Children on the move

Rural-urban migration and access to education in Mongolia

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Save the Children UK

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY 1942 MONGOLIA

CHIP
Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre

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Preface

This paper is one of series of working papers, reports and policy briefings on different aspects of childhood poverty published by the Childhood Poverty Research and Policy Centre (CHIP). CHIP is a collaborative research and policy initiative involving academic institutions and Save the Children in China, India, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and the UK. It aims to:

- deepen understanding of the main causes of childhood poverty and poverty cycles, and increase knowledge of effective strategies to tackle it in different contexts
- inform effective policy to end childhood poverty, ensuring that research findings are widely communicated to policy makers, practitioners and advocates
- raise the profile of childhood poverty issues and increase the urgency of tackling them through anti-poverty policy and action
- work globally to tackle chronic and childhood poverty in transition countries and others.

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Acronyms, abbreviations and translations

EGSPRS	Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GoM	Government of Mongolia
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PSMFL	Public Sector Management and Finance Law
NUM	National University of Mongolia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Translations/terms

aimag: province within which the major settlement is the '*aimag* centre'(Mongolia)
bagh: administrative unit within a *soum*
district: administrative unit within Ulaanbaatar
dzud: harsh winter following a summer of drought – the cause of many livestock deaths
ger: circular felt tent, traditional housing used by many in Mongolia (*yurta* in Russian)
khoroo: administrative unit within a district of a Ulaanbaatar
soum: district within an *aimag*, the major settlement within a *soum* is the '*soum* centre'

1. Introduction

This study explores the impacts of rural to urban migration on children's wellbeing in Mongolia, focusing on the effects on their access to a good education. The Government of Mongolia has committed itself to achieving universal access to education, improving the lives of children and eradicating poverty. This study suggests that, without addressing the situation of disadvantaged migrant children and families, overcrowded urban areas, and the poor children and families left behind in rural areas, these national development targets will not be reached.

1.1 Transition, poverty and children in Mongolia

Mongolia's transition from a socialist, centrally planned one-party state to a multi-party democratic state with a liberalised economy started after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990. Although never officially part of the former USSR, strong political, economic and social ties existed between the two. Mongolia was heavily reliant on the Soviet trading bloc, COMECON – the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and annual Soviet aid was equivalent to 30 per cent of Mongolia's GDP (UNDP/GoM, 2000). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Mongolia opted for a 'shock therapy' programme of reform. Many industries, services and farms – and all the livestock previously owned by the state – were privatised. Most trade barriers were removed and the country joined the World Trade Organisation in 1997. In just seven years, Mongolia had become one of the most open economies in the world.

Such rapid structural adjustment of the economy hit Mongolian families hard. Unemployment rose and inflation and prices soared. Reductions in basic social services and welfare cut the available support when it was needed most. Over recent years there have been some improvements. Economic growth had not been enough by 2000 to restore real GDP per capita to the level it was at in 1990 (Griffin, 2001). However, economic growth has been positive since 1995, reaching as high as 6% by 2004.[1] Yet despite increased macro-economic stability and growth, many Mongolians have not yet benefited, and increasing inequality is a concern.

It is widely recognised that poverty has become more widespread since the transition (Brenner, 2001; Nixson *et al*, 1999). There is increased livelihood insecurity and inequality, reduced social services and increased stress on traditional social support systems (Griffin, 2001; UNDP/GOM, 2000; Harper, 1994). In terms of consumption poverty, a major survey in 1998 indicated that 35.6 per cent of the population was living below the income poverty line (NSO/UNDP, 1998). The 2004 Household Income Expenditure Survey–Living Standards Measurement Survey reported that 36% of Mongolians are poor, living on less than 25,000 Tg[2] per person per month, and suggested rural poverty is higher than urban poverty.

Box 1 Childhood poverty – why is it so important to tackle?

Childhood is a critical period of human development. Children are often more vulnerable to deprivation and poverty because they are still growing physically, are dependent on adults for their wellbeing and security, and are often powerless. Poverty experienced during childhood can deny a young person opportunities that will affect them for the rest of their life, possibly affecting their children as well (CHIP, 2002).

[1] World Bank World Development Indicators 2005 downloaded May 2005 from http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2005/index.html. ADB, 2004 downloaded from http://www.adb.org/Documents/News/2004/nr2004040.asp

[2] 1 US dollar is equal to 1,200 Tg (May 2005).

It is difficult to assess the numbers of children living beneath the poverty line in Mongolia. Official figures suggest that around 40 per cent of the population is children under 18[3]. Poverty analyses indicate that many of those under the poverty line are in female-headed households or are children aged 0-16 (NSO/UNDP, 1998). Taking a broader definition of poverty, measures of human development indicators for children show mixed progress. In health, for example, birth rates fell during the 1990s, and infant and under-five mortality rates also appear to have fallen. Immunisation rates have risen, while acute respiratory and diarrhoeal illnesses, both of which affect children, have declined. However, malnutrition and nutrient deficiency are growing concerns: some 25 per cent of children under five have a low height for their age, and 13 per cent are underweight.[4] Some 40 per cent of the population do not have access to safe drinking water.[5]Many children have more responsibilities at home. Some leave school to work in mines, markets and factories, while some live on the streets in a country where temperatures are as low as minus 30-40 degrees Celsius in winter.

In response to this situation and, predominantly, to satisfy conditions of World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) lending, in 2003 the Government of Mongolia finalised their Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EGSPRS, GOM, 2003) which is linked to national development priorities and annual socio-economic guidelines. The EGSPRS is likely to improve the situation of children in poverty, but does not use its full potential to reduce childhood poverty.[6]

1.2 Migration in Mongolia

Mongolians have long had a tradition of pastoralist population movement. For many livestock herders this is still a way of life. Urbanisation has also been an important trend: from 1956 to 1994 the urban population increased nearly seven-fold, while the rural population increased by 1.5 times (UNFPA, 1998). However, since transition in the early 1990s, the rate of migration has rapidly increased and patterns of movement have changed. When the government allowed families to own their own livestock in the mid-1990s, many families moved to, or back to, rural areas. However, since the mid-1990s, increasing numbers of migrants are moving from rural areas and rural *soum* centres to urban areas. In-migration is concentrated in Mongolia's rapidly growing cities. In the five years before the 2000 census, 52.3 per cent of migrants moved to Ulaanbaatar, and 16.2 per cent to Orkhon (Erdenet city) and Darkhan Uul (NSO, 2002). By 2002, one-third of the country's population lived in Ulaanbaatar (NSO, 2001).

The relationship between migration and poverty in Mongolia is complex. Research has indicated that for many individuals and families, migration is a drastic strategy for coping with insecurity and hardship; for example, families move to escape unemployment or livelihoods ruined by *dzud* (harsh winter). Findings of a survey of internal migration in Mongolia suggest that, as a result of migration, migrants' 'employment status, education, …children's schooling, relations with family… and friends, housing conditions, access to public transport, markets, environment, life satisfaction, income and health have all improved' (PTRC/MSWL/UNFPA, 2001). However, a recent study of urban poverty and in-migration indicates that 37 per cent of migrant households are poor in terms of consumption expenditure; 55 per cent are poor either in terms of consumption, or social inclusion, or access to services – this is greater than for non-migrant households (MSWL/PTRC/UNDP, 2004). A study of children's living conditions in peri-urban areas of Ulaanbaatar highlights the many hardships faced by migrants (NCC/UNICEF/SCF, 2002). Migration, like liberalisation, only benefits some people. For children growing up in households that do not benefit, the implications are potentially serious.

[3] NSO, 2003, Mongolian Statistical Yearbook, Ulaanbaatar: GOM.
[4] UNICEF statistics 1995-2003, downloaded May 2005 from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/mongolia_statistics.html
[5] UNDP National MDG report downloaded May 2005 from http://mirror.undp.org/mongolia/publications/NMDGR_Mongolia_eng_Goal7.pdf
[6] See Marcus and Marshall (2004) for a fuller analysis of the EGSPRS and other poverty policy.

Box 2 The links between education and poverty

- Income/consumption poverty can prevent children getting a good education, eg when families cannot afford to pay for the costs of education or related costs (such as administrative fees).
- A lack of access to a good education is one dimension of non-income poverty. This could be due to a lack of (public) provision of services for children or for the needs of particular children/adults, eg a boy child may be education-poor because of cultural and not economic reasons.
- Not receiving a good education when you are a child increases your chances of being an adult in poverty – and even passing that poverty onto the next generation.

(Harper, Marcus and Moore, 2002)

The government has recognised the challenges and benefits that such levels of migration bring. Its population and development policy recognises the right of people to move, but promotes the development of regional centres to try to prevent movement from rural areas and to promote the provision of decent living conditions, services and social protection for migrants (GOM, 2004). The Regional Development Strategy outlines the Government of Mongolia's plans to reduce regional inequities that are increasingly a result as well as a cause of migration (GoM, 2003). Migration is also increasingly identified as an issue in sectoral policies such as education.

1.3 Children's education in Mongolia

Before transition, Mongolia's social services were of a high standard and accessible to all. Some 96 per cent of the population was literate in 1990 (UNDP/GOM, 2000) – with an extensive school network and school dormitory system that allowed herders' children to attend. Education services suffered from cuts in the national budget after the transition. As a result, the dormitory system, buildings, heating systems, equipment and the quality of teaching have all suffered. Previously high government investment in pre-school education for three to seven-year-olds has fallen.[7] After the decline in the early 1990s, net primary enrolment rates have risen again, reaching 91.0 per cent by 2000, and some of the dormitories have been reopened.

Education is still a priority sector for the government. The education law and sector development strategy recognise the impact of migration on the education sector in urban areas and the problems facing the sector in rural areas. The Ministry of Education with donors, led by the Asian Development Bank with input from the World Bank and others, are developing a sector-wide approach for education to co-ordinate development assistance. However, as all recognise, there are great challenges, particularly with respect to the impact of migration on the government's ability to deliver a good quality education to all children.

1.4 Research objectives

This study was designed to complement and add to the existing research on migration and education. The central research question for the study was whether, how and why migration improved children's access to education. Unlike some recent studies, we consider both those children and their families who have migrated, and those left behind in rural areas with high out-migration. We focus on primary and secondary education, with some reference to pre-school. With particular reference to education, the study questions whether migration is an effective strategy for getting out of poverty.

- Do children who migrate get better access to a good education? Or does migration deny some children the opportunity of a good education?
- What factors influence whether a migrant child gets better access to good education?

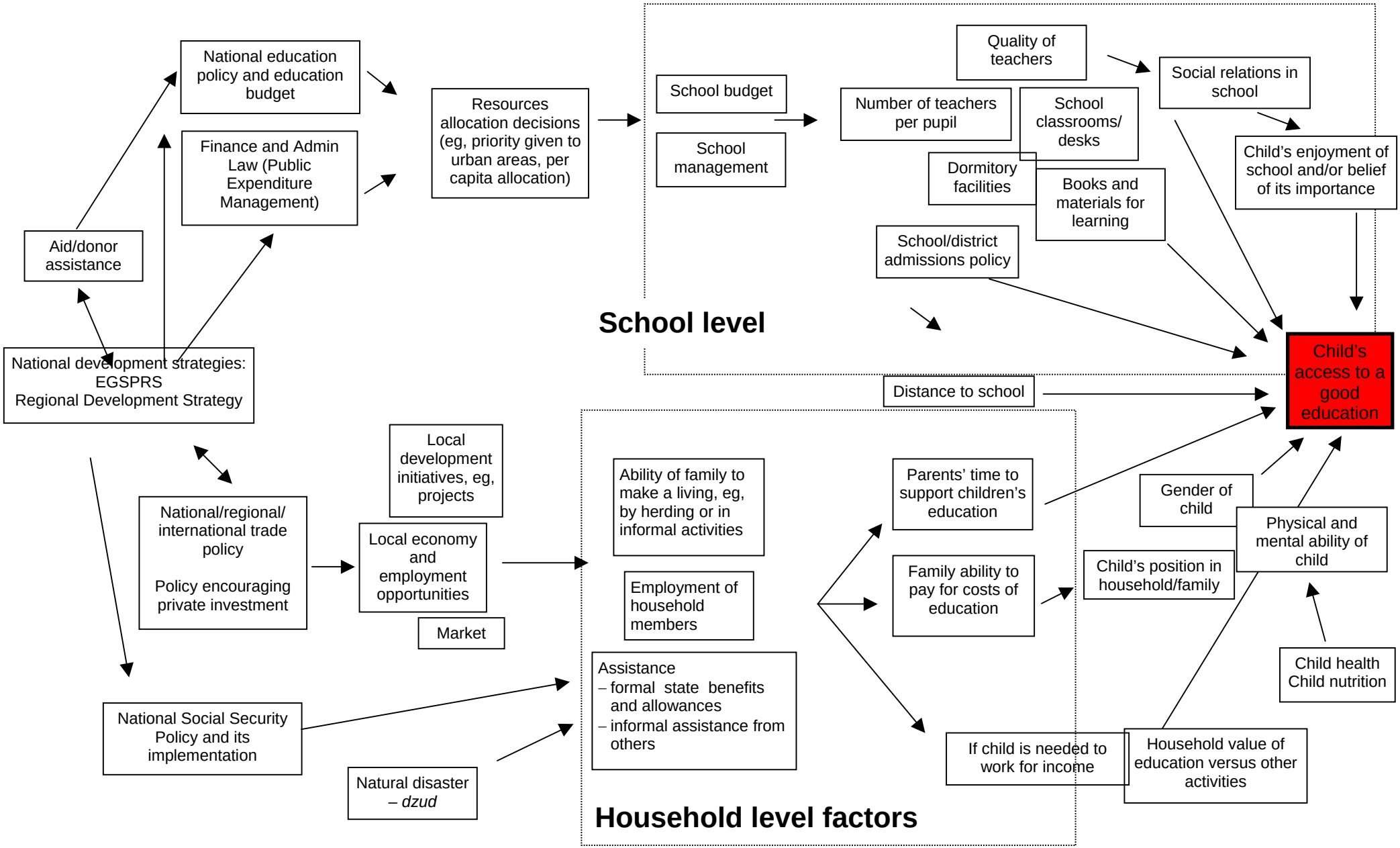
[7] In 2004, the age of entry into primary school was lowered to seven.

- Do children who are left behind in rural areas (especially areas of high out-migration) get access to a good education? Or are such children denied the opportunity of a good education?
- How do the experiences of children in families left behind differ from those of children in families separated by rural-urban migration (ie left with one parent or other relatives/guardians)?
- Why do some children benefit from migration while others do not?

The last question involves factors that operate at a range of levels – from the individual child and family, to the local area, to the sector and national policy. Figure 1 tracks the influences on a Mongolian child's access to education and provides a framework on which we have based our analysis.

Chapter 2 outlines the methodology used in the study. Chapter 3 explores how and why children and their families are migrating. Chapter 4 assesses the effects of migration on migrant children's access to a good education, and examines the causes that prevent some children from accessing education. Chapter 5 considers those children and families left behind in areas of high out-migration, particularly rural *soums*. Chapter 6 suggests reasons why some children are benefiting from migration and some are not. It considers key policy issues related to education sector development and financing, and to broader development strategies. Finally, this paper draws conclusions which reflect on how poverty and migration affect children in Mongolia, and makes recommendations for policy makers and implementers.

Figure 1 The framework for analysis: important factors influencing whether or not a child has access to a good education in Mongolia



2. Methodology

2.1 Overall design

The research combined both quantitative and qualitative data gathered through a household survey and focus groups and interviews. It collected information about the situation of migrant and non-migrant households, and about each of their children. Recognising children's ability and right to voice their opinions about issues that affect them, we also collected information from migrant and non-migrant children, using appropriate research methods.

The study was designed to be comparative, and not nationally representative. It allows us to compare rural areas of out-migration with urban areas of in-migration. For each site of in-migration we can compare migrants with non-migrants. We used a multi-stage sample, purposively sampling cities, *aimags*, *soums*, districts, *khoroos* and *bagh*s, and using a stratified random sample for households within the locations. As we are exploring migration and education in a context of poverty, we purposively sampled to reach areas of high in-migration and high out-migration, and more marginalised and disadvantaged areas, such as *ger* districts in Ulaanbaatar.

2.1.1 Principles and definitions

The following definitions were used:

a) *Family or household.* Those people living in a dwelling who share income, food and living arrangements, including members who live there for most of the year. Those others sharing a fence, toilet facilities and/or apartment are recorded as sharing a living space. For most of the quantitative analysis, the household was the unit of analysis, as the wellbeing of children is often closely linked with the wellbeing of their families/households, and families often, though not always, migrate as a group. As Kothari (2002: 3) notes: 'Migration or staying put is rarely an individualistic phenomena'.

b) *Migrant family.* A household with children (at least one child aged 3-16 living in the household) which moved to the current location in the five years before the research (ie 1998-2003), and which had moved from a more rural area or from one with a similar level of urbanisation (ie not those moving from urban to rural).

c) *Long-term urban residents*. Those families with children (at least one child aged 3-16 living in the household) living in an urban area of high in-migration from at least the beginning of 1998.

d) *Non-migrant family.* A household with children (at least one child aged 3-16 living in the household) living in an area of origin, which had been in their location since the beginning of 1998.

e) *Children from migrant and non-migrant households.* Where possible, the quantitative analysis uses data on the children living within migrant and non-migrant households (as described above). Children are under 18.

f) *Separated child.* Many children in Mongolia stay separately from their families to enable them to attend school; either staying in dormitories, with relatives or with friends. Older children move for university or for work. Some families send their children ahead and follow them later. Therefore, the distinction between a child migrant (who moves permanently) and a child who is a seasonal migrant for school is blurred. A separated child for this study was a child aged 3-16 whose parents (either one or both) have migrated to a (more) urban area; or a child aged 3-16 who has moved ahead of her/his parents.

g) *Migrant children and non-migrant children* (for qualitative work). Children who moved to their current location in the five years before the research (between 1998 and 2003 – for migrants) or who had lived in their location for five years or more (non-migrants), but did not necessarily live in one of the households surveyed. Those both in school (in formal education) and out of school (either not attending or attending informal education) were identified.

h) *Rural and urban areas.* The definition of 'urban' and 'rural' in Mongolia is not clear (GOM/UNDP 2003). This study follows the Living Standards Measurement Survey (NSO/UNDP, 1998) definition of urban centres as being the capital and *aimag* centres. *Soums* are classed as rural. However, a distinction is made between *soum* centre households and 'rural households'. The latter is used by Mongolians to mean households living in the countryside outside the *soum* centres; often they are herding families or those in small *bagh* centres. The preferred distinction in the analysis is between cities (eg Ulanbaatar, Erdenet), *aimag* centres (eg Selenge, Kherlen Soum) and *soum* centres (eg Khalkhgol), and between areas of high in- and out-migration.

2.2 Site selection

2.2.1 Cities and aimags

Sites (*see table 1*) were chosen in order to include:

- all four regions of Mongolia, plus the capital, Ulaanbaatar
- those with high in-migration, those with high in- and out-migration, and those with high out-migration – using five-year, lifetime and last-year migration rates[8] from the 2000 Population and Housing Census
- different types of areas of origin (rural areas, *soums*, *aimag* centres) and destination areas (*aimag* centres and cities). Some sites are 'stepping stone' sites – ie points at which migrants stop en route to Ulaanbaatar
- areas of different economic situations, including those with high unemployment (using the 2000 Population and Housing Census), those more dependent on livestock, areas with great industrial activity, those well connected to the capital, and those more marginalised in terms of communications and economic links.

2.2.2 District, soum, khoroo and bagh selection

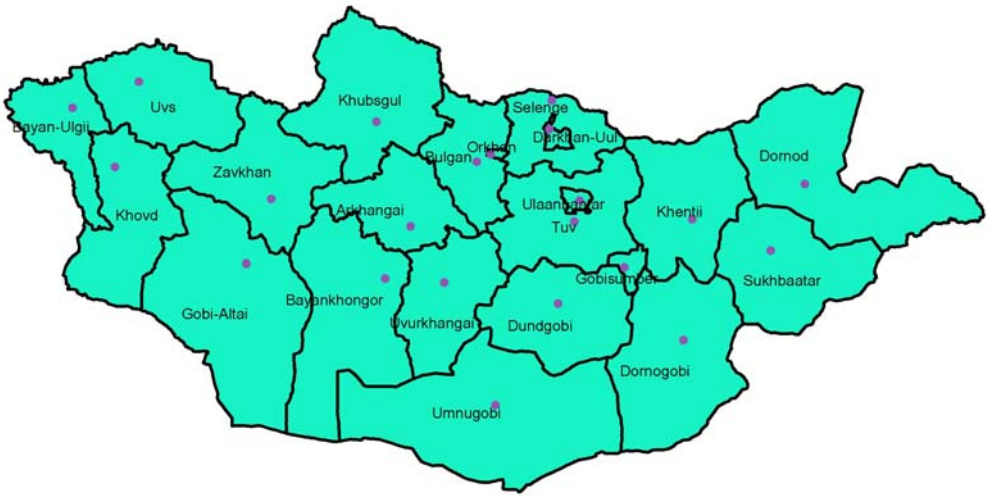
Districts and *khoroos* (in Ulaanbaatar), *soums* and *baghs* (in other sites) were selected on the basis of migration statistics. Additional criteria included the type of migration (last-year or five-year), population size, and remoteness from the *aimag* centre. Table 1 shows the sites selected.

2.2.3 Site classification

- sites of high in-migration: Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet, Sukhbaatar *aimag* centre (Selenge), Kherlen Soum *aimag* centre (Dornod)
- sites of high out-migration: Khalkhgol (Dornod), Uliastai and Bayankhairhan (Zavkhan) and Erdenedalai.

