CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME
MONGOLIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

Giving children back their childhood
CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME 2011

Project Description

Established: 1997

Location: Cities: Ulaanbaatar, Erdenet. Provinces: Bulgan Center, Orkhon, Khishigundur, Dashinchilen, Gurvanbulag, Hutul, Bayanchandmani

Target group: Children living in poverty stricken families.

Sponsors: Individual sponsors from Ireland, UK, Australia, Hong Kong, Holland, Belgium and Mongolia

CNCF Staff: 5 full time staff: Badam Sh. (project manager), Dulguun E. and Batmukh G. (social workers), Munkhtsetseg B. (translator), Chuiluuntogtokh S. (driver)

Local Partners: Mongolian National Children’s Center in UB, Children’s centers in Bulgan and Erdenet cities, social welfare offices, district and sub district, social workers, secondary school social workers.

CNCF Involvement: Full responsibility for funding, financial administration and implementation.

Funding 2011: US$ 515,445

Reporting Period: January- December 2011

Compiled By: Badam Shirnen
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Programme Background

Christina Noble established the Child Sponsorship Programme in Mongolia in 1997 with 98 children. The programme was designed to protect children who, as a result of their family’s socio-economic circumstances were vulnerable to sexual and economic exploitation, and to prevent them from taking to the streets and exposed to a life of crime. Financial sponsorship enables financially impoverished families to prioritize education as a basic right for their children and ensures their children attend school in good health and with the support needed to realise their potential. This increases the confidence and self-esteem of children living in difficult circumstances and significantly increases their chances of gaining employment or continuing with higher education upon graduation. The sponsorship programme aims to break the cycle of poverty in Mongolia by improving the living conditions of the children through providing not only financial but also emotional support.

Sponsorship funds of US$31 per child / month are received from international child sponsors engaged through our fundraising offices. Of this, US$25 goes directly to the child with the remaining US$6 spent as follows:

- US$1 for international office child sponsorship programme administration
- US$1 contribution towards an international contingency fund
- US$4 for the management, monitoring and implementation of the programme in Mongolia. Any excess funds are directed into a special administrative fund (SAF) in Mongolia for cases such as emergency health assistance for the children on the programme.

Project Mission

- Provide financial support to allow sponsorship families to purchase school supplies, clothes, food, heating, healthcare and electricity amongst many other critical expenses to ensure the child continues in the education system.
- Provide social and emotional support to sponsored children by continuing to monitor their progress and offering counselling and advice where required.
- Providing professional welfare assistance for any social and emotional needs of a sponsored child’s parents and siblings.

Project Beneficiaries

The Sponsorship Programme’s main beneficiaries are children of secondary school age who need support up until they graduate from school. However, this support can be extended through universities or college for children who show academic potential and want to pursue a higher education. We also aim to continue assisting sponsored children who have dropped out of school prematurely (due to lack of academic ability) but show interest in vocational apprenticeships.

Majority of the sponsored families live in the poor suburbs of Ulaanbaatar. However the programmes reach also extends into several rural cities between 220km’s and 510km’s from Ulaanbaatar and even more remote locations. Sponsored families usually live in gers (traditional felt tents) or small, poorly insulated huts. They reside in the ger district on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar that lacks adequate sanitation, clean water and electricity.
Many families have migrated to the capital from the countryside to find employment after losing their livestock and livelihoods during the harsh winter *dzuds*, so don’t have regular employment. Instead they undertake menial activities such as washing cars or collecting empty bottles and cans from the rubbish tips to either sell or recycle.

Most of the children in the Sponsorship Programme are from one of the following circumstances:

- Children from a single parent family with many siblings, or have disabled persons in the family.
- Children who are orphans and live with their elder siblings, grandparents or other relatives in poor living conditions.
- Children who have parents who suffer from a disability and survive on small disability pension allowances provided by the government.
- Children who are living in the countryside where their parents have lost their livestock due to harsh winters.

### 2011 Programme Overview

#### Sponsorship Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soum/City</th>
<th>Distance from UB (km)</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dashinchilen</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurvanbulag</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orkhon</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgan</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutul</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khishigundur</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erdenet</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the last 14 years the sponsorship programme has grown and now looks after 1337 children and their families. In 2011, the Sponsorship Programme operated in 9 districts of Ulaanbaatar City, as well as Erdenet City, and Bulgan, Orkhon, Khishigundur, Dashinchilen, Gurvanbulag, Hutul, Bayanchandmani soums. As seen in Table 1, the sponsorship programme attends to 129 families outside Ulaanbaatar. With 85 sponsorship children in Erdenet and Bulgan towns alone, it is challenging to maintain regular contact but this is successfully achieved through a constant stream of communication as well as thorough half yearly face-to-face visits by the team.

