BAGAKHANGAI DISTRICT

Rapid Assessment on Population, Migration and Needs

September 2022 to February 2023 (Third Phase Data Collection)

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This district-level report provides an overview of key thematic areas covered by the Bagakhangai district rapid assessment on population, migration and needs between September 2022 and February 2023. Current data collection is the third phase of the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) Mobility tracking assessment done by IOM Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar.

Similar to phase one, this study explores eight primary themes across Bagakhangai district, namely, population baseline figures, registration, internal arrivals and departures (migration), employment, financial situation, mobility-related challenges, and services and infrastructure. Data are collected through key informant interviews with kheseg leaders,[1] who are well-informed about their communities, resources and local context.

Previous IOM studies have found that a combination of complex factors, including land degradation and climate change, are altering traditional migration patterns in Mongolia. More frequent drought and dzuds,[2] insufficient job opportunities, inadequate living conditions, and rural population's livestock dependency has directly increased the level of migration to urban areas and other aimags.[3]

Understanding the nature of these migration patterns has been hindered by discrepancies between census data, registration data, and the reality of people living in and migrating between different locations across Mongolia. By obtaining data on population and internal migration in within the Bagakhangai district, this study aims to bridge the gap in up-to-date data collection and analysis to inform policies and actions on internal migration.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This report utilizes the IOM DTM Mobility Tracking methodology adapted for the Mongolian context. Information is collected at the kheseg level – the smallest administrative unit in Bagakhangai district through key informant interviews with kheseg leaders. Kheseg leaders were chosen as key informants due to their in-

depth knowledge of their communities, as well as the resources and contacts in their possession and duties providing essential public services to the population. Kheseg leaders were asked to fill out the survey tool composed of seven parts – each outlined into separate sections in this report. Kheseg leaders filled in the data collection form on mobile devices after conducting observation within their respective regions checking new arrivals and departures and the registration status. Moreover, kheseg leaders were thoroughly trained on the survey tool prior to its implementation to ensure accurate and reliable data collection and entry.

After the data entry process, the DTM team conducted a series of quality assurance checks to identify any potential data entry errors, discrepancies or duplicates, and followed up with kheseg leaders for clarification. Data analysis was conducted at the kheseg level and then aggregated at the khoroo,[4] district and city-wide levels. Notably, findings presented in this report at the district or city level are also available at the kheseg level.

LIMITATIONS

The adopted methodology relies on information provided by key informants and is intended to serve as one data source for triangulation with other available sources.

The data collected shows the estimates and perceptions of key informants, which are often subjective. Therefore, the data has limited external and internal validity since the reliability of the data will vary in line with a number of factors, including the size of the observational unit (i.e. the size and population of the kheseg) and the knowledge of the specific key informant, which might depend on the extent to which he or she is engaged with the community.

Additionally, the triangulation of results, which could otherwise serve as a useful counterbalance against biases, was limited by the usage of only one key informant per assessed location.

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[1]   Kheseg is the smallest administrative unit in Ulaanbaatar. Kheseg leader usually refer to the governor of a kheseg.
[2]   Dzuds are extreme winters characterised by freezing temperatures reaching far below the average. While herders and animals living in Mongolia are resilient to environmental hazards, and are used to hot summers and cold winters, dzuds put an additional strain on the lives of herders.
[3]   An aimag is a Mongolian province-level administrative subdivision.

[4]   A khoroo is an administrative subdivision of Ulaanbaatar.