[8] This measure records the area of origin/location for migrants five years before the census in 2000, at birth and the year before the census.

Figure 2 Mongolia



2.3 The household survey

The purpose of the questionnaire was to allow us to gain:

- a quantitative picture of children's households', and particularly poor households' experiences of rural-urban migration in the last five years
- a basic quantitative picture of the households', and particularly poor households', access to a good education. For migrant households, this includes a picture of perceived differences in education as a result of migration
- important basic household- and individual-level data on child and family wellbeing.

It also enabled us to identify individuals for further qualitative work. (*See Appendix 1 for the questionnaire*).

2.3.1 Sample

In the cities of Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet, households were selected using a systematic random sampling method, from maps created of actual household locations (given the relative unreliability of registration statistics). In *aimag* centres and *soums*, households were again identified using a systematic random sampling approach, but using household registration statistics.[9] The total sample (*see Table 2*) was 964 households: 326 of these were migrant households and 638 were non-migrant households. The total number of individual household members covered in the sample was 4,879: 2,337 (47.9 per cent) were children under 18; 1,650 of these household members (including 785 children) were migrants; and 3,229 (including 1,552 children) were non-migrants. Figures 3 (a) and (b) describe the individuals in the families surveyed, showing the numbers of girls and boys by age. There were more boys under 18 living in migrant households than there were girls, but more young women aged 18-34 than young men of the same age.

[9] Registration statistics in *aimag* and *soum* centres were taken as more reliable as the population centres are smaller for the administration to track movement in and out.

Table 1 Sites selected – cities, aimags, khoroos, soums and baghs

Site	Region	Migration characteristics of city/aimag	Economic situation of city/aimag	Land use zone	District/ Soums selected	Criteria for district/soum selection	Khoroos/ Baghs	Criteria for khoroo/ bagh choice
Ulaanbaatar city	Ulaanbaatar	Net in-migration (highest number of migrants). Ultimate destination site for many.	Economic centre of country. Diverse economic base of primary, secondary and tertiary activity. High capital flows; 2001 unemployment 2.7%[10]	Capital city	Songino-khairhan	Highest in-migration (5 year and last year)	Khoroo 1, 6, 9	Migration (more recent and older)
Erdenet city (in Orkhon)	Khangai	Net in-migration. Ultimate destination, or stepping stone site.	Industrial city with high unemployment 7.6% in 2001.	Second city	-	High in-migration (5 year and last year)	Denj, Naran, Tsagaanchuluut	Migration
Dornod *aimag*	Eastern	High in- and out-migration. Ultimate destination, stepping stone or area origin.	High unemployment (8.9%). Geographically remote from Ulaanbaatar. Kherlen Soum lost city status during the administrative unit reform.	Steppe grassland	Kherlen Soum	*Aimag* centre, high in- and out-migration	9, 10	Migration (1 high in, 1 in and out migration)
					Khalkhgol	*Soum*, one of highest out-migration	Yalalt, Sumber, Buir Lake	Population size
Selenge *aimag*	Central (north)	Net in-migration, but high in- and out-migration. Ultimate destination, stepping stone or area of origin.	Relatively well-developed infrastructure. Close to Ulaanbaatar/ Erdenet. Unemployment 3.3% in 2001	Crop production Forest.	Sukhbaatar	*Aimag* centre	2, 4	Migration (in and out)
Zavkhan *aimag*	West	Net out-migration, particularly high lifetime migrants. Area of origin (although *aimag* centre can be destination or area of origin).	Livestock dependent. Remote from Ulaanbaatar (road/rail/ market links). Highest unemployment in west (6.7%).	Mountainous	Uliastai	*Aimag* centre, high out-migration, some in-migration.	Chigestei, Tsetsegt, khonkhor Jargalant	Population size and migration
					Bayan-khairhan	*Soum*, high out-migration	Asgat, Naran	Population size
Dundgobi *aimag*	Central (south)	Net out-migration. Area of origin.	Livestock dependent. Unemployment 3.8% in 2001	Gobi desert	Erdenedalai	*Soum* centre, highest out-migration	Sangiin Dalai, Rashaant, Tuunut	Population size

[10] NSO, 2001, Mongolian Statistical Yearbook 2001.

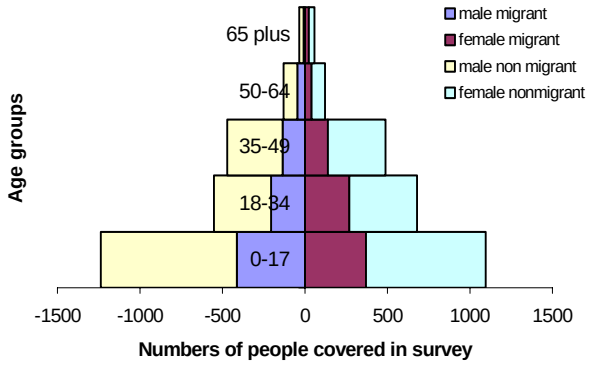
Table 2 The household survey sample

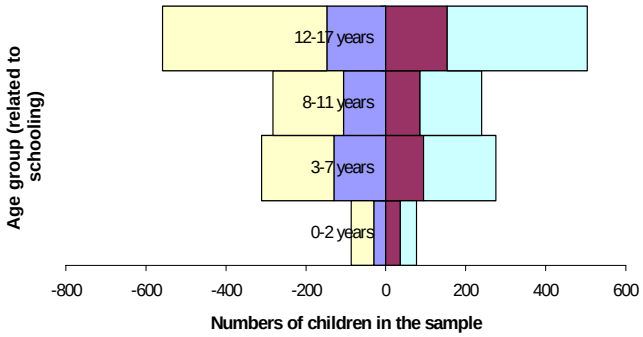
	Households		People		Children		Adults	
	Migrated house-holds	Non-migrated house-holds	Number of migrated people	Number of non-migrated people	Number of migrated children	Number of non-migrated children	Number of migrated adults	Number of non-migrated adults
Ulaanbaatar	129	67	674	349	304	154	370	195
Erdenet	99	48	503	241	251	99	252	142
Selenge	46	49	238	236	114	110	124	126
Dornod Kherlen	41	67	175	307	85	138	90	169
Dornod Khalkhgol soum	–	108	–	569	–	284	–	285
Zavkhan aimag. Uliastai	11*	102	60	487	31	231	29	256
Zavkhan aimag. Bayan-khairkhan	–	100	–	513	–	280	–	243
Dundgovi aimag. Erdenedalai	–	97	–	517	–	256	–	261
TOTAL	**326**	**638**	**1650**	**3229**	**785**	**1552**	**865**	**1677**
	964		**4879**		**2337**		**2542**	

* Included in total sample of migrant households but not a large enough number to disaggregate further by analysis.

Figure 3(a): a population pyramid for families surveyed; (b) age and sex of children under 18 in households surveyed

(note households included had at least one child aged 3-16)





2.4 The qualitative research

The qualitative work aimed to gather more contextual information, exploring the experiences and lives of particular groups of children and adults, particularly their opinions on education.

2.4.1 The sample

Table 3 Qualitative research sample

Site	Parents focus group		In-school children focus group		Out-of-school children focus group*		Young people life history		Separated child interview		Expert inter-view	Total activ-ities
	Mig	Non	Mig	Non	Mig	Non	Mig	Non	Mig	Non		
Ulaan-baatar	2	1	2	1	1		7		4		8	26
Erdenet	1	1	2	1	1*		4		4		5	19
Selenge	1	1	2	1	1*		4		3		5	18
Kherlen Soum	1	1	2	1	1		4		4		5	19
Uliastai		1	1	1		0		4		3	5	15
Khalkhgol		1	1	1		1		2		2	5	13
Bayan-khairhan		1	1	1		1		4		2	5	15
Erden-edalai		1	1	1		1		6		3	6	19
Total number of activities	5	8	12	8	4	3	19	16	15	10	44	144
Approx total number of partici-pants	50	80	144	96	40	30	19	16	15	10	44	544

* Out-of-school children included those in informal education — particularly in Erdenet and Selenge, where out-of-school children were located through information held by the informal classes.

2.4.2 Focus groups

Focus group discussions were held with in-school and out-of-school 12-14-year-olds (both migrants and non-migrants) using interactive research methods such as drawing, games and discussions. Topics included their experiences and opinions of migration and of education, plus their daily calendars at home and school. Focus group discussions were held with parents (migrants in areas of high in-migration and non-migrants in areas of high out-migration), regarding migration and education. Community mapping was used to explore changes in the situation and livelihoods of families and areas.

2.4.3 Interviews

Individual interviews, using visual methods, were used with migrant children and young people on their experiences of migration. Semi-structured interviews were held with children whose families had been separated by migration. Life history-style interviews with young people explored their opportunities over the longer term since migrating, or since being left behind as a child in areas of high out-migration.

Individual semi-structured interviews were also held with key informants including teachers, social workers, *soum*, *aimag* and city governors, and education and other key policy makers at different levels.

2.5 A note on poverty analysis

The study defines children in poverty as children and young people growing up without access to different types of resources that are vital for their wellbeing and to the fulfilment of their potential. These resources can be economic (eg an adequate livelihood); social (eg access to education, social networks to support children and families); physical (access to healthcare that enables a child to stay healthy); environmental (eg natural resources like land and forests); and political (eg having a voice as citizens).

The objective of the research was not to measure consumption poverty; other surveys do this. Using a fixed poverty line can be useful, but is not always that helpful for describing the particularities of poverty affecting children – or even adults. Different children have different needs. Two families may both be just above the income poverty line and be classed as non-poor, but one of these families may live far from a school and have high transport costs (often not included in the 'basket' of goods used to measure income poverty), or may have a child with a disability who needs special help with education. In real terms, what is important is that all the children in both these families can go to school and get a good education – rather than whether they have Tg25,000 a month.

How to classify whether children and their families are poor:

- proxy indicators or assessments of access to sufficient income: households' own assessments – of whether they have enough for basic needs, employment and key living conditions – that suggest a lack of resources, such as not having enough heating
- indicators relating to human development, such as children's attendance at school, sanitation, children's physical appearance
- lack of support networks: relatives, friends, government and others.

Chapter 3 explores how children and their families are moving and why.

3. Children on the move

This chapter considers children as migrants, the migration patterns of children and their families, and children as a reason for moving.

3.1 Migrant children

Other studies of migration often overlook the fact that children under 18 are moving, by ignoring them in population pyramids or in the related analysis, and only focusing on those aged 15 and above. They often focus on the fact that migration is particularly popular, or necessary, for young adults seeking work or higher education (eg PTRC/MSWL/UNFPA, 2001). However, as Figures 3 (a) and (b) in the previous chapter highlight, children are certainly on the move in Mongolia.[11]

Almost half, some 48 per cent, of individuals in both migrant and non-migrant families surveyed, are children. Overall, as Figure 3(b) showed, for both migrant and non-migrant households, the sample contains more children of secondary school age (12-17 years) than of primary school age (8-11 years) and pre-school age or younger. However, Table 4 shows that migrant families have younger children than non-migrant families. Remembering that this is migration over the five years prior to 2003, this suggests that families are more likely to move when their children are young. Section 3.4 shows that many families are thinking about their children's futures when deciding to move.

Table 4 Age of children in households surveyed, comparing migrant with non-migrant individuals

Age group	Migrant				Non-migrant			
	Female	Male	Total	% of children in migrant households	Female	Male	Total	% of children in non-migrant households
0-2	37	31	68	8.7	39	55	94	6.1
3-7	95	130	225	28.7	180	181	361	23.3
8-11	85	106	191	24.3	155	176	331	21.4
12-17	154	147	301	38.3	350	411	761	49.2
Total	**371**	**414**	**785**	**100**	**724**	**823**	**1547**	**100**

3.2 Patterns of family movement

3.2.1 Where are families moving from?

By considering where migrants were living five years before the research took place, in general we see that migrant families moving to Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet and Selenge in the five years prior to the survey are from all over Mongolia. More came from the Western region (31.3 per cent) and Khangai (30.7 per cent) than the Central (23.9 per cent) and the Eastern (14.1 per cent) regions (*see Table 5*). These findings are largely in line with the trends recorded in the Population and Housing Census 2000.

[11] The purpose of the study was to explore the effects of migration on children rather than to assess the proportion of all migrants who are under 18.

Different centres attract different migrants. Kherlen Soum and Uliastai *aimag* centres in the East and West, which are both relatively remote geographically and in terms of communication, attract migrants from surrounding *soum* centres and rural areas (those in Dornod and Zavkhan). Kherlen Soum, for example, is a large *aimag* centre, previously a city, that is the centre of in-migration for the Eastern region. Some 80 per cent of migrants (33 households) were from other *soums* within the *aimag*, and a further 12.2 per cent (five households) were from neighbouring Sukhbaatar *aimag*.

Table 5 Aimag and region of origin for migrant families – five year migration

Region	Aimag	Ulaan-baatar		Erdenet		Selenge		Kherlen Soum		Uliastai		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
West	Bayan Ulgii	–	–	1	1.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.3
	Uvs	14	10.9	21	21.2	7	15.2	–	–	–	–	42	12.9
	Khovd	3	2.3	2	2.0	8	17.4	–	–	–	–	13	4.0
	Govi Altai	5	3.9	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	1.5
	Zavkhan	9	7.0	19	19.2	2	4.3	–	–	11	100	41	9.2
	Total	31	24.0	43	43.4	17	37.0	–	–	–	–	102	31.3
Khang	Arkhangai	8	6.2	6	6.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	14	4.3
	Uvur-khangai	13	10.1	1	1.0	2	4.3	–	–	–	–	16	4.9
	Orkhon	6	4.7	5	5.1	3	6.5	–	–	–	–	14	4.3
	Bulgan	5	3.9	14	14.1	3	6.5	2	4.9	–	–	24	7.4
	Bayankh-ongor	7	5.4	4	4.0	1	2.2	–	–	–	–	12	3.7
	Khovsgol	1	0.8	14	14.1	5	10.9	–	–	–	–	20	6.1
	Total	40	31.1	44	44.4	14	30.4	2	4.9	–	–	100	30.7
Central UB	Ulaanbaatar	1	0.8	3	3.0	5	10.9	1	2.4	–	–	10	3.1
Central	Darkhan	7	5.4	1	1.0	4	8.7	–	–	–	–	12	3.7
	Tuv	33	25.6	3	3.0	-	-	–	–	–	–	36	11.0
	Selenge	9	7.0	2	2.0	5	10.9	–	–	–	–	16	4.9
	Dundgovi	1	0.8	1	1.0	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	0.6
	Umnu-govi	1	0.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.3
	Dorno-govi	1	0.8	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	0.3
	Govi-sumber	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	0
	Total	53	41.0	10	10.0	14	30.5	1	2.4	–	–	78	23.9
East	Dornod	3	2.3	2	2.0	-	-	33	80.5	–	–	38	11.7
	Khentii	1	0.8	–	–	1	2.2	-	-	–	–	2	0.6
	Sukh-baatar	1	0.8	–	–	–	–	5	12.2	–	–	6	1.8
	Total	5	3.9	2	2.0	1	2.2	38	92.7	–	–	46	14.1
	TOTAL	**129**	**100**	**99**	**100**	**46**	**100**	**41**	**100**	**11**	**100**	**326**	**100**

The other sites receive migrants from further afield. As a relatively thriving *aimag* centre with natural resources and border trade with Russia, Selenge *aimag* appears to attract migrant families from the West (37 per cent), Central (30.5 per cent) and Khangai (30.4 per cent) regions, but not from the Eastern region. Selenge attracts migrants from Uvs and Khovd in particular. Both Erdenet and Ulaanbaatar attract migrants from all over Mongolia. Erdenet, located within Orkhon in Khangai region, is the second largest centre for in-migrants in the country. It mainly attracts migrants from the West (mostly from Uvs and Zavkhan) and Khangai (Bulgan and Khuvsgul), suggesting that migrant families from remote western *aimags* are more likely to move to Erdenet than to Ulaanbaatar. The fact that the migrants in Ulaanbaatar represent all *aimags* of the country demonstrates that Ulaanbaatar is the final destination of migration for many. A quarter of migrants (25.2 per cent) to Ulaanbaatar come from Tuv *aimag*. Some 40.1 per cent (53 households) of migrant households in the capital city were from the Central region; just 3.8 per cent (five households) were from the Eastern region.

These scales of movement are similar to those tracked in the Population and Housing Census of 2000 which recorded the largest five-year migration flow to the city from the Central region and the smallest flow from the East. Although agreeing with national trends, our results are likely to have been influenced by our choice of Songinokharikhan district to the west of the city as the research site. We assume that migrants from western *aimags* are more likely to settle in Songinokhairkhan district and migrants from the East region to settle down in Bayanzurkh district.

Table 6 Types of area of origin for migrant households – five years migration

Type of area of origin	Ulaanbaatar		Erdenet		Selenge		Kherlen Soum		Uliastai		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Ulaanbaatar city[12]	0	0	3	3.0	4	8.7	2	4.9	0	0	9	2.8
Aimag centre	39	30.2	16	12.2	10	21.7	2	4.9	0	0	67	20.6
Soum centre	75	58.1	50	50.5	24	52.2	26	63.4	2	18.2	177	54.3
Rural	15	11.6	30	30.3	8	17.4	11	26.8	9	81.8	73	22.4
Total	**129**	**100**	**99**	**100**	**46**	**100**	**41**	**100**	**11**	**100**	**326**	**100**

Allowing for a slight bias in site selection (towards receiving areas for migrants from the Western region) and in-migration (many moving to Kherlen Soum and Zavkhan from surrounding *soums*), most families in our sample appear to be migrating from locations in Uvs (12.9 per cent) and Zavkhan (nine per cent) in the West; and from Tuv (11 per cent) and Dornod (11.7 per cent) in the Central and Eastern regions. Bulgan (7.4 per cent), Khovsgol (6.1 per cent) and Selenge, Arkhangai, Uvurkhangai, Orkhon and Kovd (each with about four per cent of migrant households) are also main areas of origin.

Most migrant families (50.4 per cent) have moved from *soum* centres (*see Table 6*). This suggests a desire to leave these areas, something that will be explored further in Chapter 4. Families moving to Selenge and Ulaanbaatar are more likely to have come from an *aimag* centre; moving to a city is perhaps less daunting if the family is already in the *aimag* urban centre. Yet, with the exception of Uliastai – from which the small sample of migrants suggests a particularly high number of households moving there from rural areas – Erdenet and Kherlen Soum have the most in-migrant households from rural areas. While this is less surprising for Kherlen Soum and Uliastai, it is more surprising for Erdenet city. This could be due to many families moving there from the Western region where urbanisation is less advanced and because it is possible for migrants to continue livestock herding in Erdenet.

3.2.2 Are they stopping on the way?

The recent survey on internal migration highlights the tendency for migrants to settle temporarily in 'stepping stone' sites en route to a city, often Ulaanbaatar. Tuv and Selenge *aimag* were identified as particularly popular stepping stone sites (PTRC/MSWL/UNFPA, 2001). However, only six per cent of migrant families we surveyed – a small total of 19 households – moved more than once between 1998 and 2003. Fifteen families moved twice and four families moved three times. Eighteen of the 19 lived in a rural *bagh* or *soum* centre five years ago. Nine of the 19 now live in Ulaanbaatar: six of these nine moved directly to the capital city, while the others stopped in a *soum* centre and not an *aimag*.

Furthermore, most migrant households – some 82.6 per cent (236 households) – said they have settled permanently in their current location. Some 10.9 per cent of migrant households who responded (31 families) said they have not settled permanently, and 6.3 per cent (18 households) did not know yet (*see Table 7*). This could mean that migrants prefer to migrate in one move. It also suggests that the process of temporarily settling and moving on again takes longer than five years, perhaps due to the cost and upheaval of moving. Discussions with a number of households revealed that they could not afford to move again.

[12] As Ulaanbaatar city boundaries include the countryside around the city, it is possible for a family to move from Ulaanbaatar to Selenge/Kherlen Soum and for it be classed as rural-urban migration.

Table 7 Percentage of households which have settled permanently (by site)

Site	Migrant					Non-migrant				
	Settled	Not	Don't know	Total	No. hhs	Settled	Not	Don'tt know	Total	No. house-holds
Ulaan-baatar	74.4	19.2	6.4	100	125	13.4	77.6	9.0	100	67
Erdenet	93.7	5.1	1.3	100	79	18.8	72.9	8.3	100	48
Selenge	91.4	0.0	8.6	100	35	24.5	75.5	0.0	100	49
Kherlen Soum	80.0	8.6	11.4	100	35	13.4	74.6	11.9	100	67
Uliastai	81.8	0	1 8.2	100	11	19.6	67.6	12.7	100	102
Khal-khgol	–	–	–	–	–	26.9	63.0	10.2	100	108
Bayan-khairhan	–	–	–	–	–	21.0	72.0	7.0	100	100
Erden-edalai	–	–	–	–	–	17.5	66.0	16.5	100	97
TOTAL	**82.8**	**10.9**	**6.3**	**100**	**285**	**19.7**	**70.1**	**10.2**	**100**	**638**

3.2.3 Rates of migration

Although most migrant households do not want to move again, non-migrants – some of whom could have been migrants six or more years ago – do want to move. Seventy per cent of non-migrant households (447 households) said that they are likely to move. The majority of households in areas of high out-migration (between 63 per cent and 72 per cent, depending on the site) plan to move. Interestingly, with the exception of Bayankhairhan, residents of rural *soums* are less likely to want to move than residents of urban areas. The highest proportion of those planning to move again were in Songinokhairhan in Ulaanbaatar. It is likely that they are looking for another site within the city, perhaps one closer to the city centre, and/or with better living conditions.

