntary or involuntary reasons. It describes the full range of mobility from short term movement (e.g. herders) to longer term or permanent relocation.

The location assessment was conducted at the secondary subdivision of the administrative level (soum) outside of Ulaanbaatar. Information was collected through interviews with key informants, identified by NEMA, in consultation with IOM. The collected data includes basic information about the residents and the displaced population (number of individuals, time of arrival, origin, reason for mobility, etc.).

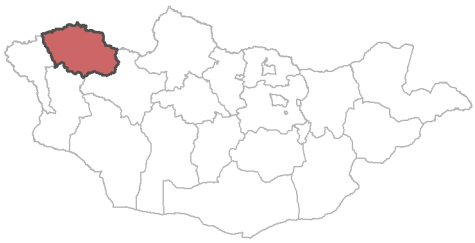
While the assessment was be carried out in all 330 soums across the country (except in Ulaanbaatar city), this report presents analysis of just the population movements of the Uvs aimag.

1 National University of Mongolia (NUM), United Nations University – Merit, and International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2018). Understanding and Managing Internal Migration in Mongolia.

2 A dzud is a cyclical, slow onset disaster unique to Mongolia. It consists of a summer drought followed by a deterioration of the weather conditions in winter and spring during which the shortage of pasture and water leads to the large-scale death of livestock.

OVERVIEW

Uvs is one of the 21 aimags (provinces) of Mongolia. It is located in the west of the country, 1,336 kilometres from the nation`s capital Ulaanbaatar. The capital of the soum is Ulaangom, which lies 936 meters above sea level. The province is named after Mongolia's biggest lake, Uvs Lake. The province occupies 4.45 per cent of nation's territory, totaling 69,585 km2. The main industry is agriculture, namely animal husbandry and crop cultivation.



Of the total area of the province, sixty per cent belongs to the mountainous climatic zone, and forty per cent to the Gobi semi-desert.

The maximum temperature is +40-50°C in July, and the lowest is -40-50°C in January. At the administrative level, the aimag is further divided into 19 soums.

KEY FINDINGS

Population mobility patterns observed in Uvs demonstrate that increased movement from some soums to others are linked to dzud and severe weather conditions.

The majority of individuals (accounting for approximately 63% of all individuals who left from Uvs between January and March) left from four soums: Zavkhan, Ulaangom, and Zuunkhangai.

There were differences in the time of departue during the assesment period, as well as destinations depending from which soum the individual left.

All the individuals who left from the Zavkhan soum went to the Myangad soum in the Khovd aimag in January. Approximately 90% of individuals left from the Zuunkhangai in February. All of them went to Ulaanbaatar.

Individuals who left from the Zuunkhangai soum mostly left because of economic reasons, moving to Ulaanbaatar in search for better opportunities, while individuals who left the Zavkhan soum to go to the Myangad soum in Khovd aimag in January mostly left because of severe winter conditions.

HOW MANY INDIVIDUALS LEFT AND FROM WHERE?

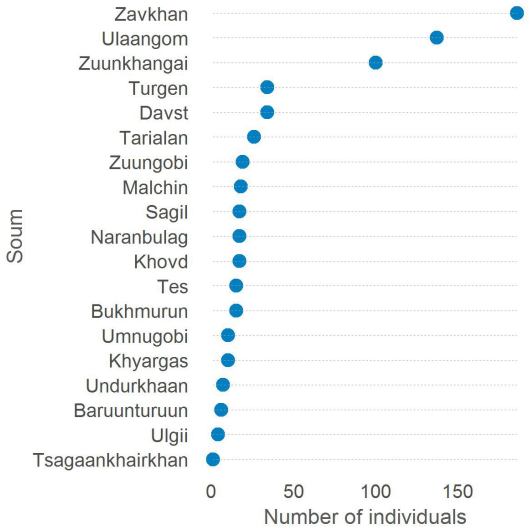
In total, between January and March 2018, 673 individuals left from Uvs.

The number of individuals who left varied significantly across soums. Sixty-three per cent of all individuals who left Uvs were from three soums including Zavkhan, Ulaangom and Zuunkhangai.