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE BREAKDOWN
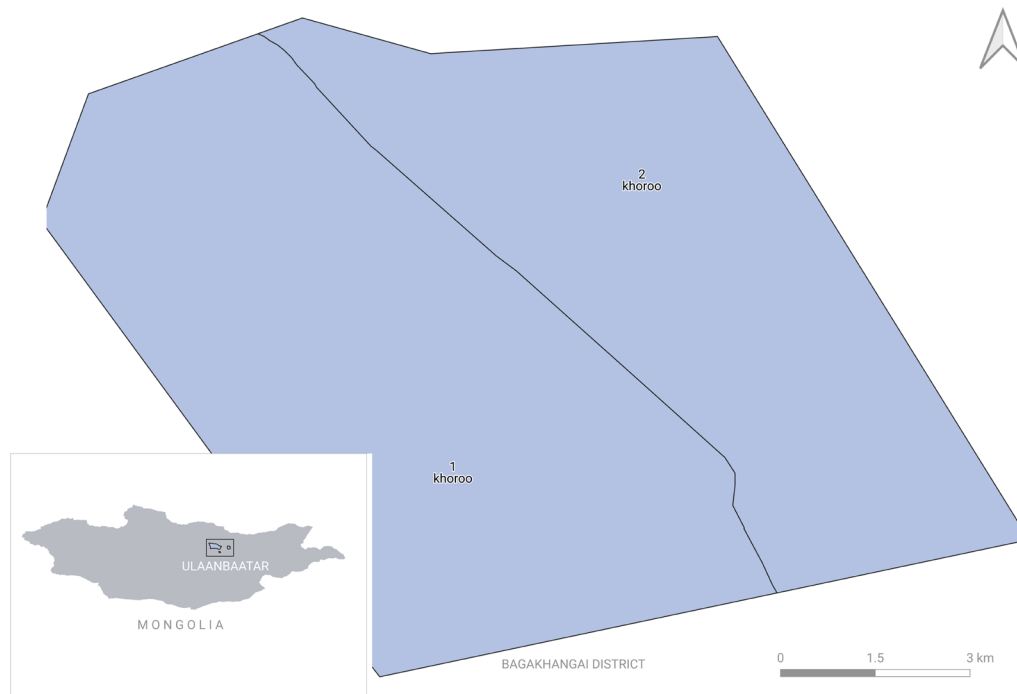
Districts	Number of Khesegs	Total population (*Inclusive of unregistered temporary residents*)
Bagakhangai	6	4,539
Total	**6**	**4,539**

DEFINITIONS

Baseline population figures: All residents of the location at the time of the assessment, irrespective of place of origin, document status, registration status, age, or any other socio-demographic characteristic.

Household: A group of individuals living under the same roof, sharing expenses and food.

Arrivals: individuals who have arrived at a location (both registered and unregistered) with the intention of staying for at least four weeks, regardless of whether they arrived from another location within the same city or outside the city.

