

# ICOA763: ULAANBAATAR GER AREA CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT

## Subtheme 01: Integrating Heritage and Sustainable Urban Development by engaging diverse Communities for Heritage Management

**Session 2:** Management, Documentation

**Location:** Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre

**Time:** December 13, 2017, 10:10 - 10:25

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*Doc. Prof N. Urtnasan was born in UB city, Mongolia in 1951. He received his tertiary education at the State Pedagogical University in Moscow (1972-1977) and later graduated with doctorate degree (Ph.d) the Academy of Social sciences in Moscow (1984-1987). N. Urtnasan served as the director General of Culture and art Department, Ministry of Culture of Mongolia (1993-1997), and department of External Cooperation (1997-2001), as Secretary General of National Commission for UNESCO (2001-2011). His research fields are (culture, cultural heritage, civilization and so on). He is currently serving as President of Mongolian NATCOM for ICOMOS.*

**Abstract:** Tangible and intangible heritage values have vital significance in increasing well-being and sustainable development of residents and serve as sense of place, and contribute to the distinctive, unique qualities and the image of cities. This accords to explicit cultural heritage target (target 11, 4) of the 15-year SDG of the Agenda 2030.

Ulaanbaatar (UB), the capital city of Mongolia is an amazing combination of nomadic traditions and modern city's life-style and heritage values. The city is divided in distinct parts: a formal urban core area and Ger (Mongolian conical dwelling of nomads) area. The Ger area's population is estimated at 800,000 which equals to the 60% of the city's population. Increasing migration to the UB city leads to over urbanization and over-centralization here.

UB as an urban modern city has only about 70 year old history. During this period several development plans have been elaborated and implemented by Government and city's authorities. Unfortunately, the inclusion of cultural heritage factors and consideration of cultural interests and needs of communities were usually ignored in its planning.

However, recently, urgent needs were raised to change the planning paradigm of city's development and consider possibilities of integration of heritage values and sustainable development in planning processes involving various stakeholders.

In order to initiate the action in this direction, feasibility study in UB city has started under title "Ulaanbaatar Ger area cultural heritage, Tourism and Community Enhancement Project".

In this case study we try to identify both tangible and intangible values in the Ger areas, integrate them, and include the safeguarding and developing measures into planning of city's development. The plan not only calls for the conservation cultural values but also for the sustainable development of the Ger areas and upgrading a livelihood for inhabitants by improving economic opportunities and social and cultural environment.

**Key words:** *community, urban development, sustainability*

Tangible and intangible heritage values have vital significance in increasing well-being and sustainable development of residents and serve as sense of place, and contribute to the distinctive, unique qualities and the image of cities. This accord to explicit cultural heritage target 11.4 of the 15-year SDG of the Agenda 2030<sup>1</sup>. It calls for making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable by strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the World's cultural and natural heritage.

UB is an amazing combination of nomadic traditions and modern city's life style and heritage values. The city is divided in distinct parts: a formal urban core area and Ger (Mongolian conical mobile dwelling of nomads) area. The Ger area's population is estimated at 800,000 from city's 1.3 million population. Increasing migration to the UB city leads to over urbanization and over-centralization here.

Ulaanbaatar's rapid growth and modernization have also generated concern about the survival of the city's cultural heritage and national uniqueness of its image. The Master Plan for UB 2020 includes the directive «to develop a capital city that embodies the special characteristics of Mongolian traditional culture»<sup>2</sup>.

The City Government of Ulaanbaatar recently submitted an application to the City's Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA) for a Pre-Feasibility Study (PES) to help identify the potential for cultural heritage conservation, protection, community enhancement and tourism development in the city's Ger Area. The application was endorsed by National Government and the Asia Development Bank (ADB). The PFS was carried out by IPE Global Limited with national partners and experts including author of this presentation.

Botanical garden to Dari Ekhiin temple a corridor-one of the sites for this overall project package is located in Bayanzurkh District, *Khoroo* administrative unit 12<sup>th</sup> and covers an area of some 51 hectares. *Khoroo* 12<sup>th</sup> has a total population of some 14,700 people living in 4,100 households. The major growth in population began in the 1990s. There are government institutions and organizations including 1 general education school with seats of 340 children, 1 kindergarten with 100 beds for pre-school children, 1 *khoroolevel* "Amgalan Itgelekhui" household health care centre, 1 Cultural Centre named after D. Sukhbaatar, and over 140 private entities operate in 12<sup>th</sup> *khoroolevel*.