These figures indicate that the rate of migration is not likely to slow down. The rate of movement of children and their families increased between 1998 and 2002. Of the families moving before 2003, ten per cent (29 households) last migrated in 1998; 13 per cent (37 households) in 1999; 22 per cent (63 households) in 2000; 23 per cent (65 households) in 2002; and 32 per cent (93 households) in 2002. It is likely that ever-increasing numbers of children will be affected by migration in the future.

3.3 Divided families

Most children move at the same time as their family members. Most migrant households – 77.9 per cent or 254 households – in the survey moved as a family unit. However, other children move ahead of their families in order to attend school, while others are left behind when one or both parents move to an urban area.

When members of a family move in sequence, it is usually one of the parents who moves first to overcome the initial hardship of migration and then bring the others. In 14.7 per cent of cases (48 households), the head of household or his/her wife or husband moved first, while in 7.4 per cent of cases other household members moved first. The high number of families who moved together will have been influenced by our sample design which identified households with children: migrants moving ahead of their families may live independently. One-in-six families had one or both parents living separately from other members of the family, including their children, during the migration process.

Table 8 Children left behind, by site of high out-migration

Site	Moved mother	Moved father	Moved mother or father	Moved both	Children separated from one or both parents	Total number of children	% separated from one or both parents
Khalkhgol	11	9	15	5	20	284	7.0
Uliastai	2	5	5	2	7	231	3.0
Bayankhairhan	3	4	5	2	7	280	2.5
Dundgoby	8	6	10	4	14	256	5.5
Total	**24**	**24**	**35**	**14**	**49**	**1051**	**4.7**

3.3.1 Children left behind

Some children who are left behind when one or both parents migrate can find life difficult without their families, while others benefit from remittances sent back to support them. In the four sites of out-migration surveyed, only 4.7 per cent of children are living without one or both parents.

The qualitative research suggests that some migrating parents choose to leave their children behind so that they finish their schooling to a certain level in rural areas. This might be influenced by the difficulties some new migrants have in registering their children in schools in urban areas.

> *Our family has four members. My parents live in the city. My sibling lives with grandmother and I live with the family of a relative. In grade 8, I might move to the city.* (Separated child interview, Zavkhan)

> *I live with my granddaughter. Her parents and brother live in the city. After grade 8 we will also move to join them.* (Elderly lady interview, Khalkhgol).

3.3.2 Children who live separately in order to study

There are many children in Mongolia who move to stay with relatives or in a dormitory in order to study. It is rarely regarded as migration.[13] Only two households reported that school-age children moved first, with the family joining them later. Observation by researchers at the survey sites, focus group discussions and interviews with experts suggest that more children are separated from their families to study. For example, two of the nine randomly selected migrant children taking part in a focus group discussion in Ulaanbaatar had come to the city earlier than their families in order to start school; in Kherlen Soum, one of the eight migrant children in the focus group had come ahead of the family.

> *My brother and sister came first to attend school. Then, my parents and I came.* (In-school migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

> *My brother first came, then I came to study. Then, my mother came and found work, so all the family moved here.* (In-school migrant children's focus group, Kherlen Soum).

Some judge urban schools to be better:

> *My parents send me to the city so that I learn better.* (In-school migrant children's focus group, Bazarragchaa, Ulaanbaatar).

This can be because a family in a rural area lives far from the facilities, or because certain facilities do not exist locally:

[13] We would not classify it as migration *per se*, but given its relation to the topic of this research, we include these children as one type of 'separated child'.

I live with my father's sister. There is no dormitory in Murun school, so I came to the city to go to school. My parents are herders. (Separated child interview, Songinokhairkhan, Ulaanbaatar)

This can mean that whole families are divided. Particularly in *soums* near to urban *aimag* centre, one of the parents will stay at the *aimag* centre with children and the other in the countryside with the livestock.

3.4 Children as a major reason for moving

3.4.1 Education as a key reason for moving

Nearly one-third of households – 31.2 per cent – reported that one of their main reasons for moving was for their children's schooling or to give their children a better education (*see Table 9 and Figure 4*). It is the second most common reason for migration, after seeking employment (34.3 per cent of households). Six per cent of households said they moved in order to improve their children's future more generally. Migrants moving to Kherlen Soum – most of whom moved from surrounding *soums* – were more likely to move for education than for economic reasons.

Many migrants say that they came to send children to school. Almost 80 per cent say so. (Expert interview, teacher, Kherlen Soum)

Education was also the most important reason for migration to Erdenet, and a significant reason for those moving to the capital city.

Table 9 Reasons* for the last migration of households (by migration destination)

Reasons for migration	UB		Erdenet		Selenge		Kherlen		Total	
	No.	% of hhs	No.	% of hhs	No.	% of hhs	No.	% of hhs	No.	% of hhs
To find a job	66	52.4	25	25.8	8	17.4	9	22.0	110	34.3
For children's education	39	31.0	33	34.0	7	15.2	18	43.9	100	31.2
To get closer to urban areas for the market, services and information	12	9.5	27	27.8	15	32.6	12	29.3	66	20.6
To get closer to relatives	19	15.1	24	24.7	15	35.6	5	12.2	64	19.9
Lost livestock	19	15.1	20	20.6	4	8.7	1	2.4	49	15.3
For health reasons	16	12.7	5	5.2	1	2.2	2	4.9	25	7.8
Our living conditions worsened	12	9.5	7	7.2	–	–	3	7.3	23	7.2
To improve our living standards	7	5.6	8	8.2	5	10.9	3	7.3	23	7.2
For other reasons related with children	5	4.0	8	8.2	2	4.3	3	7.3	20	6.2
To take up a job (already found)	2	1.6	2	2.1	3	6.5	2	4.9	10	3.1
Other	7	5.6	4	4.1	6	13.0	6	14.6	25	7.8
Total	**204**	**161.9**	**163**	**168.0**	**66**	**143.5**	**64**	**156.1**	**515**	**160.4**

* Households could select up to three reasons

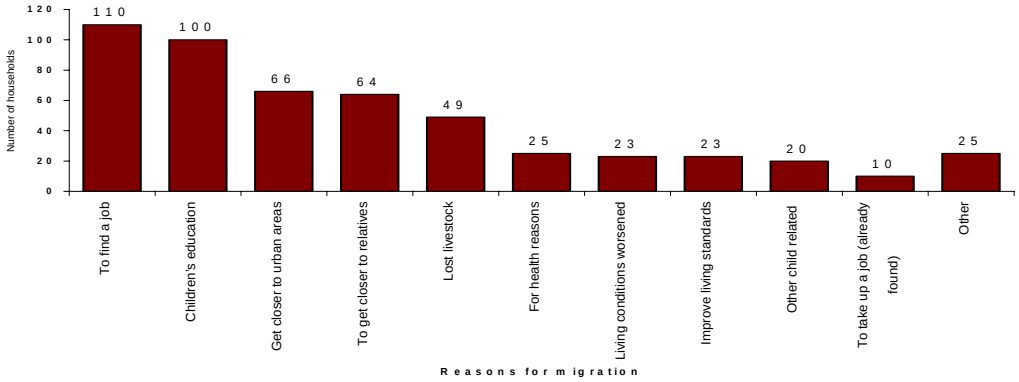


Figure 4 Reasons for migration given by migrant families *(each family could select up to three reasons)*

> *My parents say that they wanted us receive good education.* (In-school migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

> *We came to send our children to school.* (In-migrant parents' focus group, Erdenet)

The schools in both Kherlen Soum and Erdenet were widely perceived to provide the highest quality of state-provided education in their respective regions. (Whether or not aspirations for an improved education were realised, are discussed in Chapter 4.)

> *I study well, so I came here to get better education.*(Migrant children's focus group, Erdenet)

> *Last year I studied in a private school at the centre of Arkhangai* aimag. *The fee was 50,000 two years ago, then increased to 60,000. When the fee was introduced, I moved here.* (Separated child interview, Erdenet)

Far fewer migrants (15.2 per cent of households) moved to Selenge for education. Instead, they moved to this location for general social and economic reasons, such as the desire to be closer to relatives and closer to the urban market, services and information.

> *We came to improve our life, and thought this place was good for children.* (Parents' focus group, Sukhbaatar, Selenge)

> *...we wish to be close to urban areas, it becomes costly due to long distance when children start attending schools. If they come closer to their children, they can sell their herd for better price, and buy things for lower ones. Then the travel cost will be less, that's why most families prefer to move. People wish to have access to information flow, to have electricity. As information flow is weak, they lag behind the current developments. No electricity cuts down time for children to do their lessons. When there is no light they do some homework altogether in a candle light and soon go asleep. Each child has to have one candle in front of him/her. One candle costs 100 tugrug, it burns down in one night. If there are five children, we have to light five candles.*
> (Migrant parents' focus group, Zavkhan Bayankhairkhan)

3.4.2 The economic drive for migration

Just over one-third of respondents – 34.3 per cent of households – replied that they migrated in order to find work. Other important livelihood-related reasons for many households include: to get closer to urban areas for the market, services and information (20.6 per cent of households); and loss of livestock (15.3 per cent of households).

More than half of the households (52.4 per cent) who migrated to Ulaanbaatar reported that they migrated to find work. This was more than twice as many households than in other sites, and was supported in focus group discussions and interviews.

> *We moved first of all to find work and improve our living.* (Life history, Ulaanbaatar)

> *After graduation, I had no job, so came to the city to find work. Thought about the future of children.* (In-migrant parents' focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

> *There is no work in countryside. You have better chance in the city.* (In-school children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

The other reasons for migration, mentioned by migrants to Ulaanbaatar, are very diverse. Migrants to Ulaanbaatar represent a wide range of social groups and strata, have moved from different types of location (eg *soum*, *aimag*), and have moved from almost all *aimags* and *soums*.

Interestingly, more households who have lost livestock in *dzud* move to cities, particularly to Erdenet.

> *[Families] move to send children to school and also herders move to escape snow and* dzud. *Also they move to improve their living conditions in urban places.* (Expert interview, social worker, Erdenet)

Erdenet has economic advantages including a good tarmac road and railway line, well-developed infrastructure, good market access, low transport costs, and better cultural development. The availability of some land as well as access to the urban centre means people can transfer to the city without changing their economic activity: migrants to Erdenet are able to keep their livestock.

Improving their living standards was important to migrant families in Selenge. The communications (including the railway), utilities such as electricity, and market access are attractive to migrants. They have tended to transfer from livestock keeping to crop production, vegetable growing and other types of farming.

It is interesting to note that the reason for migration often determines *when* a family moves. Most households seem to move during the warm months between April and October. Almost half of those moving in the spring migrated in order to find work.

3.4.3 Other reasons: the importance of health

In both quantitative and qualitative studies, health reasons were more commonly mentioned by migrants to Ulaanbaatar than by migrants to other places:

> *My child has to be under doctor's monitoring. Also I came here to find some work. My husband has liver cancer, so we came here.* (In-migrant parents' focus group discussion)

Children also mentioned health as an important reason for migration – for example in Selenge:

> *My sister had an accident... My father is sick, so had to move close to hospital.* (In-migrant children's focus group, Selenge)

The next chapter considers the situation of migrant children living in urban areas of high in-migration and whether migration has enabled them to access a better education.

4. Migrant children and education

This chapter will describe the situation of migrant children and families in Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet, Selenge and Kherlen Soum, which are all areas of high in-migration. It considers their access to education and their perceptions of the quality of education they receive. It compares the situation of migrants with that of long-term residents.

4.1 Migration: improving access to education?

This section considers children's access to school in terms of whether they attend school.[14] Some eight per cent of all migrant households surveyed (70 households) reported that getting their children into school was one of the three biggest problems they face immediately after moving.

4.1.1 Migrant children: in or out of school?

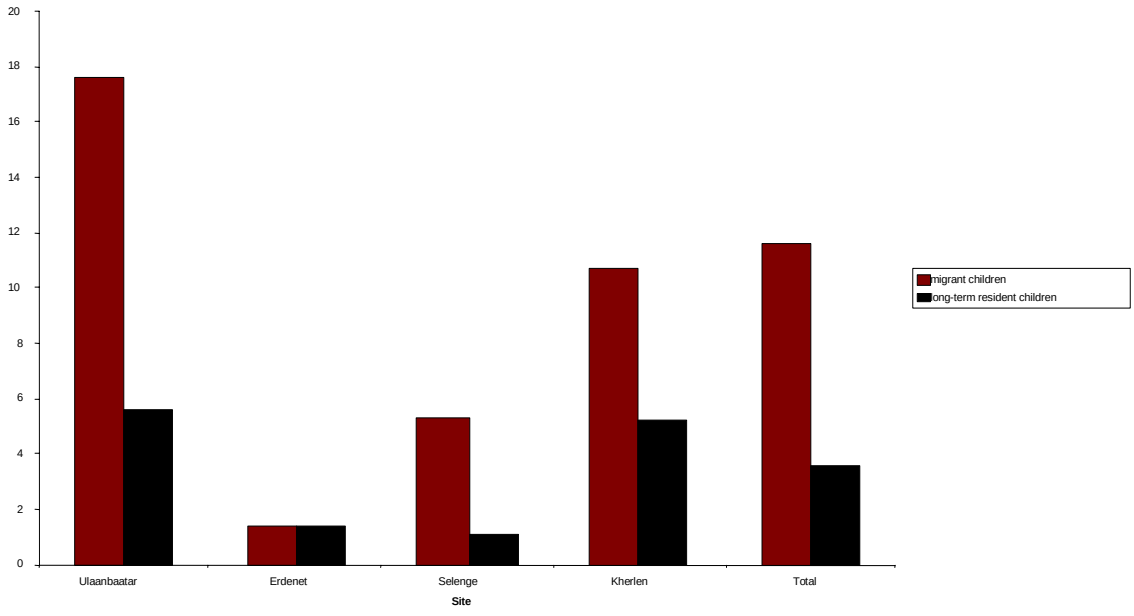


Figure 5 Children out of school, by site (comparing migrants with long-term residents)

[14] We do not consider how often children attend.

Table 10 School attendance of migrant and non-migrant children from households surveyed

	Ulaanbatar				Erdenet				Selenge				Kherlen				Total			
	mig(n)	mig %	non-mig n	non-mig %	mig(n)	mig %	non-mig n	non-mig %	mig(n)	mig %	non-mig n	non-mig %	mig(n)	mig %	non-mig n	non-mig %	mig(n)	mig %	non-mig n	non-mig %
At home*	93	30.2	30	20.1	74	29.1	20	20.2	29	25.2	16	14.5	20	23.3	25	18.1	216	28.3	91	18.3
Kindergarten	16	5.2	12	8.1	17	6.7	7	7.1	11	9.6	7	6.4	10	11.6	17	12.3	54	7.1	43	8.7
Primary	84	27.3	47	31.5	88	34.6	31	31.3	39	33.9	22	20	26	30.2	45	32.6	237	31.1	145	29.2
Secondary	72	23.4	54	36.2	60	23.6	38	38.4	32	27.8	61	55.5	23	26.7	46	33.3	187	24.5	199	40.1
Graduated**	8	2.6	0	0	3	1.2	2	2	0	0	3	2.7	1	1.2	0	0	12	1.6	5	1.0
Dropped out	30	9.7	4	2.7	9	3.5	1	1	3	2.6	1	0.9	1	1.2	2	1.4	43	5.6	8	1.6
Didn't enter	5	1.6	2	1.3	3	1.2	0	0	1	0.9	0	0	5	5.8	3	2.2	14	1.8	5	1.0
Children out of school*** as percentage of all	35	11.3	6	4	1	4.7	1	1	4	3.5	1	0.9	6	7	5	3.6	57	7.5	13	2.6
Total school aged****	199	64.6	107	71.7	72	64.1	72	72.7	75	65.2	87	79.1	56	65.1	96	69.5	493	64.6	362	73.0
Dropped out children as percentage of school aged children	-	15.1	-	3.7	-	12.5	-	1.4	-	4.0	-	1.1	-	1.8	-	2.1	-	8.7	-	2.2
Children out of school as percentrage of school aged children	-	17.6	-	5.6	-	1.4	-	1.4	-	5.3	-	1.1	-	10.7	-	5.2	-	11.6	-	3.6
Total	308	100	149	99.9	254	99.9	99	100	115	100	110	100	86	100	138	99.9	763	100.0	496	100.0

* At home: children aged 0-7 not in school
** Graduated: children aged 18 or under who have completed secondary education
*** Those dropped out plus those who did not enter
**** School-age children are those aged 8 and above (primary, secondary and those who have graduated)

A total of 91.6 per cent of all school-age children in the households surveyed in Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet, Selenge and Kherlen Soum were in formal education at the time of the survey.[15] However, as Figure 5 and Table 10 show, school-age migrant children are more than three times more likely to be out of school than children of long-term residents. Nearly 12 per cent of migrant children – one-in-eight – are out of school, while 3.6 per cent of long-term urban residents are not in school. Migrant children are also four times more likely to drop out: 8.7 per cent compared with only 2.2 per cent of long-term urban residents.[16] Figure 5 illustrates that, although migrant children were more likely to be out of school in all of the sites, greater numbers of children were out of school in Ulaanbaatar. The difference between the situation of migrant children and long-term resident children was also greatest there.

In contrast, very few migrant or long-term resident children are out of school in the sites studied in Erdenet. Ulaanbaatar, as will be discussed in Section 4.1.2, has greater administrative and educational costs for migrants and has more migrants living far from services. However, it is interesting that Erdenet should have such relatively low rates of non-attendance, suggesting that certain locality-specific factors might have been influential, including the availability of teachers.

The reasons for dropping out and never entering school were explored through open-ended questions in the questionnaire, and through focus group discussions with children and parents.

4.1.2 Why are migrants dropping out of school?

From the households surveyed, a sub-sample of children who had dropped out of school since migrating was analysed. The sample is small – 43 migrant children from 32 different households in the four urban research sites. Together with the results from the qualitative work, certain trends can be observed. Most of the children (ie 25 of the 43 or 58.1 per cent) dropped out when they were in primary school (grades 1-4) rather than secondary school (grades 5-10/11), and in equal numbers of girls and boys.

The parents of 12 of the 43 children (27.9 per cent) said their main reason for dropping out from the education system was because the urban schools would not accept them after they moved. This was also a common response of children in the focus groups.

> *When we moved here, it was difficult for my parents to get me a place in school. We looked everywhere. One acquaintance of us helped me to enrol in the school No. 11. I tried to enter schools No. 5 and No. 13. They refused to accept more children. Then, I have successfully passed the exam. I enrolled the school No. 11 and studied there for four years.*
> (Separated child interview, Erdenet)

The urban schools are overcrowded and teachers are under pressure to get good results (discussed further in Section 4.4 and Chapter 6). The majority of the children who had dropped out had moved from a *soum* centre or rural area. Teachers were reported to be reluctant to accept children from these areas as they know that the children's level of attainment is often lower than those in urban areas, often because of differences in the curriculum (*see Section 4.4*).

> *Children mistreat us and teachers discriminate, so I could not even speak. Sometimes I used to feel like running away. Urban teachers reproach us all the time and then children are afraid and later may leave school.*
> (Separated child, Ulaanbaatar)

Children who had dropped out had not moved locations many times: only one of the 43 children who had dropped out had moved more than once.

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[15] Children attending non-formal education classes are classified as being out of school, as this was how their parents and the children themselves, classified them. Non-formal education is discussed further below.

[16] Migrant children in the households surveyed were also twice as likely to enter school late for their age than long-term residents – eg entering grade one when they are nine years old instead of eight or younger. Nearly 16 per cent of migrant children are in grades for which they are too old, compared to 8.2 per cent of long-term residents. Most of these children are one grade below the grade they should be in for their age.

Migrant children have to submit their registration documents (provided by the administrative unit) to be accepted into school. If they do not have this registration, or do not obtain temporary resident registration, and if they are not de-registered from their rural residential area, it is very difficult to enrol in schools in urban areas. As Chapter 5 notes, rural schools and administrative units are sometimes reluctant to de-register children who are migrating because a drop in the number of children registered in their local schools means a decrease in their budget. Until September 2003, when the fee was removed, registration in the new area of residence involved paying a fee to the city/*aimag* authority.[17] The fee was higher for migrants to Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet. Indeed, most of the children who had dropped out had moved to the capital: 70 per cent of the 43 children who had dropped out had moved to Ulaanbaatar. All the children who were refused access to school had moved to Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet. Some 51.6 per cent of the families with children who had dropped out, had experienced problems with registration on their arrival to the area; 28.5 per cent of all migrant families experienced such problems. Sometimes the problems are the result of a lack of information or someone to help them. Children and parents also suggested that such connections and money can often get children into school.

> *We had hassles to get my children into school. Passport problem was the main issue. It was hard to get a resident permit from the* Khoroo. (Migrant parents' focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

> *I was admitted to 58th school. Actually in accordance of our residence, I should go to school number X. But teachers of school number X were expecting something to be given to them. So I had to go to school 58.*
> (In-migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

A lack of money also prevented families from paying the official fee for registration. It is difficult to discern to what extent poverty prevented registration, but it certainly appears to have affected many of those who dropped out.

Poverty was acknowledged by some of the families to be the reason their children dropped out of school. Five (11.6 per cent) dropped out because the family could not afford the costs of education. Three (7.1 per cent) did so to help earn money for the family. An assessment of all 43 families with children who had dropped out suggests they are more likely to be poor. The children came from:

- families struggling to cover basic needs. Fifty per cent of households with children who had dropped out said they could not provide enough for their family's basic daily needs (compared to 31.6 per cent of all migrant households who could not afford their basic needs). Children who have dropped out are more likely to come from households that struggle to heat their homes and do not have electricity. Forty-four per cent of households with children who had dropped out (compared with 26 per cent of all migrant households) feel that their economic situation has become slightly worse or a lot worse since migrating
- families receiving less assistance than before. Thirty-five per cent of households with children who had dropped out (compared with 16 per cent of all migrant households) said their support from relatives had declined since moving: 32 per cent said their assistance from the state had decreased, compared with 14 per cent of all migrant households who said state assistance had declined
- larger households. Children who dropped out of school were more likely to come from households with six or more members
- households which had lost livestock. Some 32 per cent of households with a child who had dropped out (7.8 per cent of all households) moved after a loss of livestock.