Departures: Individuals who have left a location and who do not intend to return for at least four weeks, regardless of whether they left to another location within the same city or outside the city.
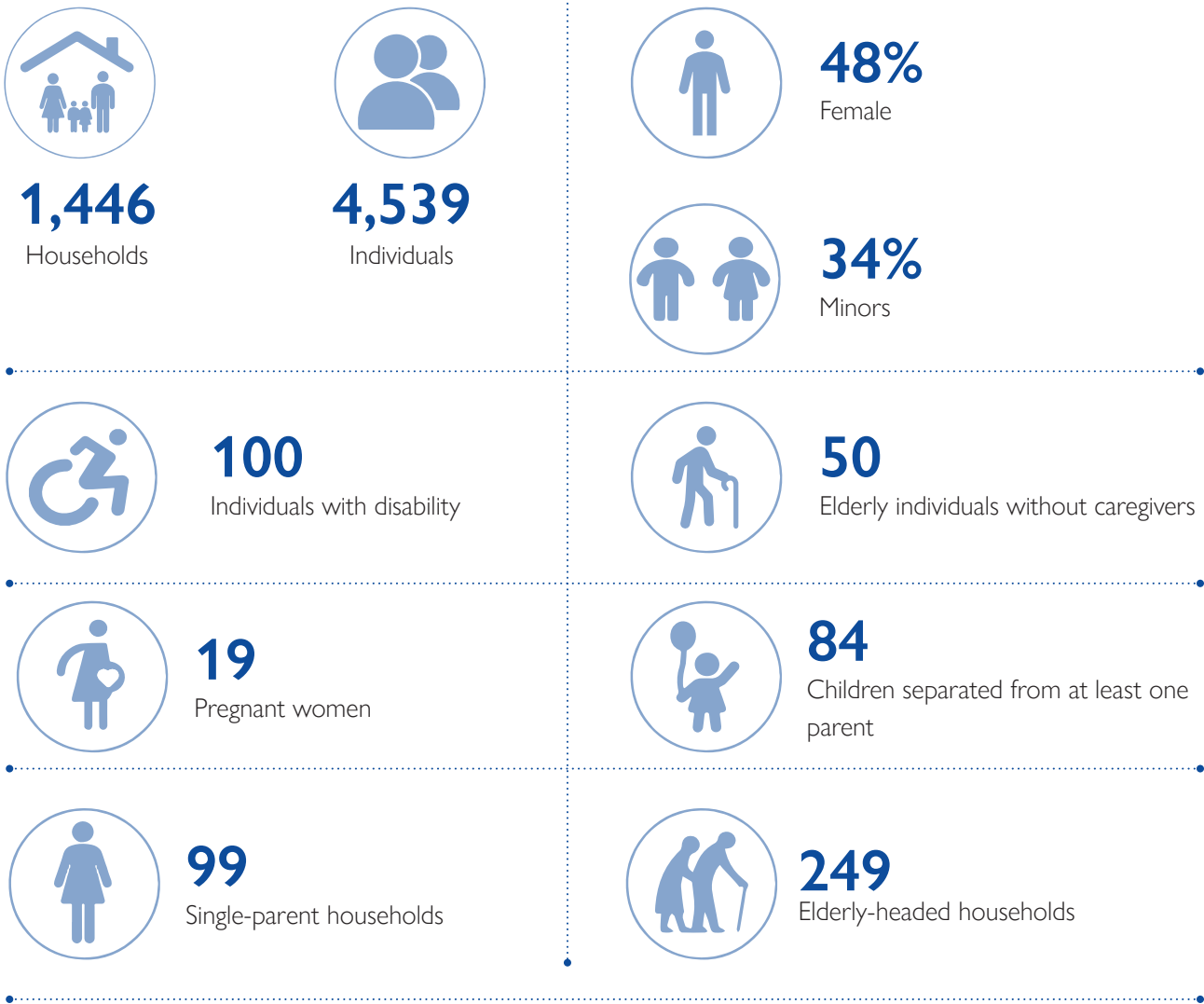
Key informant: An expert source of information, which in this case refers to the kheseg leaders.

Enumerator: An individual who collects data. In this assessment the data collection is completed by the key informant, therefore the two terms overlap.
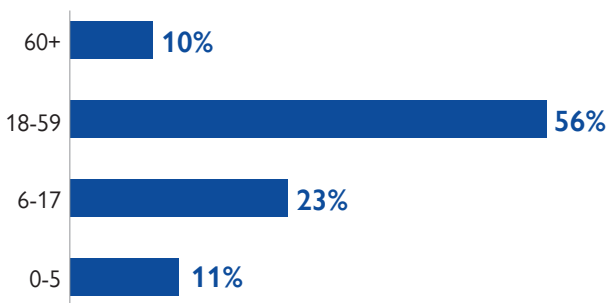
Ger and apartment mix kheseg: Ger areas are the traditional Mongolian living arrangement where state hearing and water are not provided. In ger areas, residents mostly use transported water and burn wood and coal for heating. In apartment areas, heating and water are provided by the state. Ger and apartment mix khesegs are khesegs where both living arrangements co-exist.

I. DATA ANALYSIS BAGAKHANGAI

1.1 POPULATION BASELINE AND DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

1,446
Households

4,539
Individuals

48%
Female

34%
Minors

100
Individuals with disability

50
Elderly individuals without caregivers

19
Pregnant women

84
Children separated from at least one parent

99
Single-parent households

249
Elderly-headed households

Figure 1. Population disaggregated by age groups (% of individuals)

Age group	%
60+	10%
18-59	56%
6-17	23%
0-5	11%

At the time of the assessment — between September 2022 and February 2023 — there were 4,539 individuals and 1,446 households living in Bagakhangai district, accounting for 0.3 per cent of the total population in the city. Of all people, 48 per cent were women. A significant 34 per cent of the population registered as minors: 11 per cent aged 0–5 years, and 23 per cent aged 6–17 years. Adults aged 18–59 years accounted for 56 per cent of the population, whereas the elderly aged 60 years and above accounted for 10 per cent.