The area has a long and important history in the development of Ulaanbaatar city during both the pre-revolution and after-revolution periods.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable) (2017)

<sup>2</sup>Ганбаатар.Л (2016)



**There are several identified potential natural and cultural heritage sites:**

*Fig.1- Map of the Package. Botanical Garden to Dari Ekhiin Temple Corridor. (UB, Mongolia).*

1. The Botanical Garden (22 hectares) was established in the 1970s. Since then, its purpose has been to conserve the native and rare flora and to provide plant species for agriculture, forestry and horticulture. A well-frequented pedestrian walkway runs through the garden from its north side to the Ger area and Dari Ekhiin Temple in the south. The combined length of this road is roughly 1400 linear meters. This area has great potential for developing natural and cultural heritage environment for both residents and tourists.

2. Dari Ekhiin Temple Monastery is the main cultural and religious heritage site located on the southern edge of the area (1.5 hectares). This monastery's surrounding area has a cultural and religious heritage

sites associated with “Great Tea Road” and life and deeds of D. Sukhbaatar, hero of National Freedom Revolution (1921).



*Fig.2- dariEkhiin Temple (UB, Mongolia). Two granite pillars with carved images of humans, animals and Buddhist scripts.*

Great Tea Road is 13000 km long from Wuhan in Southeast China through modern Beijing to Maimaa town of Mongolia surrounding area of the monastery (temple), from there through Irkutsk, Moscow and other cities of Russia to St. Petersburg and European countries<sup>3</sup>. Chinese traders of tea built not only many warehouses and residential houses but built the Dari Ekhiin Temple (Tara temple) to serve the religious needs of Chinese population. This complex heritage site has significant historical and religious art values related to history of the Chinese blue Faith religion of Buddhism in Mongolia and to the architectural value of the Temple as an illustration of traditional Chinese style of Buddhist art of Architecture. In this connection Dari Ekhiin Temple can have considerable potential to demonstrate very unique and interesting tourist destination place for not only Chinese visitors but for all tourists.

3. Memorial site of D. Sukhbaatar, Hero of National and People’s Revolutions of Mongolia (Sukhbaatar Park, 1,7 hectares). This Park is relatively new. Not yet well landscaped. Fences were constructed around the site. Creating a new Memorial site and its landscaping on this big area could attract the interests of both residents and tourists.

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<sup>3</sup>Wuhan and Tea Road (2014)



*Fig.3- Memorial site of D. Sukhbaatar, Hero of National Revolution (UB, Mongolia).*

4. There are four significant buildings from the Socialist Period when the area served as an agricultural area. These buildings have interesting cultural and economic heritage potential and appear to be structurally sound, can be adapted to modern cultural space. Their adaptive reuse and restoration will also help the community to remember its specific historical memory.

5. Old street located to the west of the Dari Ekhiin Temple which showcases traditional wooden fences and gates. Because of these traditional elements, the street has been used in filming several Mongolian historical movies.

6. Ger areas where the majority of inhabitants live in Ger have a very specific national cultural image and heritage values. The majority of residents of Ger area are bearers of traditional national heritages including folk oral traditions, national performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, religious and worshipping sacred site practices, indigenous knowledge, traditional craftsmanship. They have good possibilities to make “sense of place”, contribute to the distinctive, unique qualities of the area and attract tourism interest.



*Fig.4- Mongolian Ger – Conical mobile dwelling of nomadic herders. General view of Ger Area around the Temple.*

### **This package of the project proposes integrated activities**

- Upgrading the Botanical Garden. Details of this component of the project package include the creation of several different planting areas to serve the research and educational purposes of the garden, creation of small artificial lake, construction of a plant museum, arboretum, and small greenhouses.
- Improving the road that connects the Botanical Garden to the Dari Ekhiin Temple as a service road and major pedestrian path. The connecting street is significant because it not only provides the connecting link between these two important cultural resources, but it also provides access to four historic buildings from the socialist. In addition, the Ger area plots along this road will have the opportunity to be improved and/or developed into retail activities to serve both residents and tourists. The road will be landscaped in an appropriate for its use as service road and pedestrian walkway.