[17] The timing of our survey meant that all the migrant families surveyed would have been subject to this fee.

Box 3 Was the registration fee (and related bureaucracy) to blame for such high numbers of drop outs, particularly in Ulaanbaatar?

It certainly seems as if the registration fee seriously affected families' ability to send their children to school, particularly in Ulaanbaatar where the fee was higher. However, the problems faced by migrant families are a complex mix of poverty, school- and legislation-related difficulties. Poverty affects both migrants and non-migrants: of the small number of long-term residents with children out of school, half (four of the eight) had dropped out because they could not afford the costs of education. But, as we explore further below, more migrant families find it difficult to cover their basic needs than long-term residents. Removing the registration fee was a positive first step, but it is unlikely to have relieved all problems facing migrants.

Seven (16.3 per cent) migrant children who dropped out did so to look after livestock. This might reflect the need for these children to contribute to the household economy during difficult times. However, it is just as likely to reflect traditional roles within the family. Mongolia has a strong tradition of boys playing a key role in livestock rearing rather than attending school.

> *We moved from Gobi-Altai* aimag *and lived for one year in a rented apartment. Then my parents left to live in the countryside to herd. My brother, sister and I studied well. My sister and I stayed in school and my brother left to help our parents.* (Separated child interview, Erdenet)

Poor health of the child or of a close relative was another reason for dropping out given by migrant children involved in the focus groups. After taking time out of school, they often experience difficulties catching up with the curriculum, and are sometimes reluctant to repeat a year as this can lead to teasing by other children.

> *I have problems with my eyes. Every year I received treatment and could not attend school in time. Therefore, I had to leave school.*
>
> *I could not attend school because I had ulcers on my hand.*
>
> *I was hurt in my head, could not attend school, so I came here.*
>
> *I was playing on the river in winter, and someone hit me with wooden stick, since then I always had a headache and spent four months in hospital. So I dropped out.*
>
> (Out-of-school migrant children's focus group, Sukhbaatar, Selenge)

> *When I studied at secondary school in Zuunburen, my mother came here to be treated in hospital. My mother suffers from oedema, I looked after her and missed a lot of schooling. There was no one else to nurse her other than me. We came here and I could not enter school here.*
>
> *My father has hurt his leg, I was looking after him for 21 days and when I came back to school, they told me straightway 'leave'. It was the end of a semester, I did not have final marks on subjects. Therefore, children like me have no other way than just abandon school.*
>
> (Out-of-school children's focus group, Selenge, Sukhbaatar)

Seven children (16.3 per cent) dropped out because there was no school nearby. All but one of these children had moved to Ulaanbaatar. Distance to school, as an aspect of access to education, is explored briefly next.

Table 11 Summary of parents' and children's views on the problems they faced in getting education

Migrant parents	Migrant children
• No registration • No social support, relatives, acquaintances, friends • Un-influential position or no employment • Low capacity to cover related costs/routine costs and money demanded from schools. (Routine costs include temporary residence permit, money needed to look for a school)	• Teachers' discrimination • Children's improper attitude • Loneliness • Inability to catch up with subjects • Homesickness

From focus group work in Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet and Selenge.

4.1.3 Access to school – distance

Migrants, particularly those without relatives and friends already living closer to the centre, as well as those without the means to secure registration, tend to live on the outskirts of the city. This is sometimes on land unfit for habitation, such as in cemeteries, on the river's flood plain, or on marshy ground.

Compared to where they lived before, many migrant families now live 'far' from a school. Fifty-five per cent of migrant households with children in school say they now live further from their children's school than they did before moving; 26.8 per cent lived further from the school before they moved.[18] It takes migrant children longer to get to school than long-term resident children: 58.1 percent of long-term resident children take less than 15 minutes to get to school compared with 40 per cent of migrant children; 34 per cent of children from migrant families take 16-30 minutes and 23 per cent take more than 30 minutes, compared with 21.6 per cent of long-term residents who take 16-30 minutes and 20 per cent who take more than 30 minutes.

In extreme cases, a lack of a nearby school can result in a child not attending school. In other cases, it can lead to problems of transportation and security for the children.

> *Where I live is very far from the school. If I walk slowly it takes one hour, if I walk fast – 45 minutes. Sometimes a car picks me up. Usually, I walk. If lesson finishes late in the evening, I walk with my classmates. Younger children walk altogether. There are many children living in the same area. Therefore, they travel altogether. If there are few children to join, we are a little bit afraid. We have not heard so far that someone was robbed or something. But still.* (Focus group of children and parents, Selenge *aimag*, Sukhbaatar)

4.2 The struggle to send children to school in areas of high in-migration

4.2.1 Paying the costs

Either directly or indirectly, poverty prevents a significant minority from attending school in all the research sites surveyed. For many other families, sending their children to school is a struggle because of the cost of education, despite the fact that education is officially free in Mongolia. While there is no charge for standard classes, there is a range of charges and other costs (such as classroom repairs, class funds and textbooks) that families must cover. Both migrant families and long-term residents cover the same costs for children to attend school. However, migrant families struggle more than long-term urban residents because they find it harder to earn a living (*see Section 4.5*).

Education costs in the urban areas surveyed are high in relation to family income. With migration, the educational expenses of families increase sharply. The highest proportion of migrant households (72.9 per cent) reported that their educational expenses have increased substantially. Some 30.6 per cent of the migrant households which answered the question about whether they could afford the educational expenses required to keep their children in school, said they could not. More families in the cities of Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet than in the *aimag* centres of Sukhbaatar in Selenge and Kherlen Soum in Dornod, reported that they could not afford the costs.

> *Firstly, families cannot pay for food money. Secondly, the children have no clothes to wear. Frankly, in* ger *district, there are families in which two kids share one set of clothes.* (Individual expert interview, director of *ger* district kindergarten, Erdenet)

[18] This is clearly a subjective assessment for the purpose of comparison only.

Box 4 The hidden costs of education of surveyed migrant households: the example of Ulaanbaatar – the average estimated annual expenditure per child on education[19]

- **Pre-school**: clothes Tg35,700;[20] school items (eg toilet paper, drawing books) Tg14,800; additional expenses like books and pens Tg9,800; food Tg36,300; **Total: Tg96,600**
- **Primary school**: clothes Tg69,800; school charges Tg40,200; additional expenses like books and pens Tg11,400; out-of-school activities Tg17,000; **Total: Tg138,400**
- **Secondary school**: clothes Tg81,300; school charges (eg cleaning items, small repairs) Tg37,648; additional expenses like books and pens Tg13,800; out-of-school activities Tg34,285; **Total: Tg167,033**

> *Schools constantly collect money. Some classes take 500 tugrugs. Sometimes we are even asked to bring 3,500 tugrug.*
>
> *They charge money for classroom modernisation, or for window glass purchase.*
>
> *Our consumption has gone up since we came here.*
>
> *We cannot let children wear the clothes they wore in the countryside, so expenses get higher*
>
> *Money is also needed for buying books and getting library registration – 9th class require children to obtain books by themselves, therefore we have to buy some books.*
>
> (Migrant parents' focus group, Ulaanbaatar, Songinokhairkhan district)

4.2.2 Getting assistance

Families often need assistance from relatives and others to keep children in school. Some 30 per cent of families receive assistance to help cover educational expenses, compared to 18.6 per cent of non-migrants. Over 50 per cent of these receive monetary assistance; a similar proportion of long-term resident families receiving assistance also receive it in monetary form. Most receive such assistance from friends and family. Very few received assistance from the state for education. This is likely to reflect the decreased role of the state in providing support to families since transition.

> *My grandmother bought a school uniform for my sibling for Tg40,000. My parents borrowed* money from others to prepare our school clothing and other items. (Separated child interview, Ulaanbaatar)

Some children are identified by teachers and schools as needing support.

> *I am attending English language course. The usual fee is 12,000 tugrug, but I was exempt from payment, because our family is very large. Our class teacher is English language teacher, she is very kind to me. Books are available. Usually children share books, but my teacher gave me to use only by myself.* (Separated child interview, Khurtsbaatar, Erdenet)

Schools and local authorities are supposed to be able to support poor and vulnerable children, and those from households with three or more children in school, with the state assistance of Tg16,000 (approximately US$13). It should be provided in the form of books and materials once a year. However, it was widely reported during this research that schools do not receive enough funding to provide this support to those who qualify. Schools have to divide their assistance budget among many children. This is common in both urban and rural areas. Certainly poor migrant children do not appear to be benefiting from this allowance.

Migrant families received more assistance generally (for reasons other than education) than long-term residents. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that many migrants move to be with relatives or friends, and then rely on them for the first few months or years of their stay. Thirty-two per cent of families said that the assistance they received has improved since moving. However, families and friends are careful:

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[19] Obtained by asking families to estimate on a monthly or quarterly basis (depending on the type of expenditure) what they spent on children of different age groups. Annual estimates were then calculated by the research team.

[20] US$1 = approximately Tg1,100 in 2003.

People would lend money only if my parents had jobs – if they are unemployed, they would not lend money fearing it would not be given back. (In-school migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

State assistance did not improve for very many families despite the greater hardships they experience after moving. Only 6.2 per cent of migrant households received more support from the government after moving. Most families (42.6) did not know whether it increased or not, suggesting that state assistance does not play a major role in their lives. This sharply contrasts with the rise in unemployment following migration. A worsening of their employment situation was reported by 22.3 per cent of families. In addition the number of unemployed migrants far exceeded the number of long-term residents without work: 43.1 per cent of migrants compared with 25.4 per cent of long-term residents. This might be because families lack the information necessary to access support mechanisms. However, it also appears to reflect the decline in the role of the state in social assistance, and the reduction in the ability of formal assistance mechanisms to deal with the sheer numbers of migrants and the rate at which they arrive.

4.3 Non-formal education

As well as the allowance to poor families, non-formal education is a key strategy of the Ministry of Education to ensure that children who are out of school return to school and get a basic education. While non-formal education was not a focus of this study, it became clear that the provision and quality of , and attendance in, non-formal education varied from site to site.

In general, the more urban areas like Selenge and Erdenet had better provision of non-formal education, with classes running parallel to formal schools throughout the year. In rural areas, provision was usually only during school holidays, when formal school facilities were used. Teachers reported the pressures on them to get children into non-formal education. Those responsible for non-formal education provision stressed the efforts they are making in order to ensure that children enrol and continue to attend:

We put notices in the newspaper and TV. We go out ourselves and collect children – rarely children would come voluntarily. (Expert interview, director of non-formal education centre, Erdenet)

This research suggests that non-formal education in the different areas surveyed appeared to be of varying standards, often under-funded and inadequate. This is despite the fact that it was designed to support children who have dropped out to re-enter school and/or get a certificate. Children who attend non-formal education often feel that they are stigmatised:

[Teachers] treat us like bad children – even the cleaners and the wardrobe lady treat us in this way.[21]

Children from ordinary schools label us as ugly girls from non-formal education.

(Out-of-school children in non-formal education)

The issue of non-formal education requires further focused study.

4.4 Does migration lead to access to a better quality education?

Assessment of the quality of education was made by the parents of children attending schools in the area to which they had migrated, and by the children themselves. While quality is subjective, certain indicators were commonly used by both groups to reflect good or bad experiences. For migrant children, we were interested in how their experiences differed from those of long-term resident children in the same area, and whether they perceived their education as having improved since migrating.

[21] Mongolian institutions often have an area to leave the heavy coats required during winter.

Children from different schools and areas have different experiences. Children comparing education between Kherlen Soum *aimag* centre and that of their rural *soums* experienced significant improvements. Children in Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet who have moved from a range of rural and urban areas, experienced more problems after moving. This included a lack of capacity: there are more pupils in city schools. Of course, individual teachers, school directors and education officials – as is the case in Selenge *aimag* centre – can have a positive impact on children's experiences and wellbeing.

4.4.1 Teaching and the school environment

Particular rural schools and teachers, as well as the community relations in rural schools, are rated highly with individual children. However, most migrant children and their families felt the *quality* of education was better after moving, particularly the quality of the teaching and the school facilities. Children in urban areas of high in-migration were more likely than those in rural areas to give positive feedback about their teachers' teaching methods, knowledge and skills. One of the criteria children developed in their assessment of teachers is the extent to which teachers pay attention to children's learning:

> *Now teachers teach many things. They do not refuse when we ask questions. Some rural teachers do not give chances to children to ask questions and all the time make us write. Teachers here are good and teach us a lot of things. Children try hard to learn.* (Separated child interview, Selenge)

It should be noted that children distinguished between their teachers' ability to teach and their treatment of them as migrant children (discussed in Section 4.5.2).

Table 12 Positive and negative attributes of teachers in areas of in-migration and out-migration*

Teachers in areas of high in migration	Teachers in areas of origin
What is good?	What was good?
• Teachers teach their lesson in a simple manner in here • Some teachers bad, other teachers better • We do understand lessons in city, teaching is better • Teachers give us enough homework • Teaching is better, if we ask something they always tell us • Teachers are more intelligent, close and very active and bright	• It was better in Khovd, teachers were very good • Teaching is better in Khentii, they taught us more • If children miss some lessons, teachers in countryside teach them again • Teachers take care of bad children in Darkhan
What is bad?	What was bad?
• In the city teachers come and do not always teach. They talk over phone, 40 minutes run very quickly • When we ask something, they do not explain, city teachers are lazy to teach again • Some children do not come to school, if they did not understand their lessons, or did not do homework	• In the countryside, teachers come and talk about unrelated things, or come in the middle of the lesson and go away giving us some exercise to do • In the countryside, teachers did not give us homework. We did not understand our lessons in countryside • Teachers know us in the countryside, then they tend to raise certain children. This is bad for children themselves

* Children in focus groups in the sites of high in-migration.

Table 13 Comparison of school environments, areas of high in-migration and areas of origin

School environment in area of high in-migration	School environment in area of high out-migration
• The school building is very nice • School dormitory is comfortable • Not enough space in school classrooms • Three children sit at one desk • Good specialised classes • The school has sports hall • Environment close to information flow	• It is very cold, heating systems break down in winter • The school does not have sports hall • The sports hall is very cold • The school has no books, no teaching materials • There is no computer in the countryside • It is impossible to go to the library

The school environment in areas of high in-migration was also perceived to be better than the environment in their previous schools. Children reported that the heating and comfort of schools was better after moving. They said that heating in rural areas was a problem: sometimes they had to study in cold classrooms, and schools even had to close when there was no heating at all. There are also other advantages in schools in areas of high in-migration, such as classroom equipment, specialised cabinets, comfortable halls, and computers. In the countryside, a lack of libraries, computers and sport halls contribute to a poor quality of education and to limited opportunities to develop both class and non-class skills.

The children quoted above in Table 13 clearly had concerns about the capacity of classrooms and the availability of materials, such as textbooks, for all children. The parents' focus group discussion in Ulaanbaatar city, for example, also confirmed that the availability of textbooks and access to libraries are inadequate. Children who moved to urban areas, particularly to Ulaanbaatar and Kherlen, told us that, as there are not enough classrooms in their current schools, they are very crowded. This was also reported during interviews with some experts.

The greatest problems were occurring in the majority of the peri-urban sites of the larger urban areas of Ulaanbaatar and Erdenet. A concerning trend is the differences in education quality between these areas and those in the city centre.

> *Starting from three years ago, we do lessons in three shifts. We transformed labour cabinets and teachers rooms into classrooms in order to fit all children. Our school is designed for 628 children, but we are ending up this academic year with 1,557 pupils.* (Expert interview, school director, Dornod, Kherlen)

4.4.2 Differences in the curriculum and pressure for high standards of achievement

Migrant and long-term resident children both have the same problems with their school environment. However, migrant children have particular problems with the curriculum that is taught and the way in which teachers interact with their pupils.

There appears to be marked differences between the curriculum taught in rural areas and that of urban areas. During focus group discussions with children who migrated to Ulaanbaatar, for example, they mentioned that the curriculum in the city is more advanced. They said that children in the capital do not understand the lesson if they miss just one hour of teaching time. Children who studied hard and got excellent grades in their areas of origin often received only good and satisfactory marks upon moving to Ulaanbaatar. Migrant parents in urban areas of high in-migration note that their children have become more keen and active, and that the school requirements are higher in urban schools than in rural schools.

> *The curriculum in urban schools is very intense. When children come from countryside they always lag behind.* (Separated child interview, Erdenet, Orkhon)

However, discrimination against migrant children in schools appears to be a widespread problem in areas of high in-migration, often because these children are behind in the curriculum when they first arrive.

Teachers shout at new children. Someone has transferred to our class from Khuvsgul. Our teacher shouted at him "hey, Oyu go back to wherever you came from". That child stayed less than a month.

Teachers and children have different attitudes towards rich and poor, good and bad, they make judgement based on clothes worn by children. (In-migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

Such discrimination on the basis of perceived levels of poverty can be experienced by migrants and long-term residents. However, the combination of being both poor and a migrant can lead to increased marginalisation, which can have profound effects on children:

Schools in countryside are very nice. Teachers are close to children. But of course buildings are worse than in cities. It was difficult when I first moved to the city, I could not get used to urban environment, I was homesick, and my learning achievements dropped down. But slowly it got better. City school teachers have very bad character. They say to children who have moved from countryside 'go back to where you came from, do not disgrace our class'. Also they punish. In general, I think that my previous school back home was better. I always wish to meet my former teachers and friends. (Interview with child, Erdenet).

Box 5 Charging for education – a growing problem for equitable access?

Many children, in each of the urban sites, described how repeating classes, extra tuition and special classes outside the curriculum increasingly cost money. For many migrant children, such classes would be useful to catch up with the more advanced urban schools' curricula. However, this adds to the already growing cost of education for many families who are struggling. This system is fuelled by the number of wealthier urban families turning to private education when they can – either through special classes or schools that charge an annual entrance fee. Whilst recognising the pressures on public provision of education, an increased reliance on households to pay for a better quality education raises concerns regarding equity of access for all children. This situation should be monitored and explored further.

4.5 Poverty and life in urban areas

Migration has an effect on child wellbeing and family life that can directly affect children's school attainment. The decline in the living conditions of a significant number of families also raises the question about the long-term impacts of migration on children, despite their likely access to a better education.

4.5.1 Broader poverty situation of migrant families: what is the impact on children?

For as many as a quarter of migrant households, the family's economic situation has deteriorated since moving. Thirty-six per cent of families surveyed felt that their economic situation improved a little or substantially since moving; 37.7 per cent felt it had stayed the same.

Table 14 Household economic situation after migration, migrant households

	Ulaanbaatar	Uliastai	Kherlen	Erdenet	Selenge	Total
Improved substantially	6.2%		4.9%	3.0%	15.2%	6.1% (n=20)
Improved a little	32.6%	18.2%	51.2%	20.2%	28.3%	30.1% (n=98)
Did not change	41.9%	9.1%	29.3%	41.4%	32.6%	37.7% (n=123)
Declined a little	14.0%	45.5%	14.6%	26.3%	19.6%	19.6% (n=64)
Declined substantially	5.4%	27.3%		9.1%	4.3%	6.4% (n=21)
Total	100% (n=129)	100% (n=11)	100% (n=41)	100% (n=99)	100% (n=46)	100% (n=326)

Table 15 Assessing the household economic situation – migrant households in sites of high in-migration

	Ulaanbaatar	Kherlen	Erdenet	Selenge	Uliastai	Total
Not enough even for daily needs	20.9%	24.4%	48.5%	21.7%	72.7%	31.6%
Enough only for daily needs	55.8%	51.2%	41.4%	54.3%	18.2%	49.4%
Can buy some items that we want	15.5%	14.6%	7.1%	19.6%	9.1%	13.2%
Can buy furniture	7.8%	9.8%	3.0	4.3%		5.8%
Can buy whatever we wish	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	100% (n=129)	100% (n=41)	100% (n=99)	100% (n=46)	100% (n=11)	100% (n=326)

Migrant families were struggling to find employment in new areas and were more likely to work in the informal sector (which is often low paid, insecure and requiring long hours). 43.1 per cent of migrant individuals were unemployed, compared with 25.4 per cent of long-term residents. As a result, more than 80 per cent of households say that they struggle: 31.6 per cent of migrant families feel they do not have enough for their basic daily needs; a further 49.4 per cent feel they only have enough for their basic needs, and no more. Long-term residents have similar problems, but the situation is worse for migrants. Sixty-six per cent of long-term residents struggle, with 18 per cent of families feeling that they do not have enough for their basic daily needs, and a further 48 per cent feeling they have only enough for their basic needs and no more. Even allowing for some exaggeration of families' plights, the figures are high.

A family's poverty has an impact on children's access to education – directly, as we have explored, and indirectly, through their general wellbeing, nurture and opportunities in life. What implications is this situation having for children in these areas?

4.5.2 Living conditions that impact on children's attendance and attainment

Migration, and the declining economic situation facing more than a quarter of families, has an impact on the home environment that is important for children's homework and their general wellbeing. Migrants, for example, are less likely to be connected to electricity and more likely to be cold (*see Table 16*).