Overall, 100 individuals were reported with disability, accounting for two per cent of the district population. There were 19 women reported being pregnant (1% of the female population), 50 elderly reported having no caregivers (11% of all elderly aged 60 years and above), and 84 children reported being separated from their mother, father, or both (5% of children under 18 years old). Meanwhile, there were 99 single-parent and 249 elderly-headed households[5] in this district, representing seven and 17 per cent of all households, respectively.

Bagakhangai district has two khoroos and 6 khesegs. Khoroo #1 was hosting 58 per cent of the district population, while khoroo #2 was hosting 42 per cent.

Figure 2. Population by khoroo (% of individuals)
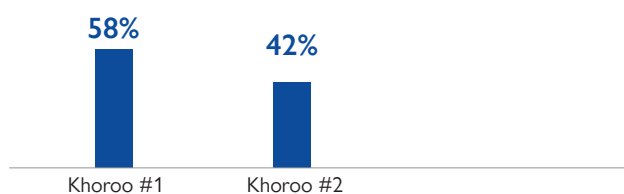
1.2 REGISTRATION

Overall, half of kheseg in Bagakhangai district reported that almost all residents were registered (meaning a registration rate higher than 90%), including two khesegs (33%) which reported that all residents were registered. In addition, two khesegs (33%) reported that most people (61–89% of residents) were registered, and one kheseg reported that less than 40 per cent of residents were registered.

Figure 3. Estimated registration rate (% of khesegs)

Figure 4. Number of khesegs with more than 90% registration rate by khoroo (number of khesegs)
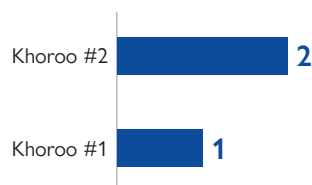

People not knowing how to fill in the form was the predominant reason for not registering in the district — as 25 per cent of all responses reported this as the driver for non-registration. This phenomenon was reported by two khesegs in khoroo #2 and one kheseg in khoroo #1.

Other important reasons for non-registration included people considering themselves as temporary residents in the kheseg (17%) and people considering registration was irrelevant to their lives (17%).

Figure 5. Primary reasons for non-registration (% of responses)

Figure 6. Number of khesegs in which the non-registration reason was because people not knowing how to fill in the form by khoroo
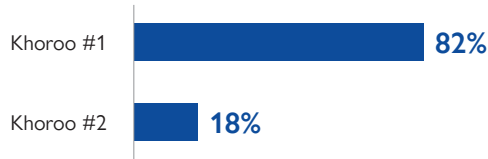

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[5]   Households which are headed by a person aged 60 and over.
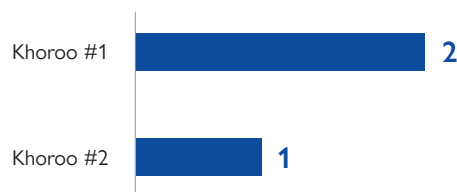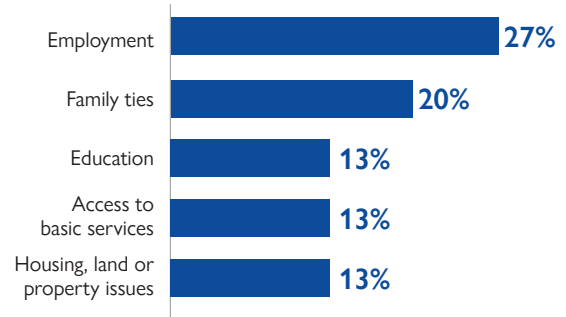
1.3 ARRIVAL[6]

A total of 56 people arrived in Bagakhangai district in the last six month prior to the interview, accounted for two per cent of all arrivals across the city. Khoroo #1 received the majority (82%) of arrivals, while khoroo #2 received the remaining 18 per cent. Of all arrivals, 60 per cent came from another khoroo/kheseg in the same district, while 40 per cent were from another district in Ulaanbaatar city. Moreover, 40 per cent of these arrivals were from apartment khesegs, 40 per cent from ger khesegs, and 20 per cent from ger and apartment mix khesegs[7].