Table 1: The number of sponsorship children located in countryside centres outside of Ulaanbaatar

Typical housing in the countryside. Note the remoteness and the lack of access to electricity or water
Sponsor Country of Origin

The sponsorship programme has a strong international sponsor base. Table 2 shows the average number of children sponsored by each country each year. Ireland sponsors the greatest number of children (37%) followed by Hong Kong (26%) and the UK (22%). The 7% drop in the average number of children sponsored between 2010 and 2011 is a combination of the number of children that graduated from the CSP that year and the number of new children not yet allocated to a sponsor at the time of year end reporting. However, there was a noticeable downturn in sponsorship numbers from the UK and Ireland believed to be the result of global financial conditions impacting disposable income.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor Country of Origin</th>
<th>Average no. Children 2010</th>
<th>Average no. Children 2011</th>
<th>+/- (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>+7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong-Kong</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1501</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>-105 (-7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The average number of children sponsored each year in 2010 and 2011, listed by country of sponsor.

The sponsorship team strives to maintain a personal connection between the sponsorship children and their sponsors. Sponsors receive an annual progress report, which includes a photo and letter written by the child. When visiting Mongolia, sponsors may meet their sponsored child, with prior notification.

Typical Housing found around Ulaan Baatar where many our sponsorship children live with their families
Educational Support

As the Child Sponsorship Programme is primarily to ensure that children are able to attend school, a close record of their attendance is kept. 81% of all sponsored children are in public school which includes primary, secondary and high school children aged 6 to 18. 17% have gone onto university, college, or vocational training courses.

At the beginning of the academic year the children provide CNCF with documentation from their schools confirming their school attendance, and at the end of the school year they submit their academic results. In cases where the sponsorship is used for children with severe health problems or disabilities, school reports are not necessary. The individual sponsorship programme agreement is executed within the general guidelines of the child being enrolled in school and part of a family and a community.

Table 3: Level of education sponsored children enrolled in for 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Number of children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Training Centre</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public school (6-18yo)</td>
<td>1079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled children</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under age 4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children no longer attending school</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher Education

Children who are about to graduate secondary school are given the opportunity to enrol in university or vocational training courses. Also, for children that may fail their first university entrance exams, CNCF encourages them to make another effort in the following school year before alternatively entering a vocational course or starting paid employment. The programme also enables us to assist some of the children with their University and College fees. This is often necessary as their parents are unable to afford the tuition fees for various reasons.

Sponsoring children involved in higher education encourages the children in their studies and eases some of the financial burden that families face in providing their children with the necessary materials to go to school. In 2011 a total of 131 sponsorship children were studying at University of which 35 of them were in their first year. Of the 131 children, 12 received assistance with their tuition fees in addition to general sponsorship.

In 2011, 12 children from the sponsorship programme graduated from University majoring in international business and management, banking management, history, accounting, marketing management, art studies and others. Each year the sponsorship team organizes a luncheon with the graduates to talk about their achievements and plans for the future.
Annual Reports

Maintaining a positive relationship between the sponsor and sponsorship child is critical for both parties to continue to benefit from our child sponsorship programme. One of the most important roles of the sponsorship team’s work is sending annual reports of the children to their sponsors.

Children involved in the Sponsorship programme write a letter to their sponsor once a year to update them on their progress. These letters are collected and translated and sent to the sponsors along with a child’s annual and home visit reports prepared by the social workers.

Activities and Achievements 2011

Home Visits

According to the home visit schedule, our social workers made 425 home visits in 2011. As a result, new children were identified and enrolled in the sponsorship programme while school attendance and family living conditions were more accurately validated.

Our social workers were better able to identify problems within sponsored families particularly the underlying reasons for unemployment, lack of access to financial resources, and cases of neglect, physical abuse or crime. They are able to understand the circumstances contributing to a family’s inability to provide basic needs such as food, fuel, electricity and clothing let alone free up the resources required to keep a child in school.
Countryside Trips

The Sponsorship team visited the children living in the countryside twice in 2011. Over 1200 km were covered each trip on very rough roads. Most of these families are extremely poor and the winter is particularly hard for them. In some cases the sponsorship money is the only reliable income families have to survive on, so they are understandably happy when we arrive.

During these visits the team is able to talk with the parents and children and perform a thorough assessment of their circumstances and home life to ensure they are conducive to education, are nurturing and most importantly are free from abuse. They also review the children’s annual school reports and discuss their progress to ensure they are still attending and performing to the best of their ability. The team also visits families that are going through the Child Sponsorship application process to assess their eligibility.

As pictured above with her family and to the left individually, Otgonjargal lives in Erdenet city which is located 370 km from Ulaanbaatar. Both her parents are currently unemployed. Otgonjargal’s father used to drive a taxi and her mother has never worked as she was taking care of her children. Otgonjargal has two brothers (age 15 and 5) and two sisters (age 17 and 3). The family lives in a ger (a traditional felt tent). Otgonjargal’s family struggle to make ends meet and their mother collects empty bottles and cans from the street and sells them at the market. She gets approximately 2-3 USD a day. The family receives an allowance of 122 USD from the Government, that is barely sufficient to support a family of seven.

Otgonjargal is a good pupil at her school. Her favorite subjects are Math and Mongolian and dreams of becoming a doctor when she grows up. Outside of school she likes playing outdoors with her friends.

Extra Help from Sponsors

Every year some sponsors send extra money to their sponsored children and their families in order to improve their living conditions or for special purposes. In 2011, 256 children received additional funds that were used to purchase food, coal, firewood, clothing and school necessities.