Table 16 Migrant households' home warmth

Is your home warm in winter?	Non-migrant households		Migrant households	
	No	%	No	%
Always warm	477	74.8	181	59.7
Sometimes cold	139	21.8	113	37.4
Mainly cold	22	3.4	8	2.6
Total of households who responded	**638**	**100**	**302**	**100**

For some children, life can be much harder after migration. Poor children in migrant settlements have many responsibilities, such as fetching water and firewood, and income-earning activities such as carrying goods, and petty trade in the markets. Migrant children participating in the survey emphasised that, besides studying, they also do the following work to help their parents:

Picking fruits.

Sometimes attend shop during summer holidays.

My friend carries luggage at the market during holidays.

My friend works as ticket man in a bus.

We fetch water, cut wood.

Collect copper and aluminium to sell.

Lately, iron business is very active, and we started to collect iron. (1kg is [worth] 10 tugrugs)

Attend the shop of relatives. For 4-5 days from 12.00 hours to 18.00 hours.

Help in building wooden houses, like bringing logs closer and straightening nails

(Migrant children's focus group and individual interview, Ulaanbaatar).

More children contribute to the household income after migration than they did before their families moved: 10.1 per cent of migrant families have children who contribute to their income, while only 3.1 per cent of families had income-earning children before migration. Families are reluctant to encourage their children to work, but their difficult circumstances after migration force many to send their children to work.

Working long hours or being unemployed can have implications for the time parents spend with children. It can also strain family relations. Furthermore, if parents in migrant families work, then their children normally do most of the household chores.

In the majority of families, one of the parents still helps with children's homework: the mother helped in 64.2 per cent of households. However, updates to the school curriculum prevents parents from being able to help their children. Many parents mentioned this during the questionnaire interview and the qualitative survey.

> *I don't understand the subjects that children learn today. Since I cannot help, what is left is just to ask whether they did homework, whether they asked teachers what they have not understood.* (Interview made during the questionnaire, Ulaanbaatar)

A number of children in the qualitative research described how they did not see much of their parents, who worked long hours:

> *My parents think only of their work. This means we have to do lots of work and there is no one to look after* ger. *Because they have to work hard, they go out in the morning and come back late in the evening. So, they are unable to pay attention to us.*
>
> (In-school migrant children's focus group, Ulaanbaatar)

Finally, a lack of resources also has an impact on the availability of food for the family. Children in 16.8 per cent of migrant families only sometimes, rarely, or never drink tea or eat breakfast in the morning before going to school. Twenty-three per cent usually have tea/breakfast, and children in 59.4 per cent of households always have it. Of those who answered, 37.1 per cent said that in a low-income month, they would cut expenditure on food for the family.

The next chapter considers the situation of children left behind in rural areas of high out-migration, and how migration affects their access to education and general wellbeing. It questions whether children receive a better education by staying in areas of high out-migration.

5. The situation for children in areas of high out-migration

This section describes the situation of children and their families left behind in areas of high out-migration: Zavkhan *aimag* centre, and Khalkhol, Erdenedalai and Bayankhairkhan *soums*. It looks at the affects migration has had on these children, particularly on their access to education, and reflects on whether life might have been better for some migrant children had they stayed in rural areas.

5.1 Falling numbers and declining services in some out-migration areas

5.1.1 Migration and school sizes

Schools in two of the four sites surveyed – Khalkhgol and Bayankhairhan, both rural *soums* – had experienced a fall in pupil numbers in recent years, according to school directors and other expert informants and parents. At the time of the research in 2003, Bayankhairkhan's eight-grade school, for example, had a capacity of 360 and yet an enrolment level of just 230. Both the eight-grade *bagh* level school and the ten-grade school in the *soum* centre in Khalkhgol *soum* were operating under capacity. Khalkhgol is more than eight hours drive in the summer from the *aimag* centre, Kherlen Soum, and the distances between *baghs* within the *soum* are vast. Schools in both areas were operating under threat of closure – children would then be required to attend schools in nearby *soums*. This situation is likely to become more common as school enrolment numbers fall.

Out-migration is not the only factor leading to falling pupil numbers in schools such as Bayankhairkhan: birth rates also contribute. Birth rates in predominantly rural areas, including the Western region, were still higher in 2002 than birth rates in urban areas, but they had nevertheless fallen across the country. The birth rate has decreased by nearly 52 per cent over the ten years from 1989 to 1999.[22] Drop-out and non-entry rates (as discussed in Section 5.2.1) also affect school sizes in these areas and will account for some of the decline in pupil numbers in schools. However, every school in the four sites, particularly Khalkhgol and Bayankhairkhan, noted a trend of families moving away from the area and the school.

Yet not all schools in areas of high out-migration are struggling. Although Uliastai, the *aimag* centre in the predominantly rural Zavkhan *aimag*, has high net out-migration rates, the number of children entering the school we visited had increased significantly. In 2003, it was operating with 400 pupils over its capacity of 640. This may be due to the school being located in an area of relatively high in-migration within the *aimag* centre. It may also reflect a number of children migrating ahead of their families or families dividing to enable children to attend *aimag* schools. Interestingly, Erdenedelai *soum* school, despite being located in a *soum* with high out-migration, is also attracting pupils from surrounding *soums* in the western part of Dundgobi *aimag*. This, as discussed below, is attributed to school-specific factors.

Overall, this study raises the concern that out-migration, from areas of high net out-migration, is contributing to a deterioration in the quality of education in some schools. In turn this is prompting more children to leave the area in search of improved education facilities in *aimag* centres or cities – a cycle of migration and education decline.

[22] GoM/UNDP, 2003, Human Development Report, UNDP: Ulaanbaatar, p 37.

5.1.2 The school environment and resources for learning in areas of high out-migration

The school environment – the state of the school buildings and electricity in particular – was a concern in all of the four sites, though less so in Erdenedalai. It was common that the *soum* schools were often cold and had limited power because of fuel problems. This is a particular problem in a country where temperatures reach minus 40 degrees Celcius in winter. Some schools close because of the heating problems. Schools often have to ask their pupils to contribute fuel for the school heating, for example, by making animal dung briquettes for burning.

> *Winter is very cold. Last year was cold so it was difficult to go to school. This year was also cold, so lessons were cancelled. But this did not worry everybody!* (In-school children's focus group, Khalkhgol, Dornod)

> *Electricity is a problem here. In the morning we start the class with candlelight. The class starts at 8:30 in the morning when it is dark and there is no light. Our* aimag *is one of the four* aimags *which still have diesel station [rather than being connected to the national/local electricity grid]. The diesel stations sometimes fail and stop. Diesel fuel is not enough.* (Expert interview, Uliastai, Zavkhan)

> *Our classroom is too small... we have to squeeze. Three children sit at one desk. Classrooms facing the sun are warm and those in the shadow are cold.* (In-school children's focus group, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

The Uliastai school included in the research appears to share many of the classroom capacity and resource problems of the schools in urban areas of high in-migration. These are compounded by the problems of being located – in terms of transport and infrastructure – in an *aimag* remote from the capital, and of being largely dependent on the rural economy. Resources for maintenance are scarce. In Erdenedalai, however, teachers, pupils and parents were happier with their school environment, which many attributed to contributions from parents and pupils.

Most children valued their libraries as a source of information and story books. However, like children in urban areas of high in-migration, they were concerned about their lack of textbooks. Some 67.5 per cent of parents of secondary school children replied that the availability of textbooks and educaion materials was poor. This response rate is higher than for parents of primary school children. Teachers and others explained why this is a problem:

> *We have a shortage of textbooks for 10th grade. Algebra for 7th grade, History book for 5th grade were not sufficient. If textbooks are not enough we have to share.* (In-school children's focus group, secondary school children, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

> *There has been no resources for restocking for the last 5-10 years. In general, there are no new books and textbooks, there are mainly old books.* (Expert interview, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

> *Primary school textbooks are in shortage Textbooks of primary school, those for 1st and 2nd grades cannot live longer than 2 years. Last year the professional inspection agency conducted an inspection and found virus from our 1st and 2nd grade textbooks. This is because many pupils use one textbook.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

Increasing the number of text books in school will not solve all the problems:

> *In Uliastai, textbooks come in less copies from [one] year to another because children leave their textbooks in kiosks as collateral for their and [their] families' debts. Some other children steal them. So they get less and less. Then, we will have to give one book for two kids* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

The availability and affordability (discussed in Section 5.2.2), and the quality of dormitory facilities are important for schools taking children from rural areas. Before transition, Mongolia had a well-developed school system, with dormitory facilities to house pupils from rural areas studying in *soum* and *aimag* centre schools. This system deteriorated in the early 1990s, although more recent efforts have been made to re-establish the system. Some schools in the country still do not have dormitories, although the four sites in the

research did. Dormitory quality varied between sites. In Erdenedalai, a good dormitory was noted by participants as one of the reasons why children are sent to the school.

> *Children are quite comfortable in these dormitories. Sometimes I ask the children how they are. They say OK. Children have iron, water boiler and TV. They eat 3-4 times a day. Sometimes teachers visit the kitchen. Food was good. The domitory has electricity 24 hours. 3-4 children live in one room. Children like to live in dormitory. Nobody escapes or wants to leave* (Parents' focus group, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

Other areas tell a more mixed story. In areas like Khalkhgol, families preferred to place children within the houses of relatives or other people. Their *soum* school's dormitory was only accommodating 15 children at the time of the research, much less than its capacity of 300. One expert from one of the sites told us:

> *Food quality at dormitory is very low. The current cook is not a professional cook. When we visit the dormitory, children say 'uncle, we are hungry'.*

5.1.3 The availability of teachers and teaching standards in areas of high out-migration

Parents, teachers and experts in three of the sites – particularly in the two sites in western Zavkhan *aimag* and parents of secondary school children – raised concerns about the lack of teachers. Expectations, it should be noted, are high as the country's education system before transition was well staffed. However, in Bayankhairkhan and Khalkhgol in particular, many teachers are teaching a variety of subjects, rather than just the subjects they were trained in.

> *There are only few children in a class. Because there is only one class in one grade, professional teachers' work hours do not reach the required number. Therefore,they have to teach some other subjects. Foreign language teachers would teach the subject 'labour skills'. Teacher of chemistry would also teach 'labour skills'. Primary school teachers teach music as well.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

This also affects core curriculum subjects:

> *Especially at the* soum *level there is a serious shortage of teachers. For example, we do not have a Mongolian language teacher, so teachers of other professions teach Mongolian language* (Expert interview, Bayankhairkhan, Zavkhan)

In Erdenedalai, the presence of sufficient teachers and of relatively good quality teaching, was attributed to the particularly good co-operation between the school director and the *aimag* administration, and to having more resources.

Box 6 What makes a good and bad teacher?

When characterising a good teacher, children said they have: 'good upbringing'; 'good communication'; 'able to make the others understand'; 'good methods'; and they 'talk to children'. They expressed the phrases: 'angry', 'make children fear' and 'not able to understand them' when talking about the characteristics of a bad teacher.

Teachers and parents in the four areas of high out-migration raised the problem of ensuring that teaching quality is maintained and improved by attracting and retaining good teachers and by keeping teachers up to date with new information and teaching methods. The quality of teachers differs, depending on whether they have graduated from state universities or private universities, and on their age. Teaching quality is a particular problem in the remoter rural areas. Teachers report a lack of training yet they still face increased pressure for good results.

Most teachers are graduates of 1970-1980s and their knowledge and skills are outdated. New young teachers do not come. Older teachers have not been re-trained. The average age of teachers would be over 35 (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

Teachers need to be trained and upgraded. (Parents' focus group, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

Older teachers certainly are better in teaching methodology and more experienced. But they lack up-to-date theoretical knowledge and information. Therefore, training and seminars are very important. Lately, whenever training or seminar is conducted only young teachers working up to three years have been nominated. Thus, teachers working over 5 years always stay out of training and seminars and lag behind of new information. (Expert interview, Dundgob, Erdenedalai)

Generally, it was observed that *soum* centre and rural families are worried about the quality of education. *Soum* centre parents prefer to send their children to the *aimag* centre, because teaching at *aimag* centre schools is better than in *soum* centre schools. Even in Uliasta *aimag* centre, families intended to move for a better education.

5.1.4 To what extent are problems with education quality in these areas due to migration?

Education is not declining in all areas of high out-migration, neither is migration the only cause of the problems facing some schools. However, certain schools – in this study those with falling pupil numbers in rural *soum* centres, often far from the *aimag* centre and from the capital Ulaanbaatar – are facing problems in delivering good quality education to children. A combination of contributing factors is highlighted in this study: migration of families out of the areas concerned; national and local economic decline, including reduced investment in education service delivery during transition; and policy changes that determine how resources are allocated to schools.

Migration appears to have affected the quality of education provided in these areas, since the number of children in a school determines the resources allocated for 'variable costs', to cover teachers' salaries, books and maintenance expenses. Since the introduction of this funding principle, schools with fewer children face budget constraints. Because of their inability to pay teachers' salaries, rural schools have fewer teachers. These financing issues are discussed further in Chapter 6. A lack of availability of teachers in Khalkhgol and Bayankhairkhan was also attributed to teachers not wanting to live in rural areas. This is particularly so in areas with declining services and poor communication links with *aimags* and the capital. Out-migration plays a role in this decline. Other problems facing schools, such as heating and electricity, appear to be due to a general lack of resources, relative to the scale of the challenge of building up the infrastructure and services again following transition.

The next section considers children's attendance at schools in areas of high out-migration, and discusses the links with poverty in these areas.

5.2 Access to education in areas of high out-migration

5.2.1 School attendance in areas of high out-migration

As Figure 6 and Table 17 indicate, in the four areas of out-migration covered, 10.1 per cent of school-age children were out of school; 8.1 per cent of school-age children had dropped out, and two per cent had never entered the system. This is higher than the total sample of migrant and non-migrant children in urban areas of high in-migration. In the total sample, 8.4 per cent of school-age children were not in school in these areas. Migrant children in the survey were more likely to be out of school: 11.6 per cent of school-age children are out of school (8.7 per cent of school-age children have dropped out). As will be discussed, the numbers of children dropping out, particularly in rural areas, was reported to have declined since the early transition years.

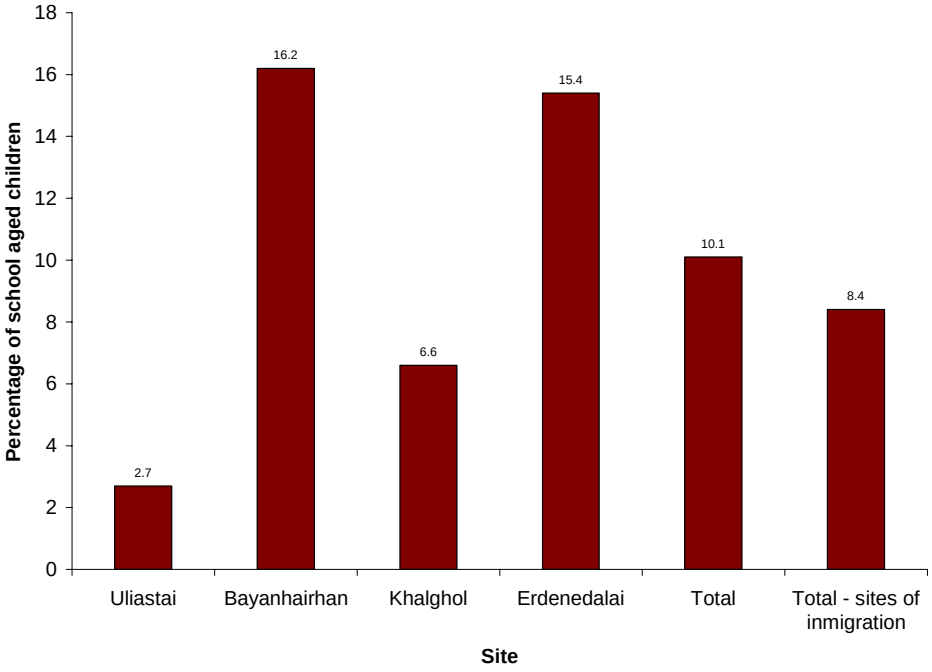

Figure 6 School-age children by type of research site, comparing those in areas of high out-migration with total school-age children in areas of in-migration

Table 17 School attendance of children from households surveyed

	Uliastai		Bayanhairhan		Khalkhgol		Erdenedalai		Total	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
At home*	38	16.5	89	31.8	46	16.2	50	19.5	223	21.2
Kindergarten	11	4.8	18	6.4	27	9.5	18	7	74	7.0
Primary	67	29	78	27.9	101	35.6	70	27.3	316	30.1
Secondary	110	47.6	66	23.6	90	31.7	89	34.8	355	33.8
Graduated**	0	0	1	0.4	6	2.1	0	0	7	0.7
Dropped out	5	2.2	19	6.8	12	4.2	25	9.8	61	5.8
Did not enter	0	0	9	3.2	2	0.7	4	1.6	15	1.4
Total	**231**	**100.1**	**280**	**100.1**	**284**	**100**	**256**	**100**	**1051**	**100**
*Children out of school****	*5*	*2.2*	*28*	*10.0*	*14*	*4.9*	*29*	*11.3*	*76*	*7.2*
*Total school aged*****	*182*	*78.8*	*173*	*61.8*	*211*	*74.3*	*188*	*73.4*	*754*	*71.7*
Dropped out children as percentage of school aged children	–	*2.7*	–	*11.0*	–	*5.7*	–	*13.3*	–	*8.1*
Children out of school as percentage of school aged children	–	*2.7*	–	*16.2*	–	*6.6*	–	*15.4*	–	*10.1*

*At home: child aged 0-7 not in school
**Graduated: children aged 18 or under who have completed secondary education
*** Those dropped out plus those who did not enter
**** School-age children are those aged eight and above (primary, secondary and those who have graduated)

Bayankhairkhan and Erdenedalai had the highest numbers of school-age children out of school. These are both rural *soums* with high numbers of herding families. Uliastai, the *aimag* centre, has the smallest proportion of children out of school.

Across all four sites, 61 children in the survey had dropped out and not re-entered formal schooling. A further 19 dropped out but re-entered formal schooling. Of the total number who dropped out, the majority of children did so from primary school: 31.3 per cent (25 children) from grade 1; 22.5 per cent (18 children) from grade 2; 18.8 percent (15 children) from grade 3; 15 per cent (12 children) from grade 4; and just 12.4 per cent from higher grades. Thirty per cent of children in grade 1 in the areas of high out-migration were nine years old, or older, suggesting a high frequency of late entry into school in these areas.

Box 7 Counting children who have dropped out of school

Our figures for children who are not attending school were collected through the household survey. A number of parents tried to hide their children who had dropped out of school.

> *Throughout autumn, the law provisions have been repeated that children should attend secondary school, otherwise fine would be imposed etc. So, maybe people fear and hide the number. I heard that the fine is 10,000 tugrugs, but I have never seen anyone paying. I saw people taking sheep from rural families.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

Researchers also noted the discrepancy between their data and the figures given by the schools and administration. One expert in Uliastai told us:

> *To calculate the official number of school drop-outs, we get the number of children at the beginning of the school year, minus the number of children graduated that year and minus the number of children who have officially transfered. Everybody says that they are being transferred. So according to statistics, there is no school drop-out in Uliastai, but we think there are quite a number of drop-outs. Of course, there are children who change school. But there are also drop-outs.*

The budgeting system does not encourage schools to record children who have dropped out: a reduction in the number of children leads to a reduction in funding. A number of experts suggested that it is not uncommon for schools to cover up the number of drop-outs.

5.2.2 Reasons why some children do not attend: the prohibitive cost of education

Figure 7 shows the different reasons why children in areas of high out-migration have dropped out and are not now attending school. Almost one-quarter of children who had dropped out of school and not returned, did so due to the cost of education. Along with health problems, this is the main reason for children leaving school. There are two main influencing factors: the cost involved in paying for children to stay in the school dormitory or with relatives, and the cost of the materials needed for school.

The costs of children's accommodation affects those families that are living in rural areas, sometimes far from the *soum* centre. It also affects families in *soums* such as Bayankhairkhan which do not have a ten-grade school. To graduate from the tenth grade, children need to go either to an *aimag* center or to other *soums*. Although the government policy is to pay for school dormitories, there are hidden costs that parents cover in many places. For example, respondents reported two different *soums* with different policies on charging fees for dormitories in Zavkhan.[23]

[23] For a few – five children in the survey – distance and a lack of sufficient dormitory facilities, aside form the quality and affordability of the dormitories, is a still problem. '*School dormitory is very good. But we have only one. This is not enough. Erdenedalai parents have to bring numerous gers in winter because children are unable to find place in dormitory, and do not have anyone to live with*' (Parents' focus group, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

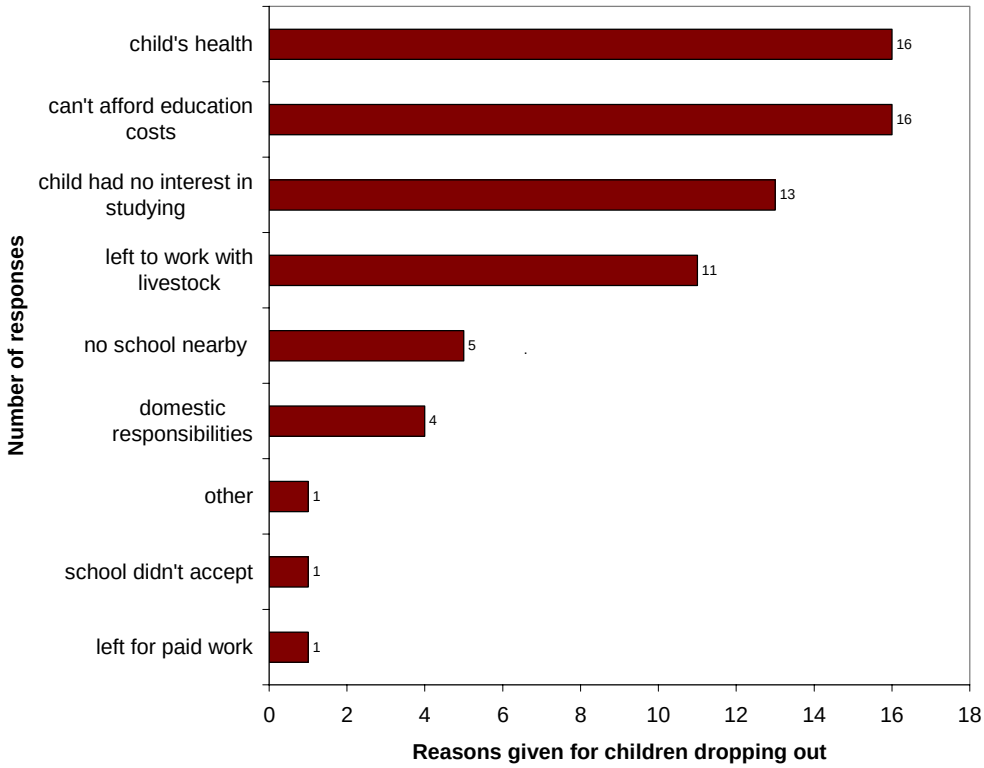

Figure 7 Reasons why children in areas of high out-migration drop out of school
(households could select more than one reason)

Sending children to live with relatives or friends requires the children's parents to provide payment. This is often payment in kind to the other family, such as two or three sheep and two or three bags of flour. The older the child is, the more the parents contribute. They also contribute more if the family with which the child is staying is not related to them.