Factors which drive people's decision for moving into this district have changed since the previous assessment. Employment, which was not one of the major reasons for arrivals in the previous assessment, has become the predominant reason for arrivals in Bagakhangai district, as reported by 27 per cent of responses. For people who arrived for job opportunities, their employment was concentrated in the social work (50%) and construction sectors (25%). Furthermore, family ties dominated 20 per cent of arrivals in the district, followed by education, access to basic services, and housing, land and property issues (each was reported by 13% of responses). During the phase three assessment, there were no otor arrivals reported in this district.[8]
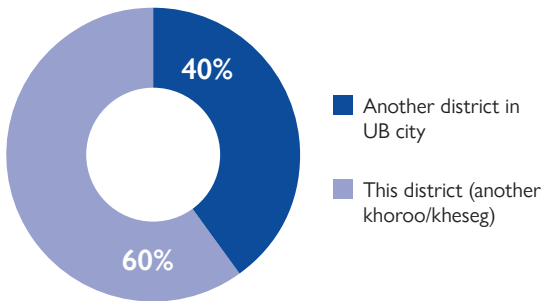
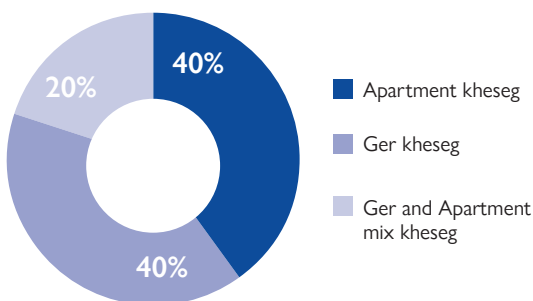**Figure 7. Arrivals by khoroos (% of total arrival)**

Chart 1. Arrivals coming from (% of total arrivals)

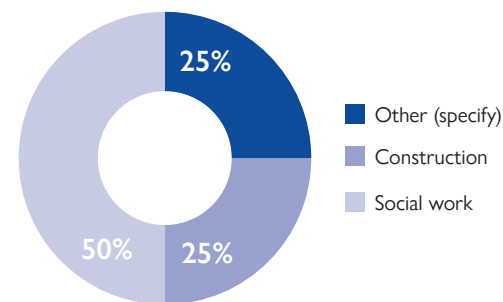**Figure 8. Primary reasons for arrival**

Chart 2. Arrivals coming from (% of total arrivals from Ulaanbaatar area)

Chart 3. Main sectors of employment for those who arrived for employment reasons (% of responses)

[6] Arrivals refer to all individuals or households who arrived to a location in this district, regardless of whether they arrived from another location within or outside this district.

[7] Ger areas are the traditional Mongolian living arrangement where state hearing and water are not provided. In ger areas, residents mostly use transported water and burn wood and coal for heating. In apartment areas, heating and water are provided by the state. Ger and apartment mix khesegs are khesegs where both living arrangements co-exist.

[8] Otor movement is a traditional mobility strategy developed by Mongolian herders when herders follow their livestock to different locations for better grazing land.

