



# Give-a-Ger Programme Annual Report 2016





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The Christina Noble Children's Foundation is dedicated to serving the physical, medical, educational and emotional needs of vulnerable children in Vietnam and Mongolia. We believe that every child deserves love, respect and freedom from all forms of exploitation and abuse.

We establish long-term relationships with the children we support and empower them to live happy, emotionally rich, and independent lives.





Happy to see her new home take shape!

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We believe that all children need a home to grow up in. A place where they can lay their heads at nighttime with peace in their hearts, surrounded by love, security and protection.

It seems so simple and in many ways it is, yet thousands of children are closing their innocent young eyes to a different story, one where they are desperately cold, frightened and vulnerable.

Our Give-a-Ger donors create real and lasting change for these precious little ones and their families by providing them with a warm, safe and beautiful home of their own. For many who apply to our programme the Christina Noble Children's Foundation offers their only hope to escape a lifetime of the violence, abuse and exploitation that often comes hand in hand with homelessness and extreme destitution.

We would like to thank the following donors and organisations that supported our Give-a-Ger Programme in 2016 and in doing so have changed the whole world for a family in desperate need:

Mr S L Moore; Hildegard Mayhew; André & Viviane Boureau; Bernard & Victoria Kwan; Chinese International School students; Julia Von Bertele; Geoff & Patricia Selley; Barbara Black; Mitsubishi Tokyo Bank; Pauline Brown; Hong Kong donors; and a special thanks to Eugene Harkin for his on-going support of the programme and his incredible donation of fourteen gers this year.

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## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

<b>Established</b>	2001
<b>Location</b>	Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
<b>Objectives</b>	To provide homeless families, those at risk of becoming homeless, or families living in dangerous and/or barely habitable conditions with a warm, safe and functional new home of their own. Through improving their standards of living, we offer the whole family a platform from which to flourish, helping to reignite their confidence, self-belief and optimism for the future. By taking away the enormous pressure of surviving without the most basic necessity – a secure home, we allow them to embark on a fulfilling and bright future together, one where the parents have peace of mind and the children are able to go to school and focus on achieving a good education.
<b>Programme Components</b>	Provision and set up of a 4 or 5 wall ger including a full set of furniture; social and psychological support to families where required; additional assistance to at least one child in the family through the Child Sponsorship Programme; access to our Child Sponsorship subprojects including the Special Assistance and Education Scholarship funds; opportunities for personal development and training workshops.
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	Our ger recipients include children and their families on the Child Sponsorship Programme; children moving out of the Blue Skies Ger Village either to be reunited with family members or to begin an independent adult life; homeless and/or vulnerable families in dire need of assistance.
<b>Local Partners</b>	National Authority for Children, National Authority for Family and Child Development
<b>CNCF Involvement</b>	Fully responsible for funding and programme management, monitoring and evaluation.
<b>CNCF Staff</b>	Director: Thomas Minter; Programme Coordinator: Otgontuya; Social Workers: Baigalmaa and Altanzul; Translators: Deegi and Muugii; Driver: Saindoo
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	First, we receive requests from families in need of assistance, which include a detailed family history and description of their current living conditions. The social worker then visits the family and meets with their responsible district and khoroo community workers in order to assess whether or not they are eligible to receive a ger through our programme. If they meet our requirements and funding is acquired, CNCF provides the ger, basic furniture and helps the family set up their new home. A full report is then sent out to donor(s) of the ger. Our social workers remain in regular contact with the families to monitor their progress and provide additional assistance if necessary. Regular updates are provided to the Programme Coordinator. Written monthly reports are submitted to the Director of Operations and an annual report is sent out to all stakeholders. Weekly internal meetings are conducted for CNCF staff to discuss programme related issues and updates.
<b>2016 Actual Costs</b>	\$39,498.73 USD
<b>Future Plans</b>	The future plan of our programme is to continue to deliver high quality gers to families in desperate need of a safe, warm and functional home. We endeavour to create lasting change in the lives of these families by providing additional emotional and social support as well as enrolling a child onto our sponsorship programme. In addition, all families who receive a ger will continue to have access to our subprojects and training sessions. We will strive to improve our services and strengthen our ability to create lasting change in the lives of those we support.
<b>Reporting Period</b>	January-December 2016



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## PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

Since starting its operations in Mongolia in 1997, the Christina Noble Children's Foundation has worked to provide homeless families with a ger of their own and in **2001**, the Give-a-Ger Programme was officially established.