> *We have three children. The eldest two children study in school. Because our* soum *does not have a 10 grade school, they live with the family of our relative in* aimag *centre. Last year only one child lived with them and we gave two sheep and two bags of flour. Now two children would live with them. We fear expenses will go up.*(Household in quantitative survey of Bayankhairkhan *soum*, Zavkhan)

Failure to pay the expenses leads to parents having to take their children out of school. Some of the children interviewed also experienced problems when staying with other families:

> *When you live in other family, you are hungry, you can't eat whenever you want. Also they get cross with you. And you always miss parents* (Out-of-school children's focus group, Erdenedalai)

Many parents are keen to keep their children with them and, as a result, many families in rural areas and *soum* centres divide themselves into two or three groups, with some family members staying in rural areas looking after livestock and others moving to a *soum* or *aimag* centre with the children. There are quite a few families which have divided like this in order to send children to school. In rural areas, families which cannot afford to divide their family between locations, or to send their children to a school dormitory, or which have no relatives in the *soum* centre, are unlikely to have any choice but to take their children out of school.

The survey also shows that that expenses for school items such as clothes, notebooks, and pens can also lead to children dropping out of school.

My parents can hardly buy food for us, let alone notebooks and pencils. Because I do not have pencil, I used to write with red coloured pencil. But teachers do not allow use of red pens and pencils. Also because I do not have notebook, I used to write on notebook cover pages. My teacher saw this and said 'if you will do like this, no need to come to school'. Teachers always collect some money. For notebook, for classroom repair etc. Earlier, it was more or less OK. Then, we were asked to bring 5,000 tugrugs. This time my parents said that the school always collects money and they would take me out of school. So, I dropped school. (Out-of-school child interview, Zavkhan)

Children leave school because they do not have clothes, notebooks, pencils, pens and school bagh (Expert, school teacher, Tseren, Erdenedalai)

We are shy of our clothes because children tease and say that we wear poor clothes.(Out-of-school children's focus group, Erdenedalai)

Other households also find the cost of education difficult to afford. Almost one-third of households (31.7per cent) in areas of high out-migration responded that they cannot afford educational expenses. Forty per cent of households in Bayankhairkhan said they could not afford the cost. This is the highest percentage of all four sites.

5.2.3 Reasons why some children do not attend: contributing to the household economy

Involvement in livestock herding is still a key reason for boys' non-attendance in rural areas.

I dropped out of school from third grade to herd livestock. I did it myself. My parents also supported.me to leave (Boy in focus group of out-of-school children, Bayankhairkhan)

Some 16.2 per cent of the children who had dropped out and remained out of school mentioned livestock herding as one of the main reasons for dropping out. Livestock is very labour-intensive, so there is often a real need for parents for get their children's help. However, compared with the mid-1990s, such cases are declining.

People obtained privatised livestock and to breed it, they took elder children out of school. When there were many heads of livestock, father and mother could not manage just themselves and took at least one child out of school. Now people do not have that many livestock and children gradually have returned to school. People now get to understand that livestock is not the sole source for living, that it can be lost in one dzud.*Here, rural herders are now requesting to have a 10-year secondary school* (Parents' focus group, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

The school drop-out rate has reduced over the last two years. Because of transition to market economy, drop-out was very common. Everybody was taking their children out of school after livestock privatisation. This was a real danger. Now young people in their twenties [who were children affected in the 1990s] regret this (Expert interview, Erdenedalai)

Based on the survey findings, it can be said that because of the shift in attitude of herders to education, school drop-out tends to decline. However, other children are also dropping out to contribute to the household economy:

*I go for wood with other people and make wooden furniture. That is why I left school. If I don't do this, how can we live? (*15-year-old boy in household survey, Zavkhan aimag, Bayankhairkhan *soum*)

Others need to carry out housework while their parents work long hours:

My parents work. They leave home in the morning and do not come back until late evening. They are very busy. There is no one to look after my siblings, and someone has to stay in the fence. So I started missing my classes and then eventually dropped out.(Girl in household survey, Zavkhan *aimag*, Uliastai)

5.2.4 Health and other reasons why some children do not attend

Poor health is often poverty related, due to both poor environmental conditions at home and poor health service provision. The other reason given frequently for children dropping out in areas of high out-migration[24] was health problems. This accounted for almost a quarter of responses in the survey and was mentioned by a number of children in the focus groups. It was a particular problem for children in Bayankhairkhan:

> *I left school from the first grade. I was sick, I had my appendicitis* (Out-of-school children's focus group Bayankhairkhan)

Whatever the cause, long recovery times for many illnesses mean children miss lessons and find it difficult to reintegrate into their classes.

Children also dropped out due to a lack of interest in studying. This may in part be a reflection of education quality and, perhaps, of its lack of relevance to rural life. This factor was mentioned by 19.1 per cent, one-fifth of respondents. What makes children become disinterested in school? Those who move to a new area and find it hard to catch up, those who fail the exams or face difficulting in learning, and those experiencing pressure from teachers said they became disinterested in attending school. Some sites reported that teachers now sign an 'output' contract, which means they are paid a full salary if more than 70 per cent of the class succeeds in their studies. Although this is supposed to encourage higher standards of teaching, it was suggested by a number of parents, and others, that to achieve this success rate, children with poor performance records are allowed to drop out.

> *I left school from 3rd grade. I could not read and write. My teacher said that I cannot learn* (Out-of-school children's focus group, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

Many of the children who were disinterested in studying, lived in the *aimag* centre, Uliastai:

> *Some children coming from rural areas have never been taught some subjects. When these children come to our school where the subject is taught at a higher level, they are bored* (Expert interview, school director Ts. Baldorj, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

As in urban areas of high in-migraiton, pressure from other children can lead to children not wanting to study. In the *aimag* centre of Uliastai, children and experts talked of local gangs of former pupils who beat school children and rob them of money and clothes.

5.2.5 Assistance for education

The quantitative survey shows that 28.1 per cent of all households receive some assistance to send children to school, while 71.9 per cent of them do not get any assistance.[25] The percentage of households receiving assistance is smallest in Uliastai *aimag* centre, at 17.2 per cent. This, and the relative lack of support given to longer-term residents in other urban areas (described in Section 4.2.2), is likely to be partly related to the strength of social networks. These appear to be stronger in rural areas, and for many migrants during their initial few years in their new location. For non-migrants and longer-term residents in *aimag* centres and cities, assistance is less readily available. However in rural areas, the level of assistance is also likely to be due to the distances families live from the schools and their need for accommodation and other types of support.

So, where do they get assistance? Some 54.7 per cent of those who receive assistance get it from family members or friends. Only 10.7 per cent of the 28.1 per cent of households getting assistance, receive material or monetary assistance from government organisations, with 34.6 per cent getting assistance from a range of other sources. One of these other sources of assistance may be organised help provided by the school and class members to particular children. Often the assistance is material:

[24] By those children who did not return to formal schooling.
[25] This is ten per cent higher than the percentage of non-migrant households receiving assistance in urban areas, but is similar to the percentage of migrant households receiving assistance to send children to school.

> *Our classmates collect money and bought a pair of shoes. Also we bought clothes to* soum *children with disabilities. When we were in 2nd or 3rd grade we used to give books, pen and ballpoint pen.* (In-school children's focus group, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)
>
> *We give school items to very poor children, but children sell them.* (Parents' focus group, Dornod, Khalkhgol)

Material assistance from the government varies from place to place, and generally appears to be insufficient in relation to need:

> *The Government provides school items worth 16,000 tugrugs to families with four and more children and very poor children. In accordance to my estimations, around 100 children are eligible for this assistance. But only 35 per cent of them (37 children) were able to receive this assistance – we don't have sufficient funds.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

Although the above criteria are used, if there are too many poor households, as is often the case, or if it is feared that households make false reports of their income, the local authorities establish their own criteria:

> *A vulnerable child is one from a households with no employed person, with no breadwinner, or with orphans. We conduct a strict screening to identify 167 households. I do it with Governors of 2* baghs. *Otherwise, there is a lot of arguments about some having a business, or a car etc.* (Expert interview, school director, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

The assistance is not enough for all eligible children. To take the Uliastai example, it was enough only for every third poor child. Therefore, the schools apply different strategies, such as skipping those children who received assistance in the previous year. Children from rural areas transferring to the *aimag* center, who do not have official migration documents or a letter from Bagh Governor, were not counted.

> *Children without migration documents are not counted as vulnerable group or included if they don't have bagh letter of reference. So, they can't get any assistance or textbook from the school. They are called as children without administrative residence. We have 18 very poor children who live in other families. We try not to lose them. There are children who live in grandfather's, grandmother's, brother's, and uncle's families. When we investigate the cases, there are many problem, parents are separated, mother is in hospital etc.* (Expert interview, social worker, Zavkhan, Uliastai)

In many cases, the assistance of various types – such as free school items to families with many children and free seeds – does not reach the target group. Furthermore, the selling of these free school materials was frequently reported by parents and others. This in part suggests a lack of value given to education, as was commonly inferred by parents and teachers. A more flexible payment in monetary form might be more appropriate.

5.2.6 Non-formal education

Although children did say they received a certificate for the classes, non-formal education was reported to be particularly inadequate in some of the areas of high out-migration. It was of mixed quality, content was repeated from year to year, the classes were said to be held only in summer in rural areas, and the system of non-formal education was reportedly under-funded. Teachers were operating under pressure to get children into these classes, and to teach during school vacations. One child said:

> *I wasn't studying well. I left school at 1st grade and because the others were teasing, I also dropped the non-formal education class. I like going to school, but the non-formal education class was taking place in a small room without blackboard. The room was very cold and there were two chairs and two desks.* (Out-of-school children's focus group, Khalkhgol)

Others agreed with the shortcomings:

> *There are some drawbacks to the non-formal education training. Every year for a short period of time, they teach the same content as they taught the previous year. The older children are bored because they are repeating material they have already learn.* (Expert interview, Bagh Governor, Bayankhairhan)

> *Initially there were 10 children in non-formal education class, then five and ended up with only two children…Children from some of the poorest households are most difficult, as they do not have commitment to study. We need to conduct lots of advocacy activities for parents.*

> *We try to collect as many persons as possible, saying that you would at least learn how to sell your livestock products. Personally, I think it is because of availability of classroom and teachers that the non-formal education training takes place during wool collection period* (Expert interview, Bagh Governor, Erdenedalai)

> *Our child has attended non-formal education class for three years. The class has few children, so it is OK, though there is no secondary class. The class runs for eight hours a day for 14 days. Non-formal education class takes place at the same time as livestock off-springs and wool cutting, so children cannot attend.* (Parents' focus group, Erdenedalai)

Children feel uncomfortable:

> *Sometimes I go to non-formal education class. But this winter I did not attend because I did not have notebooks. Also children tease that we go to non-formal education class, so I had to stop* (Out-of-school children's focus group, Khalkhgol)

5.3 Children, poverty and economic decline in areas of high out-migration

The difficult situation of some children in rural areas is linked to the general picture of economic decline in these areas.

5.3.1 Economic decline and unemployment

In the four sites surveyed, 27.6 per cent of adults were unemployed; 21.2 per cent were engaged in livestock herding; 12.2 per cent in state owned companies; and 6.5 per cent said that they were on a pension. Another 6.5 per cent were in education and the remaining 26 per cent were engaged in a range of other different activities. The unemployment rate in areas of high out-migration is high, although it is still lower than for migrant individuals in areas of high in-migration.[26] The important role of pensions and allowances in meeting the cash needs of families in *soum* centres and rural areas was demonstrated by the pension cards that are kept by the *soum* shop as collateral in all three *soum* sites (this was confirmed by interviews with the local shopkeeper and herders).

Income sources differ for *soum* centre and *aimag* centre based families and for rural ones. Families in *soum* and *aimag* settlements are more dependent on a regular salary and pension. For some people in *soums* and rural areas who have neither livestock nor job, small trading and running small service businesses are the main survival strategies to avoid poverty. However, the income they earn in some cases is limited to meeting daily needs:

> *…We are sort of in between. We do not have livestock in rural areas. And we do not have work here. So, we are left with no other choice, but do some business and try to earn some money* (Household in survey, Zavkhan *aimag*, Uliastai soum)

Meanwhile, the rural population is heavily reliant on livestock. Many households, both from rural areas and in *soum* centres and the *aimag* centre, suffer periods of income shortage during the year. Table 18 outlines the reasons for these shortages, and for months of higher income.

[26] Forty-three per cent of migrant adults were unemployed; 25.4 per cent of non-migrant adults were unemployed.

Table 18 Reasons for income shortages, and for periods of higher income

High income months and reasons	Low income months and reasons
Spring and summer: • Wool and cashmere season • Receive annual holiday pay • Cows give more milk, so sell milk, hides and other raw materials • Catch fish • Meat price goes up, sell livestock • More people in summer months • Hunting marmots *Winter:* • More raw materials • Do fuel and coal business • Price for hides and raw materials goes up, do some broker business	*Spring and summer:* • No pay during annual holiday • Children's summer vacation • People's demand goes down • No other source of income except salary • Children will have to go to school *Winter:* • Less trade and sales • Construction work stops • After public holiday • No wool and livestock

Some 44.8 per cent of households in areas of high out-migration say that their family's economic situation has worsened over the past five years. The reasons for this include price changes for livestock products, and fuel price increases.

> *...We, as rural people, do not have any other income, but livestock. If something happens, we get a few from our livestock. We make our living by selling livestock products. Trade people are difficult. Of course, they should think of fuel price etc. But, they increase their price several times. We cannot go to the* soum *or* aimag *centre for every item we end up buying from them.*(Interview made during questionnaire, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

Table 19 Changes over the past five years for households in areas of high out-migration

	Improved		Same as before		Worsened		Don't know		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Household income	53	13.2	159	39.6	180	44.8	10	2.5	402	100
Living conditions	46	11.4	281	69.9	75	18.7			402	100
Health services	56	14.2	223	56.6	66	16.8	49	12.4	394	100
Access to education	82	21.0	209	53.6	48	12.3	51	13.1	390	100
Assistance from relatives	42	11.1	198	52.1	66	17.4	74	19.5	380	100
Official assistance	13	3.7	137	38.6	64	18.0	141	39.7	355	100
Employment	39	10.8	177	48.9	79	21.8	67	18.5	362	100

Families in Bayankhairkhan and Uliastai were more likely to report a fall in household income than those in other sites. The case of the shopkeeper (below) from Bayankhairkhan indicates the difficult economic situation in the *soum*.

In the three *soums* and one remote *aimag* centre surveyed, 37 per cent of families did not feel they had enough for their basic daily needs. This is a higher percentage than for migrant families and for long-term urban residents.

Box 8 The story of H, the Bayankhairkhan soum shopkeeper

Up to 2000 we herded 150 heads of livestock. Now my husband and I work as shop attendants taking goods to our *soum*, Bayankhairkhan *soum*, and selling there. In rural areas, there is no cash, so usually cashmere and sheep serve as means of payment. People buy needed goods in advance for raw cashmere and sheep, so they used to give on loan and come back again to collect cashmere and sheep. This business is not so profitable; although we are doing business, our life did not get significantly better. There are over ten shops, the purchasing capacity of people is low, which affects business. All *soum* people buy on loan, so cash turnover is slow. We borrow from bank with interest and give to people without interest, so that's why we make almost no profit. We spend all profit we make for our own needs and paying bank interest, so we are unable to accumulate working capital.

5.3.2 Impacts on children's wellbeing

The impact of economic situations on children's attendance at school was discussed in Section 5.2.2.

Other effects worth noting are, first, children are more involved in work – both paid and domestic – to contribute to household livelihoods.

Box 9 Earning and spending money – children in Khalkhgol soum

My father tells us 'let's go together' – we bring wood from far away, maybe 30km. We go on a horse, we leave at 11am and get back at six in the evening. In winter fetching wood is especially hard because it's so cold – we fall into the snow and this year the cart got stuck several times… Cutting wood is hard too. We have to cut the whole bundle for about 500[27] *or 600 MNT, but we have to take whatever money people give us.* (Boy aged 11, out-of-school focus group, Khalkhgol soum)

Older boys 'play' with money – they gamble on card games and billiards. This is a popular pastime for many unemployed young men in this soum. The numerous billiard and card tables on the streets between apartment blocks are always busy. Others use it for basic necessities: I keep the money I manage to earn. When my mother goes to the aimag centre I ask her to buy me clothes. I give money to my mother and she buys meat and milk – mother only has a pension to buy food with. (Boy aged 12, out-of-school focus group, Khalkhgol soum)

The *soum* centres' infrastructure is poor compared with Uliastai *aimag* and sites of high in-migration. The lack of electricity, for example, affects children's ability to do their homework and to enjoy television. A common response in the children's focus groups was that they would like electricity in their *soums*. Sixty-five per cent of households in Bayankhairkhan, 59.3 per cent in Khalkhgol and 41.2 percent of households in Erdenedalai do not have access to electricity.

The situation of significant numbers of families in areas of high out-migration is difficult and has not substantially improved over the past five years. The poverty experienced by families has reduced the opportunities for some children to study, forcing them drop out of school. This situation is likely to contribute to chronic poverty in the areas as children grow up without an education.

[27] 500 MNT was equivalent to £0.24 or $0.45.

6. Some reasons why all this appears to be happening

6.1 Analysis: migration and poverty

6.1.1 Are the poorest children moving?

Assessing poverty retrospectively is very difficult. We know that many children and their families are poor when they arrive in a new place. Official figures in Ulaanbaatar, for example, state that 80 per cent of incoming migrants are poor after moving. Our survey indicates that 36.2 per cent think their economic situation has improved since moving. But the poorest and most marginalised are seemingly being left behind, particularly in *soum* centres.

> ...*Every year 5-6 families move away. Mainly to Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet and Darkhan. Families with rather good financial position with many livestock moved away 2-3 years ago. Mainly poorer families are left.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan)

Therefore, for some in rural areas it appears that migration can perpetuate poverty. Out-migration, economic decline and education service decline are interrelated in these areas. Forty-four per cent of families feel their economic situation has got worse over recent years. The future for those children and families left behind, particularly the poorest, looks bleak.

6.1.2 Are migrant children benefiting?

For significant numbers (one-in-four) life gets more difficult after migration. Of those who can move, the better off, with relatives in urban areas and more resources, tend to do better from migration. But those who were not so well off struggle more after migration.

It may be a matter of time. The non-migrants in the sample are often likely to have been migrants themselves more than five years ago – fewer longer-term residents than migrant households now feel life is difficult. Even if over time life gets better in urban areas, the short-term costs for children's wellbeing could still be critical, particularly as those families moving often have younger children. Childhood is a one-off window of opportunity and development.

For those who came from rural areas in decline, their life and livelihoods now seem to be better than if they had stayed, and they arguably have a greater chance of further improvement.

For some, moving to urban areas is creating or perpetuating poverty cycles. This will have long-term implications because access to education is suffering. Children in these families will grow up without a good education and are likely to be less economically productive.

6.2 Why the problems for migrant children are arising: an education system under pressure

According to the Education Law, education in Mongolia should be a priority sector, regulated by the state, under the scrutiny of the state and the public. All citizens have the right to obtain a basic education which is to be provided free of charge. The Government of Mongolia announced that education is a priority sector and consequently there is much attention to channelling investment into the sector and strengthening it. Education sector managers and school directors tend to attribute the causes of many of the issues highlighted in this report – related to children's access to and the quality of education – mainly to education financing issues.

6.2.1 The size of the budget

The present education budget is not sufficient to support the education service delivery required. The Law on Education stipulates that at least 20 per cent of the national budget will be spent on education. The education sector was allocated around 20 per cent of government expenditure and 8.9 per cent of GDP in 2001 – as shown in Table 20.[28] But the real value of such allocations is vital – as is the effective spending of the resources. The reports from rural schools in particular suggest that resources are not enough to provide for basic fixed costs such as heating.