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1.4 DEPARTURE[9]

A total of 447 people departed from Bagakhangai district in the six months prior to the interview, accounting for two per cent of all the departures in Ulaanbaatar. Khoroo #1 reported 82 per cent of arrivals, while khoroo #2 reported 18 per cent. Half of departures left for another district in Ulaanbaatar city, while another half departed for another khoroo/kheseg in the same district. Moreover, half of the departures left for apartment khesegs, and another half departed for ger and apartment mixed khesegs.
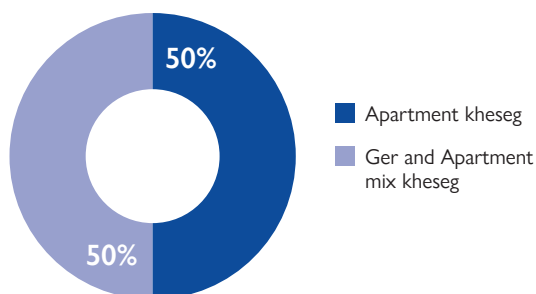
Figure 9. Departures by khoroos (% of total departed)
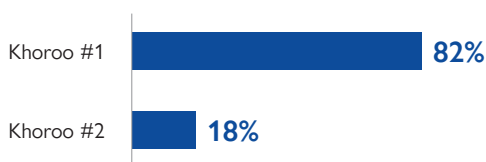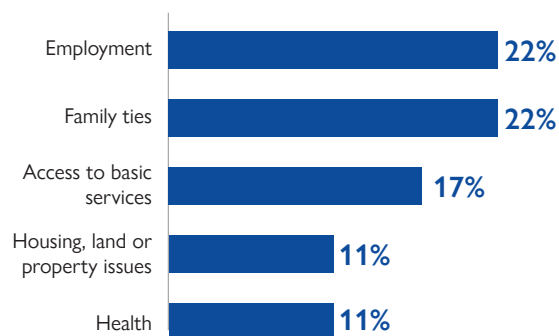

Chart 4. Departed for (% of total departures)

- Another district in UB city
- This district (another khoroo/kheseg)
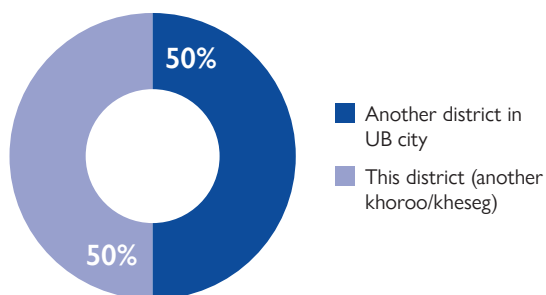
Chart 5. Departed for (% of total departures to Ulaanbaatar area)

- Apartment kheseg
- Ger and Apartment mix kheseg

Figure 10. Primary reasons for departure (% of responses)

Employment and family ties were the predominant reasons for departures in this district, each being reported by 22 per cent of responses, followed by access to basic services (17%). Considering the previous assessment education, which, according to the previous assessment, was one of the top drivers for departure, no longer dominates departures in this district.

1.5 EMPLOYMENT

**Figure 11. Primary sector for employment (% of khesegs)**
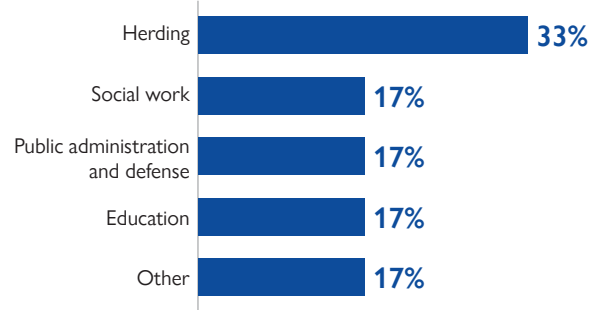
According to data from the current assessment, in Bagakhangai district, employment was mainly concentrated in four sectors: herding sector dominated in two khesegs (33%), while social work, public administrative and defense sector, and education sectors were all dominant in one kheseg (17%).

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[9]   Departures refer to all individuals or households who left a location in Ulaanbaatar city, regardless of whether they left for another location within or outside this district. The number of departures was computed based on the estimate of kheseg leaders who were aware of such information. As such this number is likely underestimated as some of responses could not provide an estimated number of departures in their khesegs.