The programme was formed as a response to the desperate poverty and hardship that engulfed the nation at that time and left thousands of children and their families fighting for survival in a country notorious for its fiercely harsh climate and challenging living conditions.

Mongolia became a satellite state of the Soviet Union in 1924, governed from Moscow by the communist party. Then, with the breakdown of the Union in 1990 and the subsequent Soviet withdrawal, Mongolia underwent rapid socioeconomic and political changes that have transformed it from a socialist country to a multiparty democracy and a market economy.

The closure of workplaces, unemployment, high rates of poverty and the many other arduous challenges that resulted from this transition caused great instability.



One of our families after receiving their beautiful, new ger.

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Parents often find work cleaning apartment blocks in exchange for a small salary and accommodation under the building's stairs.

This highly turbulent time led to thousands of children and their families becoming homeless and being forced to take shelter in dangerous, unhealthy and squalid conditions. Children dropped out of school at an unprecedented rate and often had no other choice than to go out to work for long hours with incredibly little pay in order to boost the family income.

All over the country people were living in horrendous conditions; many had no other option but to take shelter in the city sewers. For those living on the streets, the sewers – with warm waste water flowing through the pipes – was their only refuge against a long and harsh winter climate where temperatures regularly reach – 40°C.

When Christina first visited Mongolia in 1997, she was heartbroken to find so many children and families living in

such desperate and vulnerable situations. Christina, herself a former street child, understands the pain of abuse, neglect, and destitution. After spending time with these people and understanding their lives, she knew what was needed in order to help them. From that point on the Christina Noble Children's Foundation in Mongolia was born and in 2001 the Give-a-Ger Programme was officially established.



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Since its conception eight hundred and sixty families who were homeless or living in desperate and vulnerable conditions have been provided with a safe, warm and beautiful home of their own.

For many who apply to our programme the Christina Noble Children's Foundation offers their only hope to escape a lifetime of the violence, abuse and exploitation that often comes hand in hand with homelessness and extreme destitution.

Families who have come to us beaten and broken by the harsh reality of surviving without a proper home have been able to rebuild their lives and flourish once in an environment where they can be together, free from fear and without the ongoing uncertainty of what tomorrow will bring.

Our donors do not just give a ger, they reignite a family's confidence, self-belief and optimism for the future. They give families back their hope.



Enjoying childhood outside his ger!

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A view of the capital city, Ulaanbaatar.



## MONGOLIA TODAY — *Who are the families that we support?*

The first external poverty assessment of Mongolia was conducted in 1996, a year before our founder Christina Noble first arrived. It was reported by the World Bank that 36% of Mongolia's population lived below the weighted poverty line of \$17 USD per month.<sup>1</sup>

Since then Mongolia has gone through periods of incredibly fast development driven primarily by large foreign investments into the mining industry. In 2001 the world's second largest ever deposit of copper-gold ore was discovered in the Gobi desert, fuelling what many have labelled the "Mining Boom".<sup>2</sup> After peaking in 2007 Mongolia was then affected greatly by the global economic downturn as the price of metals fell rapidly – especially copper, which decreased by 65% between July 2008 and February 2009.<sup>3</sup>

Mongolia has been in recovery since 2010 but the economy continues to face challenges due to the low levels of global demand for minerals. Economic growth slowed to just 2.4% in 2015 and the downward trend continued this year, settling at a lowly 1.0%.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> World Bank (1996), *Mongolia: Poverty Assessment in a Transition Economy*, Report number: 15723 [online] [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/1996/06/27/000009265\\_3961214164741/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSPContentServer/WDSP/IB/1996/06/27/000009265_3961214164741/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf) [accessed 21/12/15]

<sup>2</sup> BBC (2013), *Mongolia's Mining Boom*, Radio 4: Crossing Continents, 1 April 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01rgm9q>

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (2009), *Mongolia Quarterly*, February 2009, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMONGOLIA/Resources/MongoliaQuarterlyFebruary2009English.pdf> [accessed 16/01/15]

<sup>4</sup> Trading Economics (2017), *Mongolia GDP Annual Growth Rate*, <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/mongolia/gdp-growth-annual> [accessed 12/02/17]



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In spite of the economic slowdown in recent years, on the whole – between 2001 and the present day – there is no doubt that Mongolia has developed rapidly and the standard of living has improved for a significant percentage of the population, including the establishment of a middle class.<sup>5</sup> Official figures show the poverty rate declining from 27.4% in 2012 to 21.6% in 2014.<sup>6</sup>

However, despite apparent progress on a national level many of the poorest families have been left behind. As is so often the case in rapidly developing countries there is a widening chasm between the rich and the poor. Due to the massive price inflation stimulated by the mining boom (inflation peaked at an incredible 31.9% in July 2008)<sup>7</sup> many families are now unable to afford basic living provisions, such as adequate food and heating, and there is effectively no social welfare available to support them. Despite the prices of commodities increasing rapidly over the past fifteen years, the income of these families has increased at a comparably meagre rate.