*Fig.5- Connecting road from the Botanical Garden to the Temple*

- Upgrading of the Dari Ekhiin Temple. Current discussions concerning the temple's future have focused on its restoration to prior historic conditions and use as a center run by nuns for teaching, prayers and/or meditation. The restored monastery (temple) could be tourist destination that demonstrates religious rituals, practices and traditional art of Chinese religious architecture. Establishing new visitor and information centres will play a central role in creating heritage and cultural content and organizing cultural and educational activities.
- Renovating four socialist era buildings to adaptive reuse for tourism and community facilities. These buildings along the connecting road are also important to the preservation of the area's history, as well as being able to provide valuable services to both the community and tourists through adaptive reuse.
- The construction of small, but historical information-providing Tea Road Museum will demonstrate a history and development of "Great Tea Road" in Mongolia and add considerable value to the other cultural assets in the project.
- Landscaping and arranging the Sacred Bayanzurkh Mountain and others sacred sites according to traditional customs and rituals. Creating the Buddhist religious Circuit. The Dari Ekhiin Temple, in combination with nearby Sacred Bayanzurkh Mountain and other landscape and cultural features will help create the basis of this Circuit.
- Supporting various small groups of ICH performers and creating centres and theatres of folk arts and games within and around this area. Safeguarding and supporting an Intangible Cultural Heritage creating handcrafts, workshops, souvenir enterprises, shops and markets along the roads within the area and among residents of Ger Area. This will support the development of cultural industry in the area.



*Fig.6– Family members who are bearers of traditional technique of making handicrafts.*

- Providing infrastructure to Ger area neighbourhoods, including water, sewer and heat connections to monastery, park, Botanical garden and Ger community.

As listed above, there are key components in this project. These highly interrelated components have been designed to produce a significant improvement in the neighbourhood. They are intended to complement and add value to each other

### **Community Involvement and Enhancement of Livelihoods**

Key members of the local community are aware of the project and support its implementation. Contacts with the community have been conducted through resident interviews, focus groups, meeting with individual stakeholders, and attendance at the Stakeholders Workshops. The group attending the workshop included representatives from *Khoroo*, City's Government, Botanical garden, the Buddhist association and private developer and etc. In terms of intangible cultural heritage bearers, a considerable number of residents are engaged in the making of traditional crafts and arts, such as wood carving, rock carving, felt-making, sewing, knitting, semi-precious stone jewellery making, among others. There is a group of felt makers in the area who also operate as a small enterprise for making felt products. Another people are involved in leather production. Installation of facilities for residents at the Botanical Garden and along the connecting roads that are attractive to tourists will create opportunities to generate revenue. They also will provide employment opportunities for local residents. The sale of plants and herbs to the public will bring in additional revenue.

Enhancement of Livelihoods is focusing on the followings:

- Local hiring of staff at new visitor centres
- Local hiring of guides, especially students who speak foreign languages
- Small loans/grants within ger areas for equipment, product display, working capital
- Homestays (bed and breakfast) nearby ger areas – advice and guidance on how to set up, market and manage home stays

- Catering at or near cultural sites
- Sales of handicrafts and other products, publications, and other goods
- Performance based on intangible heritage including traditional music and dance

## **Benefits and Beneficiaries**

Successful implementation of the project will produce a number of beneficial results for both the community as a whole and for various project stakeholders.

### **Beneficiaries**

Cultural Heritage:

Conservation of tangible cultural assets will prevent the further loss of cultural heritage in the area. These heritage sites will be restored and landscaped according to newly elaborated management plan. Opportunities for the safeguarding and inheriting ICH will occur due to increased tourism and creations of various cultural facilities in the area. Introduction of a new Tea Road Museum and a Plant Museum will highlight the historic importance of the site and neighbourhood as well as increase tourism in the area.

City:

Directives in the Ulaanbaatar City Plan for 2020 and Extension to 2030 will be implemented in a practical manner that helps building a sustainable community. On the ground development of the project will be initiated the development of new Green Sub-Centre in UB. The project has the initiation into practical initiatives to make UB a green and tourism attractive city.

Community:

Initiation of a community based approach to development in Ger areas will generate greater awareness and respect for cultural heritage in community development. The pride and sense of place in the neighbourhood will be increased as a result of the physical and livelihood improvements resulting from the project. Ownership of development and small-scale private sector initiative will be encouraged.

Residents:

Improved household incomes and livelihoods will result from the carried out activities and the introduction of responsible tourism to the area. Improved walkway from the Ger area to the Botanical Garden and Buddhist religious circuit will provide a pleasant and educational walk through the park and along roads. Living conditions in Ger areas will be improved due to the provision of infrastructure. Small-scale agriculture in the Ger area will be improved for local consumption

Stakeholders:

Full development of the botanical garden and creation of Tea Road Museum will benefit the Institute of Botany, city and garden management. Adaptive reuse of the four socialist era buildings for residents and tourists will provide revenues to their owners. Restoration of the Dari Ekhiin Temple will benefit all the stakeholders, including religious community and local residents. Improvements to the Sukhbaatar Park will provide a special benefit to children and elders of the neighbourhood.