Table 20 Budget allocated to social sectors from 1997

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
1.Proportion in GDP						
Education	5.6	7.1	7.0	8.1	9.0	8.5
Health	3.4	4.0	3.9	4.5	5.3	4.4
Social welfare	5.1	6.3	6.5	7.5	7.7	7.7
2.Proportion in total budget expenditure						
Education	16.2	17.1	17.8	19.1	20.6	19.8
Health	9.9	9.6	9.8	10.7	10.7	10.3
Social welfare	14.9	15.1	16.4	17.7	17.7	17.9

The present actual budget is not enough to rebuild an education system that suffered badly in the 1990s and is now under pressure in many areas from population movements. The transfer to an 11-year schooling that is being introduced in response to current requirements may further increase the pressure on the education system. Construction of new schools and expansions funded by donors do not match the demand.

A number of donors and other players support the provision of education in Mongolia – particularly the Asian Development Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Support focuses on sector development and investment in infrastructure. The focus of donors has been more on urban than on rural schools (in Ulaanbaatar in particular), and donor progress has been slow in supporting nationally drawn-up policies and in operating through government systems.

6.2.2 The budget allocation system

Part of the budget to schools is given as 'variable costs' to cover teachers' salaries, books and maintenance – the more children a school has, the more money it gets. This is a particular problem for rural schools suffering declining numbers, a reported lack of good teachers and buildings in poor repair.

The process of budgeting is currently regulated by the Public Sector Management and Finance Law (PSMFL) and the Law on Education. According to the PSMFL, the Minister for Finance is responsible for the state budget and signs an output delivery contract with the Minister for Education, providing the ceiling of the education sector budget. The Minister for Education is the portfolio minister for the education sector budget and signs contracts directly with organisations such as vocational training centres, colleges, universities and the

[28] GOM, 2003, Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy, Ulaanbaatar. The 2005 budget commits 16.5 per cent of expenditure.

State Library. However, secondary schools and kindergartens sign contracts with governors of districts and *aimags*, who also specify the budget ceiling. Education and Culture Departments are responsible for this at the *aimag* and district level. The Law on Education determines that the school budget consists of fixed and variable expenditures. Fixed costs include heating and electricity expenses needed for ensuring normal operation of schools independently of the number of children enrolled. Variable costs include teachers' salaries, books and maintenance expenses. According to the MOSTEC, to establish the amount of variable expenditure, the total expenditure or actual expenditure of the last year is divided by the number of children – and is adjusted for the inflation rate of the given year. Thus, it made an average of 55-77,000 *tugrugs* for primary, secondary, and high school students (this has recently been increased to 95-120,000 *tugrugs*).

Experts consulted in this survey suggested that the system is now less flexible than it was before, and that the effect of out-migration on some rural schools is great.

> *...Per child funding means bankruptcy for schools with children fewer that 400. Previously some adjustment was made at the* aimag *regional level. For example, if our school trains 1,800 children, then budget was allocated for 1,700, and the remaining sum for 100 children was transferred to* soum *schools with few children to balance. Now the funding is transferred directly from the ministry based on the actual number of children.* (Expert interview, Zavkhan Uliastai)

Not all schools are affected – those attracting children benefit from more money:

> …*Our school is a buffer school of the western region of the* aimag. *Children of several neighbouring* soums *come to study in our school, teachers are also trained here. It is rare when families move due to education related reasons. There are other reasons. It may come out that the quality of our school is better than of a school on outskirts of cities.* (Expert interview, Dundgobi, Erdenedalai)

A range of problems was identified. The research identified cases of rural schools not releasing paperwork needed for children to move, which means they have problems getting into urban schools. It was reported to be quite common in many areas for school directors to report school drop-outs as if they are still attending the school, or to make a false list of pupils to increase the size of funds they receive. Some schools which have been trying to give a higher quality education, but to a smaller number of pupils, have stopped operating in this way. They have instead begun to accept other pupils into their 'high achieving' classes, in order to increase the number of children enrolled in the school. Also because the amount per pupil for older pupils is higher, schools are more interested in recruiting higher grade pupils.

> *...In the past we were seen as school with advanced teaching of science. We used to take exams and only successful children used to enter our school. Since 2 years' ago, because of variable cost we have to admit more children to pay for teachers salary. Now those who wish can enter our school. ...*
>
> *...The rate for high school students is a bit higher, so we try to accept more students in higher grades. More children more funding. According to the new law, teacher can get higher salary when student per teacher ratio is high. So, school with more demand will get higher rates of variable cost funding. Our school was an advanced school, but because of funding scheme we are now just a normal school...*(Expert interview, Selenge *aimag*, Sukhbaatar *soum*)
>
> *Variable cost per student is now 110 000¥. The* aimag *knows that it is difficult and gave us one million tugrugs more. But this is far from being enough…. Therefore, we are thinking of opening 9th grade this year...* (Expert interview, Bayankhairkhan *soum*)

When calculating the budget for individual schools, the financial year is from 1 January, not 1 September when the academic year starts. Because of this, budget managers frequently encounter a problem of gaps in the numbers of children, or receive less funding than the amount due.

> *The size of funding will be changed again from 1 December. The size of funding next year is based on the number of students this autumn. Actually this is should be changed on 1 September. Teachers work with more children from 1 September to December, but get the same funding...* (Expert interveiw, Selenge *aimag*, Sukhbaatar *soum*, Ichinkhorloo, head of studies, school No.4)

The PSMFL and the Law on Education are still sometimes not well understood by key officials within schools and local administrative bodies, who are given increased responsibility in budget setting under these laws. The

role and effectiveness of the *aimag* in channelling state funding to schools was not covered explicitly in the research but should also be considered.

6.2.3 Teacher training and incentives

Rural schools and areas need to be attractive to teachers for them to want to work there. Some areas, such as Khalkhgol *soum*, and Ministry of Education, are trying out a number of ways to encourage teachers to return to the *soum* after their training.

> *New teachers just do not come. And old teachers do not attend upgrade training seminars* (Expert interview, Zavkhan, Bayankhairkhan*)*
>
> *...We wish to train our own people. Quite soon we expect one doctor, the one from Dornogobi, to come after completion of his/her studies. We try to assist him/her, recently we have sent him 10,0000 tugrugs, so that he/she could use that for graduation. People, who come from city, do not stay here for long. We have one person now, who receives the highest salary. But we observed that these people are mostly not good enough. In* soums *we mostly lack mathematics teachers. An issue of attracting teachers was raised not today, but since 1990s.*(Expert interview, Deputy Governor Ganbaatar, Dornod, Khalkhgol *soum*)
>
> *We are trying to recruit students from rural areas. For 2002-2003 academic year, the Government of Mongolia resolved to provide 300,000 tugrugs to teachers going to work in rural areas. Quite many teachers departed to these areas but returned after one year. Teacher training institutions sign contract with* soums *and* aimags *as a guarantee for making the students return. Tuition fee of such students is discounted. Another measure is to set up a group composed of children who want to become teachers and admit best of them into universitites without admission exam. (*Expert interview, Primary and Secondary Education Department, Ministry of Education, Cutlure and Science)

Unfortunately, the incentive schemes discussed by some teachers that encourage them to achieve good grades from their students seem to be leading to increased discrimination of poor and migrant children who need time and support to adjust. Teachers are under pressure to encourage children to join non-formal education classes: this is often seen by teachers as additional work and can lead to a negative attitude towards these classes.

6.2.3 A lack of real focus on equity

Schemes that are designed to increase marginalised children's access to school, such as the Tg16,000 grants and non-formal education, do not appear to be sufficient and are under-funded. The centralised budget of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science for 2004 was 2 billion 351 million tugrugs. Out of this, 1 billion will be spent on the Tg16,000 grant scheme.

The particular needs of migrants entering urban schools, such as extra lessons to enable them to catch up, do not seem to be being addressed. The pressure on schools to keep their pupil numbers high (see point below on per capita funding), means that the numbers of children dropping out are often under-recorded. This makes planning for non-formal education provision difficult.

6.3 Broader poverty eradication policy

The reasons for problems facing migrant children and children left behind in areas of high out-migration do not just stem from the education sector. Figure 1 tracks the range of different policy areas that impact on children's access to education in Mongolia, including economic policy. The history of economic reform through the transition has had a far-reaching impact on family livelihoods: many poor families have not benefited from the shift. Many children continue to be marginalized, particularly, as this study suggests, those in migrant families or in families left in areas of high out-migration as poverty and migration. Arguably this is at least in part due to a lack of focus on *equitable* growth in the country, historically a project based approach to poverty reduction and a lack of coherent planning to end child poverty in Mongolia.

It is evident that the main directions of the government actions – outlined in the EGSPRS and the Government's Action Plan - aim at economic growth. Mainstream policy has focused (and still focuses) on economic growth that is private sector-led. This growth is important for sustained poverty reduction but it is questionable the extent to which *pro-poor* growth has been analysed and pursued in Mongolia.

Furthermore, some areas of this vast country – divided into 365 administrative *soums,* each with its own infrastructure, service delivery and other needs – have been hugely under-resourced since transition began. Some of these are now areas of high levels of out-migration. It is unclear the extent to which economic policy decisions taken over the last 15 years, until the more recent progress with the regional development strategy (GOM, 2000a), has involved explicit planning for a positive impact on poor families' livelihoods and to reduce out-migration from these declining areas.

Pro-poor policy until the EGSPRS in Mongolia had taken a project-based approach to poverty reduction**,** whilst mainstream economic policy pursued economic stability and growth. The National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NPAP), approved in June 1994, was not based on a strong analysis of the realities of poverty – there were too many major gaps in the knowledge about the situation in Mongolia.[29] Furthermore, it was not used in the way originally intended, ie as a management tool to guide the government and donors to address priority actions in a co-ordinated and systematic manner. Instead, it was treated principally as a Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF) that financed small-scale project activities, including the rehabilitation of social and economic infrastructure, micro-finance and some social transfers. There was also a limited focus on anti-poverty policy. The NPAP (in reality the PAF-financed activities) was completed in 2000 and a new programme was developed – the National Household Livelihood Capacity Support Programme. Thus, until the late 1990s, poverty was principally seen as a problem to be addressed at a project level, largely through NPAP/PAF with some broader poverty policy work aimed at human development for example. However, the development policy framework continued to predominantly emphasise growth, with relatively little attention to equity. Moves towards more coherent policy-based approaches to poverty reduction did begin in 2000[30] but it was too early to make any judgements about the success of aspects of the EGSPRS in this research.

Finally, an important approach of policy makers to children in Mongolia is highlighted by Box 10 that considers the policy implications for children of the EGSPRS. Children are often seen as a specific vulnerable groups – such as street children – rather than as a significant proportion of the population. Strong commitments have been made over time to health, education and social protection sectors in Mongolia, all sectors of particular importance to children's wellbeing, but tackling childhood poverty often appears to be regarded as a matter of support to vulnerable groups, with 'ghettoised' small-scale or pilot programmes, often run through donor or NGO funded schemes, rather than ensuring that broad economic and social policies promote child wellbeing.

Box 10: Mongolia – Childhood poverty and the EGSPRS (from Marcus and Marshall, 2004)

Children in the analysis of poverty

There is no comprehensive consideration of poverty affecting children and young people and the importance of tackling it to reach poverty reduction targets, realise the rights of the child or contribute to future national development. However, children are discussed in the analysis as:

- Featuring strongly within the five identified sectors of the population that experience higher levels of poverty, including 'single parent headed-households with many children' and 'specific vulnerable groups' including street children and orphan children (GOM, 2003b: 11)
- Street children, discussed at some length in their own right, as a particularly 'unacceptable phenomenon' that has emerged due to 'economic crisis, social inequality, and breaking down of values and other negative trends in the society' (ibid: 19)

[29] For example, the first Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) was not undertaken until 1995.

[30] After the production of an interim PRSP in 2001, Mongolia's full PRSP, the Economic Growth Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EGSPRS), was assessed by the IMF and World Bank and lending was approved in autumn 2003. It outlines how the country will tackle poverty through the promotion of financial and economic sustainability, improving market access and sustainable human development (GoM, 2003)

- Users/beneficiaries of an education system with problems of increasing non-enrolment, non-attendance and illiteracy
- Those particularly affected by concerning rates of malnutrition and anaemia and falling, but still relatively high, levels of infant and child mortality.

Although not referring to children in particular, the EGSPRS states that 'having a person reach satisfactory levels in terms of education level, food availability and health is the prerequisite to prevention and escaping from poverty and vulnerability especially inter-generational poverty' (ibid: 127). Broader issues of marginalisation are also discussed, with regard to geographical location (eg urban concentrations of poverty and differences between rural and urban service levels), gender (eg higher rates of boys not attending school) and, to a certain extent, the difficulties faced by migrants.

Children in the strategy to reduce poverty

Economic policies

The government's core commitment is to 'achiev[e] poverty reduction through higher economic growth which will be based on private sector participation and export-oriented trade policy' (ibid: ii). Redistribution of the benefits of growth to counter increasing inequality is a stated priority. This will take place through health, education and social welfare, and 'through implementing specific projects and programs aimed at increasing employment among the poor and the near-poor to take their own initiatives to improve their situation [sic]' (ibid: 29). Reducing 'dependency' is a running theme. The IMF and World Bank Joint Staff Assessment (JSA) of Mongolia's EGSPRS notes a commitment to poverty and social impact analyses for energy pricing and pension and civil service reforms (IMF/IDA, 2003). These could encourage a more thorough consideration of the impacts on marginalised children and their communities of the continued far-reaching structural reforms, although only if people concerned with child wellbeing push for this.

Sustainable human development and social protection

The EGSPRS restates previous commitments to social sector investment (for example, that a minimum of 20 per cent of the budget must be spent on education) and emphasises the need to increase the efficiency of the budget resources allocated.[31] It states the government's commitment to ensuring that poor and vulnerable groups in society have equal access to basic social services, particularly with regard to exemptions from health insurance. However, it is ambiguous about private sector involvement in the provision of health and education services, which raises concerns about equality in access to services. Section 5.81 on health, for example, considers that 'privatisation tends not to be beneficial to the poor' while Section 5.87 states that 'the government is actively supporting private health sector'! (GOM, 2003b: 139 and 140). On social welfare reforms, Section 5.142 reassures people that 'the policy is not to step backward from the level reached at the moment' under the Social Assistance Law that covers benefits to mothers and children, but rather to ensure that the system targets those who need it (ibid: 154). The economic policy sections of the strategy, however, discuss 'rationalisation of social safety nets' as a key aspect of restructuring for achieving economic growth (ibid: i).

Childhood issues in the poverty monitoring system

The EGSPRS targets and monitoring indicators – the Mongolian MDGs and indicators – are largely in line with the international MDGs and therefore include vital child-specific targets such as education for all and reduced child and maternal mortality. They also include broader development targets that will benefit children, such as increasing access to safe water, good sanitation and dealing with the national debt. Other indicators could be added to capture the situation of children, such as those related to working children, developed through the ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour database, which is currently being developed in Mongolia. Surveys dominate the monitoring system; the Participatory Living Standards Assessment of 2001 was commended but was seen as a one-off exercise rather than a mechanism for sustained, qualitative analysis of poverty over time. Recent developments in poverty assessment work offer some potential.

Children's and young people's participation

There was no evidence of children or young people's participation in any stage – formulation, implementation or monitoring – of the EGSPRS so far. Some child-focused NGOs did participate in EGSPRS consultations.

[31] Since Mongolia anticipates being eligible, this may reflect MCA requirements that a high percentage of GDP be spent on health and education. It is also noteworthy that despite the country's debt problems it has managed to maintain high budget allocations to social services.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

Although Mongolia is more on track than many low-income countries striving to reach the Millennium Development Goal 3 of universal access to education, this research suggests that that this will not be reached so long as the impact of migration on education is not more comprehensively addressed. In a number of ways, migration is having a negative impact on children's attendance at school and the quality of education they receive.

More migrant children are out of school than non-migrant children, and the rate of migration of families from rural areas to urban areas looks set to continue, suggesting this situation might get worse in the short to medium term. The majority of families and children considered their education to be better in urban areas than rural areas. However, there are still serious concerns about the capacity of schools to cope, and about over-stretched teachers' lack of support for migrant children struggling to adapt to their new school and environment. Even if migration is leading to most children getting access to a better education in many ways, over a quarter of families of children do not appear to be benefiting economically from migration. This has implications for children's living conditions and responsibilities at home. The negative effects of this might well counterbalance the more positive impact migration is having on the quality of education over the longer term.

In some rural areas left behind by many out-migrants, the situation is one of decline: economic and service decline together push more families to move. More children in these areas are out of school than in urban areas of high in-migration (although more migrant children are out of school). The quality of education in these rural areas is variable: two *soums* included in the research appear to reflect many of the negative effects of migration, but schools like the one in Erdenedalai suggest that investing in schools that attract children from neighbouring areas can be an effective strategy.

The policy responses to such a situation are not just education sector specific. They require an inclusive approach to poverty reduction planning more generally, with a focus on the most marginalised and those who are not benefiting. The combination of policies and interventions include:

- targeted measures aimed at getting marginalised children into school and poor and marginalised families out of poverty
- sector policies and investment to achieve improved service delivery in all areas, including declining rural areas of high out-migration and overcrowded urban areas
- economic policies that promote poor families' livelihoods, especially those of poor migrant families as part of a broad strategy of more equitable regional development that should prevent some families moving for economic reasons.

This requires a joined-up approach to development planning, linking the more economic planning response to poverty and regional development to core social sectors, including education. Importantly, it requires development planning that explicitly aims to benefit children.

7.1 Achieving equitable service delivery in a country with high population movement and vast land areas

7.1.1 Getting migrant children into school: taking an inclusive approach to education

Generally, the education system must maintain its focus on **access for all and on public service provision**, and support better service delivery in areas particularly affected by out- and in-migration. After years of decline following the start of transition, substantial public investment is required. The demand for capacity must be met in all urban areas of high in-migration, including more remote *aimag* centres. This problem is identified repeatedly in policies and plans but barriers to progress, particularly financial ones, need to be removed, with the support of external assistance. Urban schools running with three shifts a day must be a temporary solution to the problems rather than a permanent one.

Measures must be taken to support children who either have had time out of school (due to economic hardship, poor health or moving location) or who are behind in their classes (due to moving from rural to urban schools). This includes **non-formal education provision**. Non-formal education needs to be reviewed, improved and better resourced – incentives for teachers should encourage them to improve the quality of this sector, rather than see it as an additional burden on teachers. **Extra support to migrant children** should be offered to help them catch up with the curriculum in urban areas. Incentives and training for teachers should encourage them to help migrant children rather than discriminate against them. The study indicates the significant proportion of children whose families struggle economically after migrating: extra support should not involve them making additional payments, if poor migrant children are to benefit.

More migrant children might be accepted in urban sites of in-migration if better **information management** systems within the education sector tracked where children are throughout the year – not just at the beginning – so that resources can follow them more effectively. However, this will only work if rural schools record the numbers of children leaving the schools accurately – the current budget allocation process does not encourage them to do this.

The **assistance with school materials** for the poorest children needs to be reviewed. The effectiveness of giving materials, versus monetary assistance, should be reviewed. Where necessary, the budget for assistance to the poorest families should be increased to make it sufficient to reach the numbers of children who need it and to provide for a larger proportion of the costs. This assistance should be seen as part of broader social protection/social security policy.

The impact of the removal of registration fees needs monitoring to ensure that this has actually removed an important barrier for migrant children attending school.

7.1.2 Addressing the needs of rural schools to prevent migration and enable children to access a better education

A review of **budget allocation methods** for education is needed. This needs to be carried out in the light of likely increased migration and the impact these methods seem to be having, particularly on rural children's access to a good education. Although a system of resources following children seems logical, the situation in some rural *soums* left behind by migrating families suggests that more attention should be given to the impact of this system on these areas.

New models of rural education need to be considered. Even in a more favourable economic climate, it is very difficult to see how the necessary significant improvements in education quality can be made with so many schools operating across such a vast country, given the decline in the 1990s. We recognise that the closure of a

number of rural *soum* schools, closure of *soums* themselves, *may* be an inevitable eventual result of economic change and migration. Investment in schools that take children from a wider catchment area might be considered, but with attention to children's needs for adequate care when living away from home.

Therefore, even without these closures, but particularly with, the **school dormitory** system that was in full operation pre-transition must be adequately funded to provide a high standard of care for children, to allow rural families to send their children to *soum* or *aimag* schools. Alternatives, such as forms of assistance to poorer families, to reach those who wish to send their children to live with relatives and friends near the school, could be considered.

More economic and other incentives for **attracting good teachers** to rural areas should be explored. Incentives for teachers should encourage them to support non-formal education classes and assist poor children, rather than place additional burdens on their time. As in urban areas of high in-migration, it appears non-formal education and assistance to the poorest children need to be reviewed.

Alternative measures for reaching rural children across such vast distances should be (re)explored, such as using radio and post.

There is a clear need for investment to achieve these changes outlined in Sections 7.1.1 and 7.1.2. As a medium-term strategy, greater proportions of **donor budgets** should be allocated to supporting viable and equitable basic service delivery across the country, targeting overburdened urban areas and rural areas in need of investment, to prevent further decline. Donors in Mongolia need to be better at co-ordinating their aid, using it to support national policies and working through government systems.

7.2 Better pro-poor policy that is designed to maximise impact on poor children and their families

The **recent regional development policy** needs a greater focus on social as well as economic policy across the country if it is to slow down the rate of migration. Almost one-third of migrant families are moving to improve their children's schooling. More equitable investment in education, but also other services like health and water, across the country could play an important role in preventing migration and coping with changing settlement patterns.

Are economic policies analysed as to their likely and/or actual **impact on poor families and poor children**? If inequalities between rich and poor areas and people are to be reduced and avoided in future, the impact of policy choices on the poor and marginalised people and areas must be considered. Poverty and Social Impact Analysis, supported by the World Bank and IMF, and other national analyses and debates on economic and social policy reform, should consider their impact on marginalised groups.