<sup>5</sup> Asian Development Bank (2010), *The Rise of Asia's Middle Class*, <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/27726/ki2010-special-chapter.pdf> [accesses 07/10/16]

<sup>6</sup> World Bank (2016), *Mongolia Overview*, 12 April 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mongolia/overview>, [accessed 19/04/16]

<sup>7</sup> Trading Economics (2016), *Mongolia Inflation Rate*, <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/mongolia/inflation-cpi> [accessed 12/01/16]

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Still 61% of Ulaanbaatar's population resides in the city's ger districts, where the majority have no access to running water or a sewage system; of these 736,000 ger district residents, 60% are unemployed.<sup>8</sup> This is to a large extent due to the incredibly high levels of migration from the countryside to the city over the past ten years.

With the rapid nationwide increase in the prices of goods, the traditional nomadic lifestyle has become uneconomical and insufficient for many herders. This, combined with a series of severe winters where large numbers of livestock were lost, has left many nomads with no choice but to move to the capital city in search of a better life.



With no access to running water, people living in the ger district often have to walk long distances in freezing temperatures to collect reserves from one of the public wells.

As a result between thirty and forty thousand people flock to Ulaanbaatar each year with hopes and dreams of steady employment and a prosperous future.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately however, this is not the case for the vast majority of the new arrivals and Mongolia now faces a situation where its capital has 1.4 million people living in a city that was originally engineered to support a mere 400,000.<sup>10</sup>

The immense overpopulation and its subsequent large-scale unemployment are at the root of many systemic and often incredibly complex societal dysfunctions. Alcoholism, domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, and families living in extreme destitution are just some of the saddening and desperate realities that many face

every day, as they struggle to survive with very little support and scarce opportunities.

<sup>8</sup> Engel, David (2015), *Ulaanbaatar's Ger District Issues: Changes and Attitudes*, SIT Graduate Institute, [http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3109&context=isp\\_collection](http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3109&context=isp_collection) [accessed 12/01/16]

<sup>9</sup> National Statistical Office of Mongolia (2010), *Population and Housing Census 2010*, Population and Housing Census Bureau, <http://catalog.ihsn.org/index.php/catalog/4572> [accessed 24/04/16]

<sup>10</sup> Forrest, Brett (2013), *James Passin, The American Who Bought Mongolia*, Bloomberg, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-05-16/james-passin-the-american-who-bought-mongolia> [accessed 04/02/16]



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For the majority of unemployed or low income families, the traditional Mongolian felt ger still provides their best option for security and protection against Mongolia's bitter climate. However, with such limited finances available to them, it is often only the cheapest and lowest quality materials that families can buy. This combined with the relatively expensive cost of maintaining their homes throughout the harsh climatic conditions, means that many people are living in gers that are long past their effective lives.

It is not unusual to find many generations, relatives or even different families sharing the same tiny living space as they are unable to afford their own ger. Unsurprisingly, existing in these cramped conditions can have numerous physical, mental and social ramifications. In recent years, domestic violence has been on the rise and the number of women and children who suffer physical and mental abuse at the hands of step-parents and other family members continues to increase. Victims of domestic violence typically lack alternative shelter and funds, resulting in continued abuse over a long period of time.



Many of the poorest families live in gers that are long past their effective lives.

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Those seeking to escape domestic violence, or families who cannot afford their own home and have no one to turn to, often face the harsh reality of life on the streets – moving in-between temporary shelters such as old dilapidated coal sheds or half constructed buildings.



Homeless families often seek shelter in the tiny, dark and unhealthy stairwells of city apartment block buildings.

Some find work cleaning in one of the city's apartment blocks in exchange for a small salary and accommodation in the building's stairwell. Although these tiny rooms offer some form of warmth and protection, they are typically unventilated, unclean, and have no access to natural light. This can result in a range of serious health concerns such as problems with the lungs, kidneys and bladder.