## **Conclusion**

Successful development of the project will help prevent inappropriate redevelopment in the future and provide an example how communities can work together to improve their cultural heritage and natural environment and living conditions. Installation of urban infrastructure will significantly improve the lives

of people living in the Ger area and enhance the area's image and its "sense of place" for both visitors and tourists.

By 2022 could be reached following results:

- Enhanced values of tangible and intangible cultural heritage and public facilities;
- Conserved cultural heritage sites and improved access to them;
- Improved infrastructure of social basic services in Ger area;
- Diversified and improved livelihoods of Ger area residents on the basis of enhanced natural and cultural values and facilities in the Ger area
- Enhanced institutional strengthening and capacity-building in cultural heritage.

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# **ICOA763: LE PATRIMOINE CULTUREL DU DISTRICT GER À OULAN-BATOR: TOURISME ET DÉVELOPPEMENT DES COLLECTIVITÉS**

## **Sous-thème 01: Intégrer le patrimoine et le développement urbain durable en engageant Diverses communautés pour la gestion du patrimoine**

**Session 2:** Le management, documentation

**Lieu:** Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre

**Date et heure:** 13 Décembre, 2017, 10:10 - 10:25

**Auteur:** Urtnasan Norov

Le professeur N.Urtnasan est né dans la ville d'Oulan-Bator (Mongolie) en 1951. Il a obtenu son diplôme d'enseignement supérieur à l'Université pédagogique de l'Etat (Moscou, 1972-1977) et son doctorat à l'Académie des Sciences sociales (Moscou, 1984-1987). Il a exercé des fonctions comme Directeur général au Département Art et Culture du Ministère de la Culture de Mongolie (1993-1997), au Département de la coopération extérieure (1997-2001) et comme Secrétaire général de la Commission nationale pour l'UNESCO (2001-2011). Il consacre ses recherches e.a. à la culture, au patrimoine culturel, à l'histoire de la civilisation. Il est actuellement président du Comité national ICOMOS de Mongolie.

**Résumé:** Les valeurs du patrimoine matériel et immatériel sont d'une importance vitale pour le bien-être accru et le développement durable des populations ; elles procurent un sentiment d'appartenance et contribuent aux qualités particulières et spécifiques des cités ainsi qu'à leur image. Ces notions concordent précisément avec l'objectif relatif au patrimoine culturel (Objectif 11.4) repris au Programme de développement des Nations-Unies pour l'après-2015, parmi les Objectifs de Développement Durable de l'Agenda 2030.

La ville d'Oulan-Bator, capitale de Mongolie, associe remarquablement traditions nomades, style de vie urbaine moderne et valeurs patrimoniales. La cité est divisée en plusieurs parties: un noyau central urbain structuré et une zone périphérique appelée Ger (habitation conique des nomades mongols). La population des districts Ger est estimée à 80.000 personnes, équivalant à 60 % des habitants de la ville. La migration croissante vers la ville d'Oulan-Bator conduit à une urbanisation et une centralisation excessives dans cette zone.

Oulan-Bator est une ville moderne, dont l'histoire remonte à 70 ans. Durant cette période, divers plans d'aménagement ont été élaborés et mis en œuvre par le Gouvernement et les autorités de la Ville. Malheureusement, l'intégration d'éléments du patrimoine, la prise en compte d'intérêts culturels et des nécessités des communautés ont été régulièrement ignorées dans ces planifications.

Cependant, récemment, l'apparition de besoins urgents a modifié le paradigme de planification du développement urbain et permet d'envisager l'intégration de valeurs patrimoniales et de développement durable dans le processus de planification impliquant divers intervenants.

Afin d'initier l'action dans cette direction, une étude de faisabilité a démarré dans la ville d'Oulan-Bator intitulée « Patrimoine culturel du district Ger d'Oulan-Bator, Projet de tourisme et de développement communautaire ».

Dans cette étude de cas, nous tentons d'identifier à la fois les valeurs matérielles et immatérielles dans les districts Ger, d'en tenir compte et d'intégrer des mesures de sauvegarde et de développement dans les plans d'aménagement urbain. Ces plans préconisent non seulement la préservation des valeurs culturelles mais aussi le développement durable des districts Ger et l'amélioration du niveau de vie des habitants en valorisant les opportunités économiques et l'environnement social et culturel.

***Mots-clés:** communauté, développement urbain, développement durable*