In addition, the children sometimes receive parcels and letters from their sponsors. Each item and news from the sponsor brings a lot of enjoyment to the children. Sometimes they receive things that they have never seen before or experience an opportunity to try foods that are foreign to them.
Sponsor Visits

Some of our sponsorship children are lucky enough to get to meet their sponsor in person. This provides a wonderful opportunity for both the sponsor and the child to bond and for the sponsor to see how their contribution has benefitted the family of the child they support. The smiles on the faces of the children and their sponsors are always priceless.

Special Assistance Fund

The Special Assistance Fund provides emergency help to the sponsorship children and their families in the event of urgent problems, such as serious illness or special requests for food, firewood, coal and clothing. In the event of the death of parents or siblings of the sponsorship children, the family receives a financial contribution toward funeral costs.

During 2011, 14 poverty stricken families were provided with coal and food and support towards the funeral costs of their recently deceased parent or sibling.

Warm Winter Clothing Distribution

In November and December 2011, the sponsorship team distributed jumpers, hats, and gloves that were knitted and donated by a group of UK donors. All the children were delighted to receive the brightly coloured and warm clothes perfect for the Mongolian winter. Such functional donations are highly appreciated as it enables the families to spend more on basic subsistence items.

Summer Camp

In 2011, 17 children from the sponsorship programme received an incredible chance to spend 10 days of their holidays at a Children’s Summer Camp. The children love to attend these camps as it allows them to interact with children from other backgrounds and walks of life. They also spend time out of the city enjoying the fresh air in the beautiful and natural surroundings. At the camp, the children actively participate in different kinds of indoor and outdoor activities. For those who are living in difficult circumstances, it is one of the happiest times of their life.
Success Stories 2011

Successful Sponsorship Programme Graduations

Ariunzaya joined the CNCF sponsorship programme in December 2001. She is from Darkhan province and moved to the city of Ulaanbaatar in 2001. Her mother passed away in 1999 and her father left her and her younger brother many years ago. Ariunzaya dropped out of school while in the 2nd grade and lived at the railway station. She finally came to the attention of CNCF when she visited our doctors.

Ariunzaya started to live in the CNCF Blue Skies Ger village in 2001 and also had a hip operation that year. She graduated from secondary school in 2007 and then went on to study at the University of Social Sciences where she studied social work and psychology. In 2009, she left the Ger Village and received a ger donated from CNCF’s Give-a-Ger project. In 2011 Ariunzaya graduated from university and now lives with her husband and child. She hopes to work as a social worker when her baby is older.

Khaliuna joined the CNCF sponsorship programme in June 2001 when she was 11 years old. She was living with her grandparents and 3 brothers. Her father left them in 1991 and her mother passed away in 2000. The family had a very low income and was living in poor conditions. She graduated from secondary school in 2009 and went to a Food Technology College. Khaliuna was a motivated and diligent student and graduated from college in 2011.

Urangoo joined the CNCF sponsorship programme in June 2002, when she was in grade 6 at school. She was living with her mother, stepfather, younger sister, and grandmother. Her younger sister is 3 years old and stays at home. Urangoo’s stepfather is in poor health and unemployed, her mother is unemployed and her grandmother is a pensioner. The family’s living conditions are very poor and they reside in the ger districts of Ulaanbaatar.

Urangoo recently graduated from the sponsorship programme after 9 years with CNCF. During her studies at the University of Art and Culture where she trained as an actress, she won three awards for acting. Urangoo also attended an international theatre festival and came third in a speech competition ahead of many other competitors. Since graduating, she has written a book of poems which has been published and is now working in TV providing Mongolian voice-overs for foreign films. She has also appeared in a supporting role in a film for Mongolian TV.
Gantuya is 17 years old and has been sponsored by CNCF since March 2005. She lives with her mother, elder sister, three older brothers and a younger brother. Her father died in 2002 due to illness, her mother works as a volunteer at a local administrative unit, and her sister at a wool factory. Their total family income is US$202 per month. Although her family income is low and they live a hard life, Gantuya has been learning free style wrestling and judo since 2007 and also plays basketball. Since commencing training she has become a master of judo and free style wrestling.

Gantuya’s long list of achievements includes:
- 15 gold medals, 5 silver medals and 10 bronze medals in various wrestling competitions since 2008.
- 1 gold and 1 bronze medal in two basketball competitions in 2011

Bolorerdene is 14 years old and has been sponsored by CNCF since May 2007. She lives with her mother and two younger sisters and her father passed away due to illness. She has been learning judo wrestling and sambo wrestling since 2010 and continues to perform well in her studies.

Bolorerdene’s achievements include:
- 1 gold medal, 2 silver medals and 1 bronze medal at various wrestling events in 2010 and 2011
- Special place at Mongolian Language Olympiads in 2010
2011 in Photos

Sponsorship children are encouraged to apply themselves to various careers, including hairdressing and various trades.

Sponsors enjoy visiting their sponsored children as well as donating extra goods especially in winter.

Toys, school resources, sweets and much more are sent to sponsorship children throughout the year.