These unsuitable and often dangerous living conditions put many people, especially children, at high risk of exploitation, abuse and ill-health.

Through providing those most in need with a home of their own, our Give-a-Ger Programme helps vulnerable children and their families create a bright future; we restore their independence and enable them to enjoy an enriching life experience not just an existence.

We believe that having a safe, warm and comfortable place to grow up in is the foundation of life for all children.



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## OUR GERS

Mongolian ger sizes are determined by their number of walls. A four-wall ger, which costs \$3,100 USD through CNCF, can house a family of four, but larger families needing more space are given five-wall gers, costing \$3,800 USD. A Mongolian ger consists of two main components, wood - which forms the roof, pillars, skylight, walls, and door; and a thick felt covering to insulate the home.



All of our gers are made from high quality materials to ensure their longevity.

The Mongolian climate is notoriously volatile; heavy snowfall, strong windstorms and temperatures reaching  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  are common. Poor quality gers are unable to endure this extreme climate and are prone to collapsing, being carried away by the wind, or suffering from severe and costly damage. Gers made from low grade materials have an effective lifespan of one to two years, after that a family's only options are to buy a new ger, move to a different residence, or continue to live in a cold, worn out home that offers little defence against the elements.

We want to be able to provide our families with a ger that is going to last them for a long time, giving them peace of mind and security for their futures. We therefore purchase all of our gers from a well-known and reputable Mongolian company that uses only the best quality wood and insulating felt on the market.

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In addition to receiving a ger, our families are provided with a full set of furniture including two sofas with expandable beds, cushions, table/desk, chairs, kitchen unit with sink, large wardrobe, chest of drawers, mirror and the all important ger stove, used both for cooking and for keeping the family warm in winter. The majority of our families would not be able to afford these items otherwise, all of which play an important role in creating a comfortable and functional *home* that they can feel proud of.

The ger is assembled through the combined efforts of a professional ger construction company, our CNCF team, and members of the family. As a ger is designed for nomadic life it is relatively quick and easy to erect; most Mongolians have at least a simple understanding of how they are constructed. It is always heartwarming to watch the children get involved, and see their excited smiles as they help to build their new home.



Happy little faces inside their beautiful new ger.



Our children are always excited when their new furniture arrives!



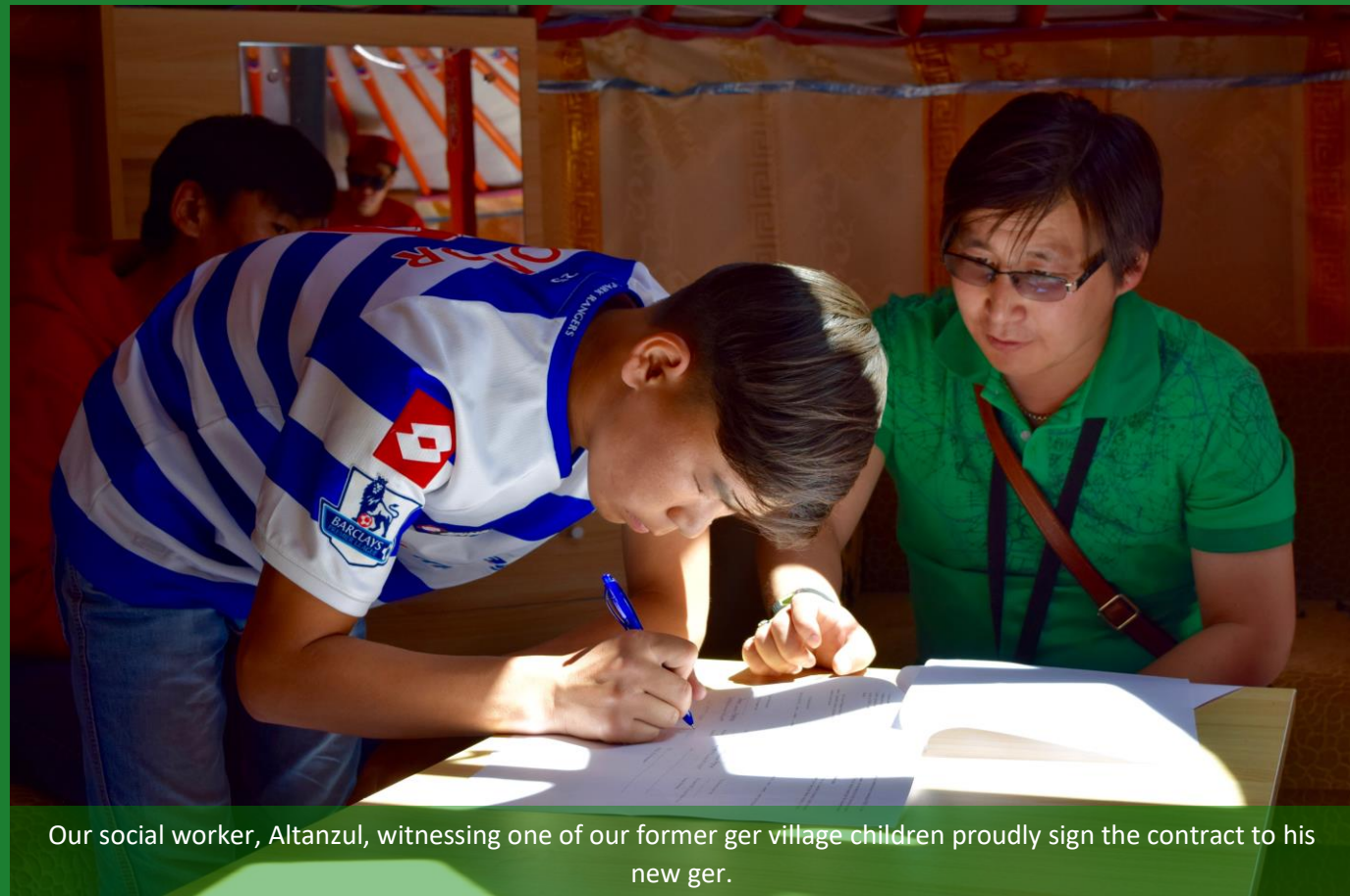
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## OUR DAILY ACTIVITIES