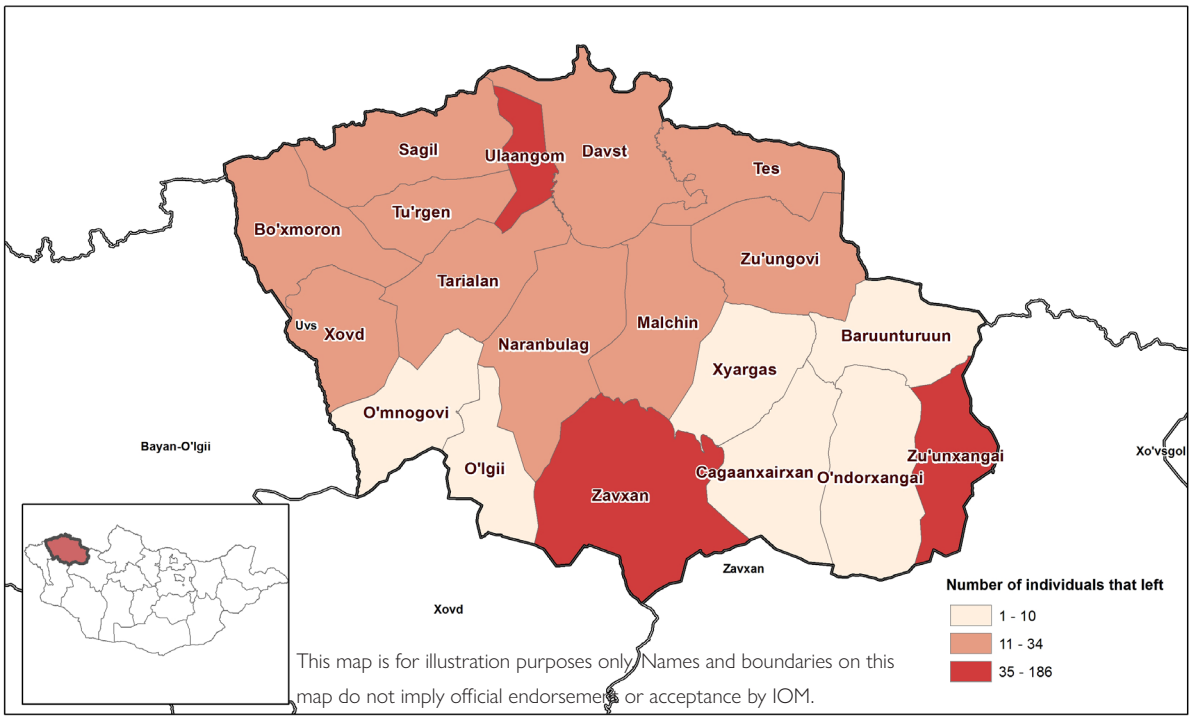
The lowest number of individuals left from Tsagaankhairkhan and Ulgii soums.

The map below shows the distribution of individuals who left Uvs by soum.

Figure 1: Number of individuals who left Uvs between January and March 2018, by soum.



Map 1: Number of individuals who left Uvs between January and March 2018, by soum.

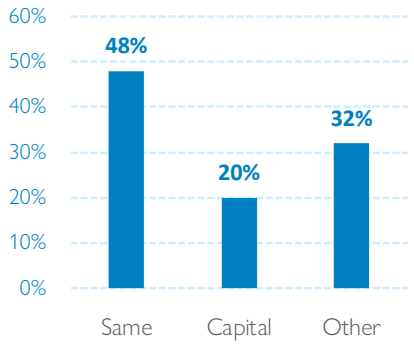


WHERE DID THE INDIVIDUALS GO?

Approximately half of all individual left their soums of habitual residence to move to other soums in the Uvs aimag.

Where the individuals moved to varied significantly in the first three months of 2018. The percentage of individuals who moved to different soums within Uvs aimag did not change significantly between January and February, while there was an increase in March as opposed to February.

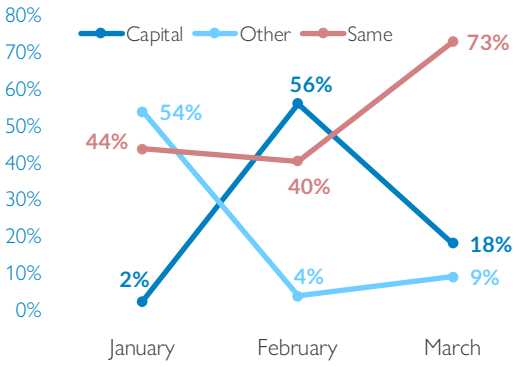
Figure 2: Percentage of individuals who left Uvs for the capital/other aimag/other soums in Uvs between January and March 2018.



Approximately half of the individuals who left Uvs in January moved to other aimags (mostly from the Zavkhan soum to the Myangad soum in the Khovd aimag), while another half moved to different soums in Uvs. The percentage of individuals who left for other aimags dropped from 54 per cent in January to four per cent in February and then to nine per cent in March.

February saw an increase in the share of individuals who left for Ulaanbaatar (mostly from the Zuunkhangai soum).