Overall, to end poverty affecting children, to prevent this generation of children growing up into poor adults, economic and social policy needs to benefit children. The situation of children must be linked to more mainstream policy frameworks such as the EGSPRS and regional development and trade policies. Children are not just a 'special group' requiring special projects run by specialised agencies. They are almost 50 per cent of the population and most policies will have an impact on them.

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Appendix

Example questionnaire for migrant families.

The questionnaire for long-term residents/non-migrants omitted part of section 1 (questions 24-27), section 2 (questions 28-39) and section 4 (questions 124-132). It had additional questions asking households whether they would settle permanently and why.

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….□□□

Research questionnaire: Screening Form and Household Record

For every household in sample – to be attached to questionnaire

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER (FROM SAMPLE) …… Name of head of household……..

Visit 1	Visit 2	Visit 3
Date	Date	Date
Result	Result	Result

Result:

1. SCREENED OUT: carried out screening check but not suitable
2. COMPLETED: carried out screening, suitable, interviewed
3. ABSENT from home
4. POSTPONED
5. REFUSED
6. NOT FOUND

"The Sociology department of the National University of Mongolia is conducting a research on migration and children. We would like to ask you a few questions about your household to see if we would like to interview you – if you are willing!"

SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Do you have children aged 3-16 in your household? (that includes children living with you who are not your own) **1. YES, 2.NO** ***IF YES, GOT TO Q2. IF NO, FINISH***.

2. Has your household moved to this place in the last five years (since January 1998)? **1. YES, 2. NO.** ***IF YES, GO TO QUESTION 3, IF NO FINISH.***

3. Did at least one of the children move (since January 1998)? **1. YES, 2. NO.** ***IF YES, GO TO QUESTION 4, IF NO, FINISH***

4. Where did you move from? ……***IF MOVED FROM CENTRE OF ULAANBAATAR, FINISH***.

If finishing:

"Sorry, we are looking for households with children who have migrated from rural areas (or urban areas smaller than Ulaanbaatar) for our research. Thank you for your time".

If they household fits criteria:

We would like to continue with this interview, if you agree. We hope that it will not take more than 45 minutes of your time. Information collected during the research will not be passed on to anyone else – it will be used to influence policy to improve children's lives. Your response is of a great value for the research. We hope you will respond to the best of your knowledge..

INTERVIEW RECORD

The research conducted on _____(year/month/day) Started time……Finish time…… Interviewer……

.

Aimag/city name …….. Soum/district name …….. Bag/horoo name ……..

Household geographical situation ……*(describe so you can find it again)*

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….□□□

Research questionnaire

Section 1. Information about the household

Please could you tell us about the people who live in your household *(include all the people who usually live together, sharing meals and income - often but not always blood relation. DO NOT INCLUDE either (a) those who have been away for 3 months or more – they will be recorded in Q16-23 or (b) other separate households sharing the apartment or fence –they will be recorded in Q14-15)*

	Q1. Please give the names of household members and people living together – **this information will not be used at all in the study, it is just so we can refer to you by name during the interview. If you would rather not give names, that is fine.**	**Q2. How old is s/he?**	**Q3. Is this person male or female?**	**Q4. What ethnic group does s/he belong to?** 1. Khakha 2. Khazah 3. Buriad 4. Torguud 5. Other (please write)	**Q5.** What relationship is this person to the **head of household** 1. Head of household 2. Husband, wife 3. Son, daughter 4. Father, mother 5. Brother, sister 6. Father-in-law, mother-in-law 7. Son-in-law, daughter-in-law 8. Grandparents 9. Grandson, granddaughter 10. Other relative 11. Not any relative?	**Q6&7.For those children under 18, please tell us/confirm who their mother and father is?** 16. moved to another place within Mong. (still part of hhold) 17. moved to another place divorced/ separated) 18. moved abroad 19. died		**Q8. What is the highest level of education each adult person reached?** 1. Incomplete primary education 2. Primary education 3. Incomplete secondary 4. Complete secondary school education 5. technical school 6. university 7. no education	**Q9. What is each person's main activity?** 1. Work in government organisation 2. Work in state-run company (state organization) 3. Work in private company 4. Run private business 5. Run small service 6. Trade 7. Herder 8. Pupil (up to secondary level) 9. Student (in higher education) 10. Domestic work 11. Retired 12. Disabled or unable to work due to ill health 13. Unemployed 14. other …	**Q10. Did s/he work last week?** 1. Yes 2. No
						Q6 Father	Q7 Mother			
1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										
5.										
6.										
7.										
8.										
9.										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
1.										

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

Q11. Total number of adults in household ☐☐

Q12. Total number of children in household ☐☐

Q13. Total number in household ☐☐

Q14. Does your household share their apartment, house or yard with other households?

1. Yes, share apartment ☐
2. Yes, share house ☐
3. Yes, share fence ☐
4. Live in other person's yard ☐
5. No (go to Q16) ☐

Q15. If yes, how many households ☐☐ and people ☐☐ share the space?

Please name any household member(s) who have been away for 3 months or more *(eg student living in city, family member who has moved elsewhere for work, went for military service, abroad etc.)*

	Q16. What is the name of the person who is in the household but not currently living here?	**Q17.** What relationship is this person to the **head of household?** 1. Head of household 2. Husband, wife 3. Son, daughter 4. Father, mother 5. Brother, sister 6. Father-in-law, mother-in-law 7. Son-in-law, daughter-in-law 8. Grandparents 9. Grandson, granddaughter 10. Other relative 11. Not any relative	**Q18. Where are they living?** (write place including whether is urban area eg *Zavkhan aimag centre, XXX soum centre, Tuv aimag Lun soum or Ulaanbaatar city Bayanzurh district*)	**Q19. When did they leave?** (give year and month)		**Q20. When do you expect them to move back here?** 1. In next year 2. in next 2-3 years 3. more than 3 years 4. don't know	**Q21. Will you move to join them?** 1. Yes 2. no 3. don't know	**Q22. Do they send assistance back for your household?** 1. No 2. Money 3. gifts/goods 4. other	**Q23. Do you send assistance to this person living separately?** 1. No 2. Money 3. gifts/goods 4. other
				Q19.1 Year	**Q19.2** Month				
1.									
2.									
3.									

Q 24. Did you leave members of your household behind when you moved here?

1. Yes ☐
2. No (go to Q28) ☐

Q 25. If yes, who? (please, write number of people and the relationship of those people to the **head of household**)

……

Q 26. Do you send them the following?

1. Money
   1. Yes ☐
   2. No ☐
2. Gifts/goods
   1. Yes ☐
   2. No ☐
3. Other
   1. Yes ☐
   2. No ☐

Q 27. Will they join you?

1. Yes ☐
2. No ☐
3. Don't know ☐

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..……☐☐☐

Section 2. Questions about migration

Q28. For how long have you lived in current place of residence? ☐☐ years ☐☐ months

Q29. Will you settle here permanently?
1. Yes (go to **Q 32)**
2. No (go to Q30)
3. I don't know (go to Q32)

Q 30. If no, why not?

……..……..

Q31. Where do you plan to move to?

……..……

Q32. How many times has your household (including your children) **moved since 1998?** ☐ *Start from the most recent one (if more than 3, write answers to questions on a separate piece of paper)*

Number of migration	**Where did you move from?** (*actual location and type of place)*		**Q35.When did you move?**		**Q36. Reasons for moving** (please, write)		**Q37. Who moved first?** 1. All together 2. Head of household 3. Spouse 4. Child 5. Other family members	**Q38. Why did you choose here to move to?** (please, write the respondents answer in full without rephrasing into researcher's own words.)
	Q33. Name of place moved from	**Q34.Type of place** 1. city 2. aimag centre 3. soum centre 4. rural area	**Q35.1** Year	**Q35.2** Month	**Q36.1** What were the reasons for you to move? (please, write the respondents answer in full without rephrasing in your own words.)	**Q36.1** Why – what were the more fundamental reasons for need for job/better education/no work etc? (please, write the respondents answer in full without rephrasing in your own words.)		
1								
2								
3								

Q39. When you first moved to this place, what problems did you face in the first 6 months? Please select up to five choices you believe are most important.

1. Difficult to get migration registration ☐
2. Difficult to get land permission ☐
3. Housing problems ☐
4. Difficult to find work ☐
5. Pasture problems ☐
6. Difficult getting access to social welfare ☐
7. Difficult getting health services ☐
8. Couldn't get children into school ☐
9. No income sources ☐
10. Problems getting access to water ☐
11. Problems getting electricity and/or fuel ☐
12. Lack or contacts' or relatives' support ☐
13. Civil registration problems (eg for babies) ☐
14. Other ……. ☐

Section 3. Household situation

Q40. What type of dwelling?
1. House (go to Q41)
2. Ger (go to 43)
3. Both (fill in all questions)

☐

HOUSE

Q41. What type of house is it?
1. A house
2. Apartment in a building
3. Student dormitory
4. Workers' dormitory
5. Non-resident (basement, trench, container etc.)
6. other……

☐

Q42. How many rooms do you have? ☐

GER

Q43. How many gers do you have? ☐

Q44. Do you hope to own the land you are living on in the future?
1. Yes
2. No

☐

FOR ALL HOUSEHOLDS – FACILITIES

Q45. What heating do you use?
1. Centralized
2. Non-centralized apartment heating
3. Heat on my own (go to Q46)
4. other (please write) ……

☐

Q46. What kind of fuel do you use?
1. Coal
2. Firewood
3. Dung
4. Gas
5. Trash
6. Other

☐

Q47. Are you able to keep your home warm in winter?
1. As much as we need
2. Sometimes we do not have fire
3. It is cold

☐

Q48. Do you have electricity?
1. centralized
2. local
3. own source (generator etc.)
4. no (go to 49)

☐

Q49. If you do not have electricity, why?
1. not connected to the electricity line
2. cannot afford to pay for electricity
3. permission is not being given

☐

Q50. Does your household have a toilet/latrine?
1. Yes, in the house, private
2. Yes, in the house, shared
3. Yes, outside
4. Yes, outside, shared
5. No

☐

Q51. Where do you get water for domestic use?
1. Water tap in the house (hot and cold water
2. Water tap in the house (cold only
3. Public tap stand
4. Protected public well
5. Unprotected public well
6. Well within the fence with pump and cover
7. Well within the fence open
8. Water tank truck
9. River/stream/lake
10. Other

☐

Q52. Where do you take a bath
1. At home
2. Public bathhouse
3. Other (at relatives' etc.)

☐

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

HOUSE OWNERSHIP

Q53. Who owns your house/fence?

1. head of household/ spouse ☐
2. state ☐
3. parents/relative ☐
4. company ☐
5. rent from private individual ☐
6. other ☐

Q54. How many livestock does household have?

	Livestock	Number
1.	Camel	
2.	Horse	
3.	Yak/cow	
4.	Goat	
5.	Sheep	
6.	Other	
7.	No	

Q 55. Which of the following you have?

	Name of household effects	Number
1.	Radio, stereo	
2.	Stove	
3.	Color television	
4.	Black and white television	
5.	Refrigerator	
6.	Motorcycle	
7.	Car	

Please tell us about the income that your household has

Q56. What is your average monthly income? ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ tgs

Q57..Does your household income vary?

1. Yes ☐
2. No ☐

Q58. If your household income varies, what is a good month? ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ tgs

When do you have a 'good month'
(what happens to bring in more income?) ……..

Which months of the year of usually better? ……..

Q59. If your household has a bad month for income, how much do you have? ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ tgs

What makes the month a 'bad' month?……

Which months of the year are often bad months?……

Q60. How has your household economic situation changed comparing to before you moved?

1. Improved very much ☐
2. Improved a bit ☐
3. Almost no change ☐
4. Got a bit worse ☐
5. Got much worse ☐

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

Q61. Please, assess your household consumption.

1. Is not enough for every day needs/foodstuff. ☐
2. Is enough for basic every day needs but not clothes, other household goods ☐
3. Are able to fulfill everyday needs and some more things that we want ☐
4. Are able to fulfill everyday needs and clothes/other household goods ☐
5. Besides the above needs, we can buy other things we wish like luxury goods ☐

Q62. Do children currently contribute to income? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q62.1 What work do they do? ……

Q62.2 Did they contribute to income before you moved here? 1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐

Q62.3 If so, what did they do?……..…….

Please tell us the main three kinds of economic activity that your household depends on both now and before you moved. (start from the most important)

Q 63. Now	**Q64.** Before migrating
63.1	**64.1**
63.2	**64.2**
63.3	**64.3**

Economic activities	
1. Mining	12. Industry – other
2. Agriculture – crop production	13. Trading – cashmere
3. Livestock herding – cashmere	14. Trading – other (international)
4. Livestock herding – meat production	15. Trading other (national)
5. Livestock herding –other	16. Social services (health, education, government administration)
6. Forestry	17. Small services (informal)
7. Industry – timber processing	18. Tourism
8. Industry – food processing	19. Commercial sector (private business)
9. Industry - mineral processing	20. Development sector (eg NGO)
10. Industry – construction	21. Assistance (benefits, allowances)
11. Industry – textiles	22. Other ……

Q65. What changed happened on the above these activities in last five years? (eg privatization, price changes, worked for factory but factories privatised and made redundant)

……

Q66. Did changes in these influence your decision to move ? ……..

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..……. ☐☐☐

Q67. If you received state benefits, which ones to you receive:

1. Pension ☐
2. Half-orphan/full orphan ☐
3. Disability allowance ☐
4. Child benefit (one years after birth) ☐
5. Unemployment ☐
6. Sudden retirement ☐
7. Other (goods etc.) ☐
8. No ☐

Where from and what kind of assistance did you receive in the last year

68. From who did you receive money from over the last year (either gifts or borrowed) ?		**69. From who did you receive gifts of food/ clothes/ household items from over the last year ? (tick boxes)**		**Q70. Who has helped you with child care over the last year? (tick boxes)**		**Q71. Who did you receive information from over the last year? (tick boxes)**	
	1. relative ☐		1. relative ☐		1. relative ☐		1. relative ☐
	2. Relative who migrated ☐		2. Relative who migrated ☐		2. Relative who migrated ☐		2. Relative who migrated ☐
	3. Neighbours ☐		3. Neighbours ☐		3. Neighbours ☐		3. Neighbours ☐
	4. Friends ☐		4. Friends ☐		4. Friends ☐		4. Friends ☐
	5. Work colleagues ☐		5. Work colleagues ☐		5. Work colleagues ☐		5. Work colleagues ☐
	6. Local government ☐		6. Local government ☐		6. Local government ☐		6. Local government ☐
	7. NGO/international donor ☐		7. NGO/international donor ☐		7. NGO/international donor ☐		7. NGO/international donor ☐
	8. Religious organization ☐		8. Religious organization ☐		8. Religious organization ☐		8. Religious organization ☐
	9. Savings group ☐		9. Savings group ☐		9. Savings group ☐		9. Savings group ☐
	10. Informal lender ☐		10. Informal lender ☐		10. Informal lender ☐		10. Informal lender ☐
	11. Other ☐		11. Other ☐		11. Other ☐		11. Other ☐
	12. Did not receive any ☐		12. Did not receive any ☐		12. Did not receive any ☐		12. Did not receive any ☐

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

Please tell us about your household's major expenditures:

		Q72. In an average month, what do you have enough to spend money on? (*not figures, tick boxes)*	**Q73.** In a good month, how does you expenditure change for these items? (tick boxes)		**Q74.** In a bad month, which expenditure do you reduce or cut in order to ger by? (tick)		**Q75**. How does your expenditure on each item now compare with before you moved? (tick)		
			1. same	2. increase	1. same	2. decrease	1. same	2. increase	3. decrease
1.	Food	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Clothing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Electricity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Health services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Social insurance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Fuel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9.	House (rent) payment	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10.	House repairs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Alcohol and cigarettes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Other ……..	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Using 'far', 'average' and 'close' how far are the following services from your home now? (please ring appropriate answer)

		(a) NOW			(b) BEFORE LAST MIGRATION		
		Far	Average	Close	Far	Average	Close
Q76.	Bus station	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q77.	Water source (for domestic use)	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q78.	Children's school	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q79.	Work place	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q80.	Shop	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q81.	Family clinic	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q82.	Market for selling goods	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q83.	Communication (telephone)	1	2	3	1	2	3
Q84.	Hot water	1	2	3	1	2	3

Comparing to your previous (most recent) place, what kind of changes happened in your household?

		Improved	Same	Got worse	Don't know
Q85.	Household income	1	2	3	4
Q86.	Housing situation	1	2	3	4
Q87.	Access to health services	1	2	3	4
Q88.	Access to education	1	2	3	4
Q89.	Relatives' support	1	2	3	4
Q90.	Formal support (state)	1	2	3	4
Q91.	Employment status	1	2	3	4

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

Section 4. Children's education

Please tell us more about the children who live in your household (all those who are under 18 years old)

	Q92. Name	**Q93. Line no in first table**	**Q94. Which level is s/he studying in?** (*For grades 1-10 write number of grade, then:* 11. at home 12. in kindergarten 1. dropped out 2. did not enter school 15. graduated	**Q95. If dropped out, from which grade?** (number 1 to 10)	**Q96. Why did s/he drop out?** (please, write the respondents answer in full without rephrasing into your own words.)	**Q97. Your future plans for child's education?** 1. will not send to school 2. will graduate 8th grade 3. will graduate 10th grade 4. will study technical school 5. will have higher education 6. don't know	**Q98. Does s/he have a disability** (eg blind/deaf/ learning probs/ phys disability) 1. no 2. yes (specify)	**Q99. How long does it take them to get to school?** 1. less than 15 minutes 2. 16-30 minutes 3. 30-60 minutes 4. more than 1 hour
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								

How would you assess the following related to your children's education now? (*Tick the appropriate answer)*

		For children in **preschool**				For children in **primary school** (grade 1-4)				For children in **secondary school**			
		Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Don't know	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Don't know	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Don't know
Q100.	Achievement (generally)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q101.	Availability of enough teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q102.	Qualification of teachers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q103.	Extracurricular activities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q104.	Capacity of classrooms	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q105.	Availability of books and other study materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Q106.	Home condition to do homework	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

HOUSEHOLD NUMBER……..…….☐☐☐

Please could you tell us how much you spend on your children's education? (fill in for appropriate levels of education)

		PRESCHOOL COSTS per child			**PRIMARY SCHOOL COSTS** per child			**SECONDARY SCHOOL COSTS** per child		
		Q107. How much do you spend on this?	**Q108.** Time frame 1. a month 2. quarter 3. a year	**Q109.** Total a year	**Q110.** How much do you spend on this?	**Q111.** Time frame 1. a month 2. quarter 3. a year	**Q112.** Total a year	**Q113.** How much do you spend on this?	**Q114.** Time frame 1. a month 2. quarter 3. 3. a year	**Q115.** Total a year
1.	School clothing									
2.	School fees (if paid)									
3.	Study materials (eg bag, notebooks, books stationery)									
4.	Additional cost school requires (review of a lesson, classroom repairs, class fund etc.)									
5.	Pocket money									
6.	Food costs									
7.	Course, extracurricular activities									
8.	Dormitory costs									
	Total (to be calculated, not asked of respondent)									

Q116. Can you always afford all these education costs?

1. Yes ☐ 2. No ☐ If no, why? ……

Q117. Who mostly helps the younger children get ready for school?

1. Mother ☐
2. Father ☐
3. Older sisters/brothers ☐
4. Other relative ☐
5. They do by themselves ☐
6. Other ☐

Q 118 .Do they have breakfast in the mornings before school?

1. yes always ☐
2. most days ☐
3. sometimes ☐
4. rarely ☐
5. never ☐

Q119. What do your children do in the time they are not at school?

1. Study in a course ☐
2. Do sports ☐
3. Help in household work ☐
4. Look after younger brother/sister ☐
5. Look after an ill/old person ☐
6. Plays ☐
7. Watches television ☐
8. Works (paid) ☐
9. Nothing ☐
10. Don't know ☐

Q120. Can your children study in the district they should?

1. Yes ☐
2. No ☐

Q121. Do you receive assistance for your children to go to school?

1. Yes ☐
2. Yes ☐

Q122 Who from?

Family ☐
Friends ☐
NGO ☐
State ☐
Religious ☐
Other ☐
Uniforms/materials ☐
Food costs ☐

Q123. What kind of assistance?

Money ☐

Thinking back to before you moved the last time, please compare your children's education (generally) now and before you moved

	Improved	Same	Got worse	Don't know
Q124. Children's achievement	1	2	3	4
Q125. Children's school	1	2	3	4
Q126. Children's interest to study	1	2	3	4
Q127. Teachers	1	2	3	4
Q128. Children's character, behaviour	1	2	3	4
Q129. Children's health	1	2	3	4
Q130. Other ……..	1	2	3	4

Q131. Over the last 10 years, in the different locations which you have lived in, when and where do you believe your children's education was best?……

Q132. How and why?……

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS.

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Directors: Dr Caroline Harper and Professor David Hulme

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For information contact:
CHIP, c/o Save the Children, 1 St. John's Lane, London EC1M 4AR
Telephone: 44 (0)207 012 6796
Email: info@childhoodpoverty.org
Web: www.childhoodpoverty.org

Department of Sociology, School of Social Sciences,
Room 258, Bldg 2, National University of Mongolia,
Ulaanbaatar 46, Mongolia
Telephone: 976 11 314326
Email: mn_soc@yahoo.com
Web: www.num.edu.mn

Save the Children UK Programme in Mongolia, CPO Box 1023, Ulaanbaatar 13, Mongolia.
Telephone: 976 11 329365; 976 11 329371; 976 11 328995
Email: monscf@magicnet.mn
Web: www.savethechildren.mn/eng

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