First we receive requests from families in need of assistance, which include a detailed family history and description of their current living conditions. The majority of the applications made are from families that are currently or about to become homeless. The social worker then visits the family and meets with their responsible district and khoroо community workers in order to assess whether or not they are eligible to receive a ger through our programme. A decision is made based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Family income
- Living conditions
- Number of children
- Family status
- Health conditions and disabilities
- Threats to the family's safety

When we have the financial support of a donor, families are chosen in accordance to their level of priority. As most of our families do not own their own land, our team will assist them in finding a suitable location to rent. If they are unable to afford the rent, the Foundation will provide additional financial assistance until the family is in a better position and has the ability to fully support themselves. After all prerequisites have been met, our team will contact the ger company and arrange a date and time for the family's new home to be delivered.



Our social worker, Altanzul, witnessing one of our former ger village children proudly sign the contract to his new ger.





The day we arrive to give the ger is always very special. The children watch with excitement as their new home takes shape and love helping wherever possible.

The social worker who has been assigned to the family is always present on the day that they receive their home and takes an active role in helping to construct the ger. During this process our social worker documents the special day by taking photos and talking to the family about how they are feeling as their new home comes together. This is later used to compile a report for the donor, which also includes the family's history and how the gift of a ger will impact their lives.

For a family who may have been homeless just three hours beforehand, receiving a fully furnished ger of their own can feel almost magical. The children often look around their new home in excitement and disbelief, amazed that they now have a wardrobe to put their clothes in, a bright and comfortable sofa to relax on, and a desk to study at.

Our team is always filled with a tremendous sense of achievement when they see such happiness, hope and pride restored in the lives of our families.

We remain in close contact with all of our Give-a-Ger beneficiaries and continue to help them wherever possible. This includes enrolling one of the children on our Child Sponsorship Programme and visiting the family at least once a year to monitor their progress and provide social support.



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## OUR YEAR

### 2016 Objectives

To provide homeless families; those at risk of becoming homeless; or families living in dangerous and/or barely habitable conditions with a warm, safe and functional new home of their own. Through improving their standards of living, we offer the whole family a platform from which to flourish, helping to reignite their confidence, self-belief and optimism for the future. By taking away the enormous pressure of surviving without the most basic necessity – a secure home, we allow them to embark on a fulfilling and bright future together, one where the parents have peace of mind and the children are able to go to school and focus on achieving a good education.