1.6 FINANCIAL SITUATION

In Bagakhangai district, all khesegs reported employment as their primary source of income. Meanwhile, three khesegs (50%) reported food consumption reduction – khesegs #2 and #3 in khoroo #1 and kheseg #1 in khoroo #2 – impacting more than 2,000 people (51% of the district population).

**Chart 6. Primary source of income (% of khesegs)**

Employment

100%
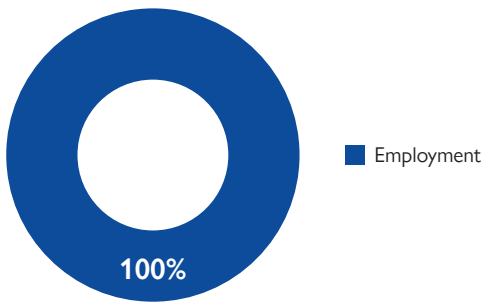
Figure 12. Reduced food consumption (% of khesegs)

| 50% | 50% | 0% | 0% |
| Not at all | Rarely | Sometimes | Frequently |
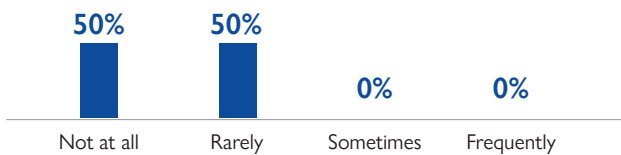
1.7 MOBILITY-RELATED CHALLENGES

Two khesegs (33%) in Bagakhangai district reported that they have mobility-related challenges, and these challenges were all related to environmental pollution. Challenges which were reported in the previous assessment, such as strains on health services and air pollution, were not being reported by any khesegs in the current assessment.

Chart 7. Khesegs reporting mobility-related challenges (% of khesegs)

17% 33%

With challenges
No challenges
Unknown

50%
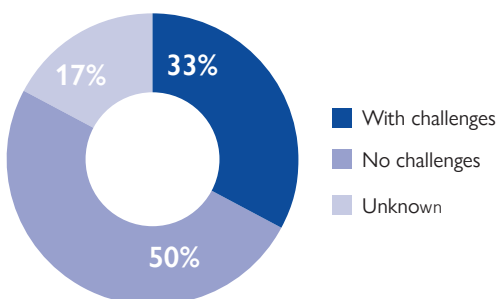
Chart 8. Mobility-related challenges (% of responses)

Environmental pollution

100%
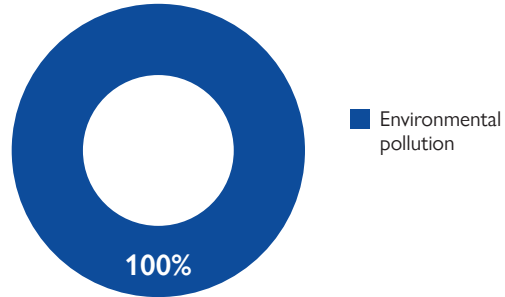
Table 1. Top khoroos reported environmental pollution

Overall	Khoroo #1	Khoroo #2
2 khesegs	**3 khesegs**	**2 khesegs**

Of these two khesegs which reported mobility-related challenged, both confirmed that their administrative unit had taken actions to tackle those challenges. Apart from measures which were currently taken by the administration, the key informant from one kheseg believed that creating favorable legal environment for the migration registration should be considered by authorities.

Chart 9. Actions taken by administrative unit (% of khesegs)

Yes

100%
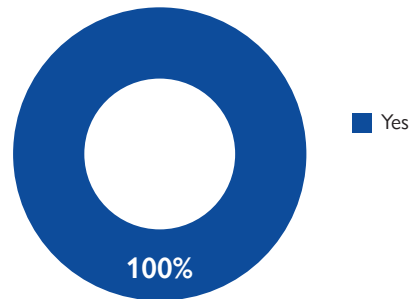
Chart 10. Actions taken by administrative unit (% of khesegs)

50%

Create a favorable legal environment for the registration of short-term movements

