

## J. Erdenetuya

Manager of FXB Mongolia's Dornogobi project



“ **Households enrolled in the project have increased their income and built their savings** ”

The objective of the project is to enable destitute people to escape permanently from poverty by working simultaneously in four areas over the three years of the program: strengthen economic capacity; consolidate food security and eradicate child malnutrition; improve access to medical care and hygiene; facilitate access to education for children and young people and develop the autonomy of adults.

***The program with a peculiar name FXB is being implemented for the first time in Mongolia and specifically in Dornogobi province with financing from Orano Group. Can you briefly describe the program?***

**J.E.:** The FXB program has been running in Dornogobi province since 2016. This program has successfully been carried out in more than 40 countries of the world. FXB is the abbreviation of François-Xavier Bagnoud's name, who

was an aspiring professional pilot of a rescue helicopter. He died at the age of 24 while flying his helicopter on a mission in Mali. In 1989, his mother, family and friends established the FXB Association in order to commemorate his rescue work, kindness and compassion by protecting many thousand children of the world, helping people in vulnerable groups and fighting poverty.

This international non-governmental organization was first created on the firm principles of human rights and health. It has worked over the past 20 years to protect many thousand children who are exposed to AIDS and poverty.

The regional FXB program provides assistance in terms of health, education, society and mental well-being and supports low-income families in creating their own source of income. The program adjusts to the social, cultural and economic norms of each country. Its advantage is that local employees run the program in their local area.

#### **How do you select families for the program?**

**J.E.:** First of all, we support orphans and families in vulnerable groups, who have many children and live below the poverty line. We consider whether the family has lived stably in the area. In addition, we also focus on herders with few livestock, single parent households, uneducated people and those who have little opportunity to obtain income. We worked together with the representatives of Badrakh Energy LLC in the selection of the families.

#### **What are your areas of activity?**

**J.E.:** Our program works to aid in health, education, society and mental well-being and to help in finding a source of income.

#### **You said that the regional FXB program began in 2016 in Dornogobi province. How many families did you cover throughout that period?**

**J.E.:** The first program was carried out with success in 2016-2018 with the assistance with the support from the Orano Group. Because the project ended in success, Orano Group decided to finance our project for another 3 years. Thus, our second project started in February 2019 and it will end in December 2021. Like for the first project, it was decided to implement the project in the area where Badrakh Energy operates. The first project covered 100 families – 76 families in Sainshand sum of Dornogobi province, 13 in Ulaanbadrakh soum and 11 in Zuunbayan village. The second 2019-2021 project covers 95 families – 64 families in Sainshand sum, 15 in Ulaanbadrakh soum and 16 in Zuunbayan village.

#### **Can you briefly describe your activities to support these families in recent years, namely, in 2019-2020?**

**J.E.:** As part of the program, we organize regular training and meetings according to the activities, visit the families enrolled in the project each month, view their living conditions and review their income and expenditure diaries and the progress in working towards increasing the household income. All 95 families have received household income assistance, which is the main activity area of the program, and they began to increase their home production and home revenue depending on their own skills, possibilities and opportunities.

The citizens in the provincial capital began a joint carpet-weaving business following a carpet-weaving training in 2019 to upgrade their skills, and they have begun to accept orders and create their products from 2020. In addition to carpets, they process the sheep wool to make felt shoes, slippers and insoles.

Citizens in Zuunbayan village are making handcrafted items together. They first started making various candles. Those in Ulaanbadrakh soum partnered with a teacher of the lifetime education center and also began handcrafting. They improved their skills through training on making pickled vegetables, candles and soap.

#### **It seems that they are having a certain amount of income through small handcraft enterprises and skill improvement training. But do you support their individual development and growth in any other way?**

**J.E.:** We do support. People can work, earn income and improve their livelihood only by staying healthy. That is why the FXB program regularly organizes a preventive examination and immunity strengthening for our beneficiaries, together with the provincial healthcare center and the household healthcare center.

We also paid for the tuition of two people in order to support their education and improve their skills. We have now assisted 278 people in obtaining tools. We are mainly focused on health and education.

We are glad to be supporting these many families, as our project has been carried out twice for 3-year terms with the assistance from the Orano Group. I believe that we will do more productive action together with people from Badrakh Energy LLC.