To do this we:

- Provide every child and family with a comprehensive assessment. Social workers conduct home visits to see firsthand the living conditions of each family and plan the details of their move, such as renting land and in many cases escaping complex family dynamics. A plan is put in place for each family depending on their own unique circumstances and it is established how the Foundation can best support them now and in the future.
- Enroll a child on our Child Sponsorship Programme. This applies to new families who are not yet part of our Foundation's programmes. Through providing ongoing monthly financial and social support, the family is able to continue to improve their quality of life after receiving their new ger.



It is always a heart-warming moment when we say goodbye to our families and leave them to enjoy being together in their new home.

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- Supply the highest quality gers to ensure warmth, security and ger longevity. The majority of our families are not able to afford regular maintenance costs, we therefore only provide gers that are made from the most durable materials and can withstand years of severe weather conditions without showing significant wear and tear. We want our families to have a home that is going to last them for a long time, giving them peace of mind and security for their futures.
- Hire a professional ger construction team to erect the family's new home, ensuring that the structure is safe.
- Fully furnish each ger to create a functional and homely environment that the family can enjoy and feel proud of. This includes the provision of a desk so that the children have a space to study at home.
- Help family members identify goals and objectives, which could improve their lives going forward.
- Give families hope, optimism and security for their futures, by relieving the fear and anxiety that comes with having no home.
- Improve each member of the family's self-confidence by treating them with dignity, compassion and respect at all times.



Having fun on their new bright and bouncy sofa!



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## 2016 Overview

This year fifty families applied to our Give-a-Ger Programme. After carefully assessing the living conditions of each family and gaining a deeper understanding of the challenges they were facing, our social workers identified twenty-four families who were most in need. Each had their own heartbreaking story of hardship – severe abuse, the loss of loved ones, disabilities and chronic health conditions were all common themes expressed by the families.

Out of our families sixteen received four-wall gers and eight of our larger families were given five-wall gers. By providing fully furnished homes to these deserving families a total of seventy-five children and forty-five adults now have a safe, comfortable and beautiful place to live that they can feel proud of. For all of our families, the gift of a new ger has allowed them to start a fresh chapter in their lives and move forward with hope and optimism.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The total direct cost of the Give-a-Ger Programme in 2016 was \$39,498.73 USD.

This includes all expenditure that is specific and dedicated to the running and operation of the programme such as gers and all necessary accessories, furniture, rent for land where required, transport, and social worker and translator salaries.

The indirect cost of supporting the programme was \$8,053.46 USD. This includes the salaries of CNCF Mongolia management and administration staff, office rent and utilities, stationery and supplies, communications, staff training, professional consultancy, and travel.

Our 2016 accounts are available upon request.



## GIVE-A-GER 2016 HIGHLIGHTS

**24** families received a ger through our programme

**16** received four-wall gers

**8** received five-wall gers



**75**  
children now  
have a home



**45**  
adults now  
have a home

**All** gers come fully furnished

**All** families receive social worker support

**All** families have a child enrolled on the Child Sponsorship Programme

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## OUR STORIES

### Dalaikhuu

Dalaikhuu\* and his family have struggled to overcome many challenges since moving to Ulaanbaatar from Zavkhan province in 2005. Although his father, Odbayar, was unable to work because of poor eyesight, his mother, Egshiglen, found work wherever she could – working as a cook, a sales assistant, and a cleaner. Recently Dalaikhuu's older sister graduated from vocational training school as a chef and now works to help support the family.

In 2010 Dalaikhuu fell ill with meningitis, which has left him permanently disabled. Unable to walk or sit alone, and needing frequent medical treatment, his mother had no choice but to give up work to care for him.

Last autumn, while Dalaikhuu and his mother were at the hospital for more medical treatment, the family's ger was broken into, burgled and destroyed. Heartbroken at the loss of their home, they moved into rented accommodation but had to leave when they were unable to pay the rent. The family found state accommodation but were soon at risk of eviction there too, as they were again unable to keep up with the monthly rent payments.

The family, with their severely disabled son, were likely to become homeless and turned to CNCF in desperation. After learning about their



With the security of their own home, Dalaikhuu and his family can now look towards the future with positivity and hope.



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situation the family were overjoyed when, thanks to the generosity and love of one caring Donor, we were able to immediately offer them a fully furnished ger. On 8 September 2016 the CNCF team arrived to assemble the new four-wall ger, and the family joined in with enthusiasm as their new home took shape.