I don't know

50%
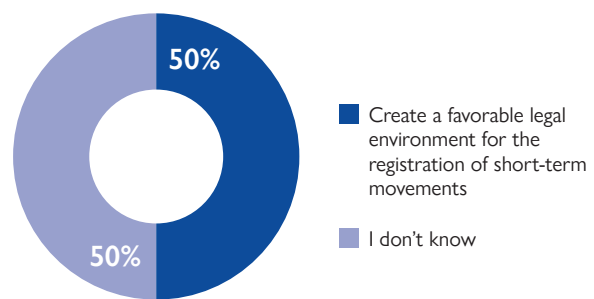
1.8 SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In Bagakhangai district, housing was the most pressing issue — 24 per cent of responses reported difficulties in accessing housing services (an increase from 17% in the previous assessment). Moreover, the lack of access to income- generating opportunities and to healthcare continued to be two other major challenges in the district, as each was reported by 18 per cent of responses.

Figure 13. Services that people have difficulties accessing (% of responses)
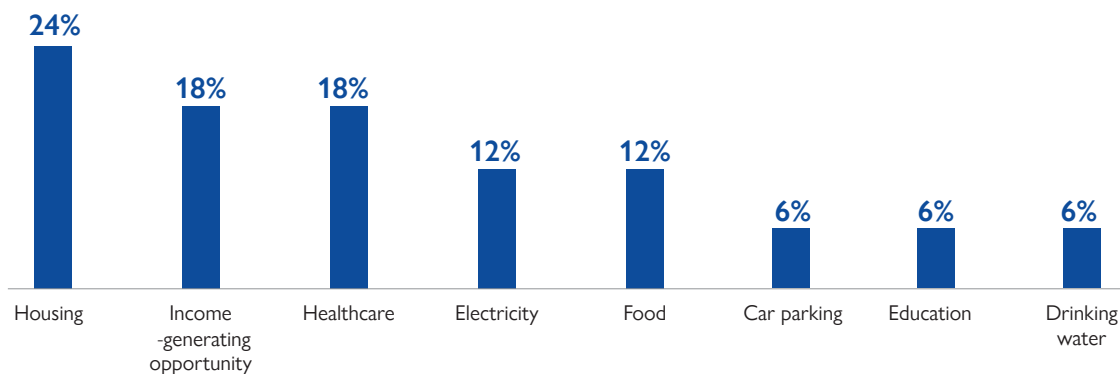
Table 2. Number of khesegs that reported difficulties to access services or infrastructures by khoroo

Lack of access to housing services	Overall 4 khesegs	Khoroo #1 2 khesegs	Khoroo #2 2 khesegs
Lack of access to income-generating opportunities	Overall 3 khesegs	Khoroo #1 2 khesegs	Khoroo #2 1 khesegs
Lack of access to healthcare	Overall 3 khesegs	Khoroo #1 2 khesegs	Khoroo #2 1 khesegs

For people living with disability, the primary challenges were found to be the lack of specialised transportation services and the lack of specialised medical care — as each was reported by 43 per cent of responses, followed by the lack of educational facilities and services (14%).

Figure 14. Challenges for people living with disability (% of responses)
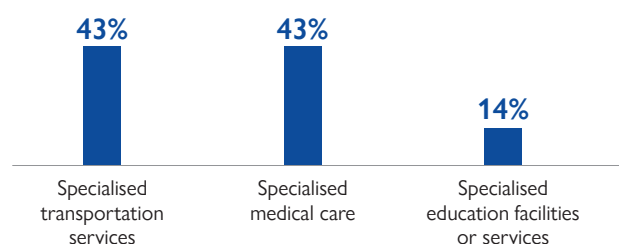
CONCLUSION

The findings of the current assessment show that employment has become to a key driver for arrivals and departures in Bagakhangai district. Meanwhile, the lack of access to income-generating opportunities is a major challenge in this district. These challenges can bring significant negative impacts on food security. During the current assessment, half of the khesegs in the district reported some level of food consumption reduction, and most of them also reported difficulties in accessing income-generating opportunities. To better address these challenges, further research into the employment situation and its implication for income and food security is required.

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