Figure 3: Percentage of individuals who left Uvs for the capital/ other aimag/other soums in Uvs, by month.



WHEN DID THE INDIVIDUALS MOVE?

Fifty-six per cent of all individuals who left departed in January, 28 per cent departed in February and 16 per cent left in March.

There were significant variations in the number of individuals leaving by month among different soums.

All individuals who left from Zavkhan to the Myangad soum in the Khovd aimag left in January. Approximately 90 per cent of individuals left from Zuunkhangai in February. All of them went to Ulaanbaatar.

The destinations of individuals who left from the Ulaangom aimag varied by month. In January most left to the Naranbulag soum, in February to Zuungobi, and in March to the Sagil soum.

Figure 4: Percentage of individuals who left Uvs, by month.

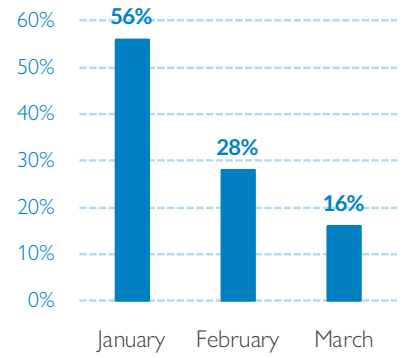
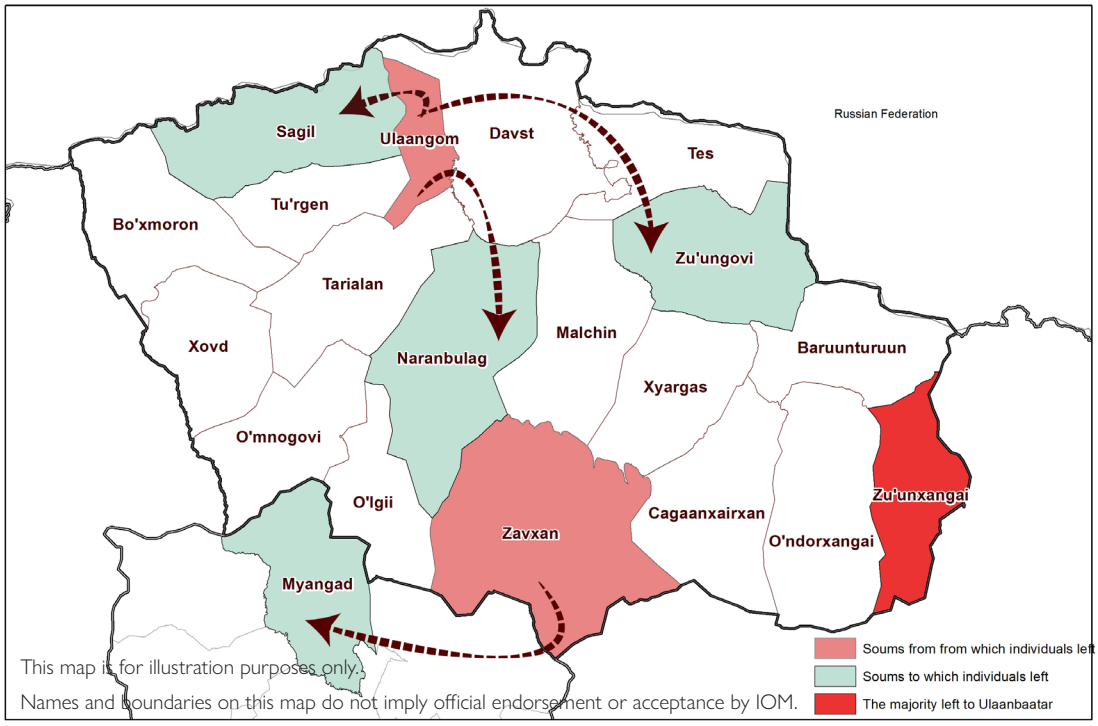


Figure 5: Percentage of individuals who left Zavkhan, Ulaangom, and Zuunkhangai soums, by month.

Map 2: Soums of destination for individuals who left from Zavkhan, Ulaangom and Zuunkhangai soums.



REASONS FOR LEAVING

Individuals who left the Zuunkhangai aimag mostly left because of economic reasons, moving to Ulaanbaatar in search of better opportunities, while individuals who left the Zavkhan soum to move to the Myangad soum in Khovd in January mostly left because of severe winter conditions.

In January the temperature reaches -40-50°C making the aimag especially vulnerable to dzuds. The snow cover map of Mongolia below shows the relatevely lower snow density of the Khovd soum, in comparison with the nearby Zavkhan soum.

Map 3: Snow cover map of Mongolia (as of January 2018).