They were overjoyed. The life changing impact that this will have on the family can be understood through Dalaikhuu's mother's heartfelt words:

*"We were hardly able to survive because we had no money for rented accommodation and our neighbors scolded us for Dalaikhuu's health problems. But now we are very happy because we have a fully furnished ger. Dalaikhuu can practice his walking in the ger and he will be able to have some treatments at home. We really appreciate the help and support of the very kind person who bought this ger for us. It means so much to our family and it will really help Dalaikhuu's healthy development. Thank you so much."*



Tsatral and her mother inside their old, rundown hut.

## Tsatral

Seventeen-year-old Tsatsral\* had been living under intolerable conditions for many years. Tsatsral, her sister and their fifty-five -year-old mother were living with Tsatsral's two uncles in a small ger belonging to one of the uncles who is unfortunately – like many Mongolian men living in extreme poverty – an alcoholic. The other uncle has a severe learning disability, which means he needs nursing care at home.

Tsatsral's mother, Uyanga, has an acute kidney disease and also suffers from high blood pressure and depression, and so is unable to work.

Tsatsral is very keen to study and go to university like her older sister but this became incredibly difficult, as their living conditions grew increasingly violent and dangerous. Tsatsral

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would usually try and do all her studying and homework at school as their tiny ger was often filled with her uncle and his alcoholic friends drinking together.

Eventually, in desperation, Tsatsral and her mother moved to a little summer hut owned by a friend, far away from her uncles (her sister was away at university by this time). This meant they were safe but it would not have been possible for them to live in the flimsy structure through the bitter Mongolian winter.

When our social work team became aware of Tsatsral's situation they immediately took steps to help this family and provide them with the new home they so desperately needed. Fortunately, through the love and generosity of one Donor, in September 2016 we were able to give Tsatsral and her family a fully furnished four-wall ger, just in time for Tsatsral's all important 12th grade year in school – and also in time for winter. If she can pass her exams successfully this year, this determined young woman will be able to go to university and onto a successful career.

Tsatsral's mother asked us to express their gratitude:

*"I used to worry about my daughter's future because for children the most important thing to study successfully is living in a comfortable and peaceful home. I'm so incredibly grateful to receive this ger."*





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Gereltungalag's old basement room was cramped, dark and unhealthy.



harsh Mongolian winters.

## Gereltungalag

We met ten-year-old Gereltungalag in 2014 when her mother, Ariuntsetseg, enrolled her on the CNCF Child Sponsorship Programme. For many years this brave woman had struggled to provide for herself and her two children – Gereltungalag and her younger brother, Anand.

Sadly, Gereltungalag's father left his family shortly after she was born. Ariuntsetseg remarried and gave birth to Anand, but his father also abandoned the family and neither man has kept in touch with them.

In order to support her children Ariuntsetseg found work as a cleaner in an apartment block, and as part of her working arrangement the family were allowed to live in the damp, airless basement. For many families living in poverty in Ulaanbaatar this is the only type of accommodation they can find to protect them from the

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Ariuntsetseg and her children have since lived in the basements of several different apartment blocks, stifling in the hot summers and freezing in the winters when temperatures can plunge as low as – 40°C, and breathing in air that is often filled with mold. As a result, Ariuntsetseg, Gereltungalag and Anand all suffer from respiratory diseases and sore throats. Despite their ill-health, however, Ariuntsetseg was unwilling to give up her job as this would have meant that the family would have then lost the only shelter they had.

The money from Ariuntsetseg's salary combined with the CNCF sponsorship money covers the cost of basic needs such as food and school supplies, however on this income owning their own home would never be more than a dream.

The CNCF social work team realised that this family needed to move from their basement home quickly if their health was not to deteriorate further. With thanks to the care of one Donor, after visiting the family's home on the 5 September we were able to give them a fully furnished ger just three days later. For the first time in their lives the family was able to call a home their own.

The family joined in with happiness and enthusiasm as the ger was built and their new home took shape. On the day the ger was delivered Gereltungalag and her mother's excitement was clear to see in their huge smiles and joyful energy. Gereltungalag told us:

*"I used to envy other children's homes but now I am so happy to have a ger of our own. My family and I will look after it very carefully."*

Gereltungalag, Ariuntsetseg and Anand can now live together happily in the warmth and safety of their own home.





One person **CAN** make a difference. **YOU** can make a difference.



Gantsetseg and her mother outside their old, collapsing home

## Gantsetseg

Eight-year-old Gantsetseg has faced many challenges in her life. She was born with a cleft lip and palate, inherited from her mother who also has the same condition. These medical issues mean that she has already had eleven operations and will need further surgery in the future.

