

1.Introduction

The Lamp of the Path is a social project established in 2003 by the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition in Mongolia. We call the project LOP, which is an abbreviation of the long name, “Lamp of the Path”. LOP is located in the Bayanzurkh District, on the east side of the city and is one of the poorest and largest districts in the Mongolian capital, Ulaanbaatar. For the past 18 years, LOP has operated to the best of its ability, in accordance with the capacity of the organisation to help the poorest and vulnerable strata of the Mongolian population. In the neighbouring area of the Soup kitchen, the number of poor families has increased several times over the past few years. They live in small houses or usually traditional houses (which are called ger). These poor families are losing their jobs and income during the pandemic, children and the elderly are suffering from malnutrition and generally all are going through difficult times.

LOP’s main activities include the Soup Kitchen, Health clinic, vegetable gardening, Second-hand clothing distribution and Food aid for poor families. This project was added due to the impact of the pandemic. Due to unemployment, many people have been affected by food shortages and are experiencing hunger and malnutrition caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The soup kitchen remains the core activity of the Lamp of the Path, proving to be the most stable and beneficial project. The average number of people fed per day ranged from 30 to 50. In 2021, the soup kitchen provided a nourishing hot bowl of soup with bread and tea to a total of 10,143 homeless people.

During the pandemic, we also co-operated with the Mongolian Blind Association and distributed food aid and warm clothing to 40 vulnerable families of the blind. Donations of food and warm clothing were donated to 38 families in the 12th khoroo of Bayanzurkh district and 10 low-income families in the 9th khoroo.

In addition, bread was distributed to low-income families in some homes in the neighbouring areas.

In recent years, the distribution of second-hand clothing has not only helped the homeless keep warm, but has also raised awareness among the local population about the plight of these poor people. LOP has become a collection point where people can bring their old warm or even new warm clothes. Also, every year a foundation named El Puente Wallis-Welt from Switzerland sends us high-quality second-hand clothes for free. Dear people from Switzerland, thank you very much for supporting our organisation.

From the first years, a small vegetable garden has been cultivated alongside the community centre to provide fresh vegetables and herbs for use in daily meals. Every year, this vegetable project expands. The greenhouse cultivation work was successful and enabled us to grow an increasing number of different types of vegetables resulting in the soup becoming more nutritious. This year we plan to improve the quality of the vegetable garden with the addition of fertilizer and black soil.



Lunch is cooking!



Lunch is served!!



Time to eat!



Helping in the vegetable garden