Gantsetseg's mother, Altannavch, ran away from Gantsetseg's father when she was pregnant as he was a heavy alcoholic and often abusive. She and Gantsetseg were homeless, living on the streets where Altannavch sold chewing gum and cigarettes to buy food.

They turned to the Christina Noble Children's Foundation for help and after

learning about their desperate situation we immediately enrolled Gantsetseg onto our Child Sponsorship Programme.

With the support of CNCF, Altannavch was able to afford rent for a ger. CNCF also helped to get Gantsetseg into a school that specialises in working with children with speech impairments; she is now happily studying in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We have also helped the family several times with emergency supplies of food and coal in the freezing winter months.

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Altannavch has worked hard to provide and lovingly care for her daughter, washing cars, cleaning, and continuing to sell chewing gum and cigarettes. However by 2016, their rented ger had become too derelict to live in, with broken wooden roof poles and worn felt covers the family had had no choice but to move into a small, collapsing shed. The shed was cold and patched with cardboard in an attempt to keep out the freezing weather.

It is with thanks to the generosity and kindness of one donor that when our social workers visited the family and saw their desperate situation we were able to immediately offer them a new 4-wall ger where they could live together in warmth and safety.

Gantsetseg's eyes sparkled with happiness as the ger and furniture arrived and she helped the CNCF team and ger construction company build her new home. She enjoyed every moment, laying the floor, exploring the furniture and peering out of the doorway with a beautiful, joyous smile.



Gantsetseg is over-the-moon with her beautiful new ger, where she can now live with her mother in safety and comfort.



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## Jargalmaa

Sixteen-year-old Jargalmaa has experienced a great deal of trauma in her young life. In 2009 her father committed suicide in the family ger, and was found by Jargalmaa and her sister, leaving them traumatized by the experience.

Unable to stay in their ger with such painful memories, Jargalmaa's mother, Ninjin, sold their home and she and her family moved to a rented ger.

In 2015 Ninjin remarried but her new husband was an abusive alcoholic. Ninjin realised that she had to leave him in order to protect her children from his destructive and violent behavior.

Despite these traumatic experiences and challenges, Jargalmaa has continued to study hard and is now in the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade, with particularly good marks in Maths, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Recently she was awarded a silver medal from the Ulaanbaatar Biology Olympiad. She dreams of becoming a doctor and has already begun to prepare for the entrance exams to the University of Medical Sciences.

Ninjin earns about \$150 USD a month from painting and decorating, from which she supports her three children; Jargalmaa has two older siblings, her sister Anujin and her brother Batbold. Ninjin now also supports Anujin's baby daughter, Batbold's wife, and their three-year-old

Jargalmaa's old rented ger was small and falling apart, however with the family's limited income owning their own home could only ever be a dream.



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son. This large family all lives together in a small, rundown rented ger, and with such limited income, every day is a struggle to survive.

Desperately in need of a new home, Ninjin approached the Christina Noble Children's Foundation and, with thanks to the generosity of one donor, on 23 October we were able to give them a large 5-wall ger.

The ger is light and airy and will be a safe and happy home for this family, where they can heal from their traumatic past experiences and where Jargalmaa can continue her studies and pursue her dream of becoming a doctor.

Now that the family doesn't have to pay rent they also have more money to spend on basic essentials such as food, firewood and coal. A huge amount of pressure has been lifted from their lives and they can move into the future with security and optimism.



They now have a beautiful, high quality ger where they can live together in comfort, protected from Mongolia's harsh winter climate.





## THANK YOU

It is because of the love and kindness of our Give-a-Ger donors that this year twenty-four families whole worlds have changed. They are finally able to embark on a safe and secure future in their own home.

On behalf of everyone here at the Christina Noble Children's Foundation, especially all of the children and families who have benefited from receiving a ger, we would like to thank all of our incredible donors for their generosity and believing that all children have the right to a happy and safe childhood. Your support has genuinely helped to transform the lives for these families. Their futures are so much brighter than before.

Happy to have a beautiful new home where they can enjoy their childhoods in comfort and safety.





““Every child has a right to sleep on their pillow at night time, with peace in their hearts, love, security and protection.”” – *Christina Noble*

Each of us is only one person. But by joining all the ones together, we can accomplish greatness. If you or your organisation is interested in supporting us in 2017/2018 please contact our Foundation. It is only through the love, care and generosity of others that we are able to continue our work with some of the world's most vulnerable children.

Christina Noble Children's Foundation – Mongolia

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