

Managing the Urban Environmental Frontier: Ger Area Expansion in Ulaanbaatar

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The National and Local Context

Mongolia

- Since 1991: Political and economic transition
- Population: 2.78 million; 63% urbanization (2010)
- Rapid economic growth in past few years

Ulaanbaatar (established in year 1639)

Coldest capital in the world

- Temperature: +40 to -40 degree C

Sustained economic growth

- City share of national GDP: 63%

Rapid population growth

- 572,000 (1990) → 1.15 million (2010)
- Urban poverty: 29.8 % (2010)

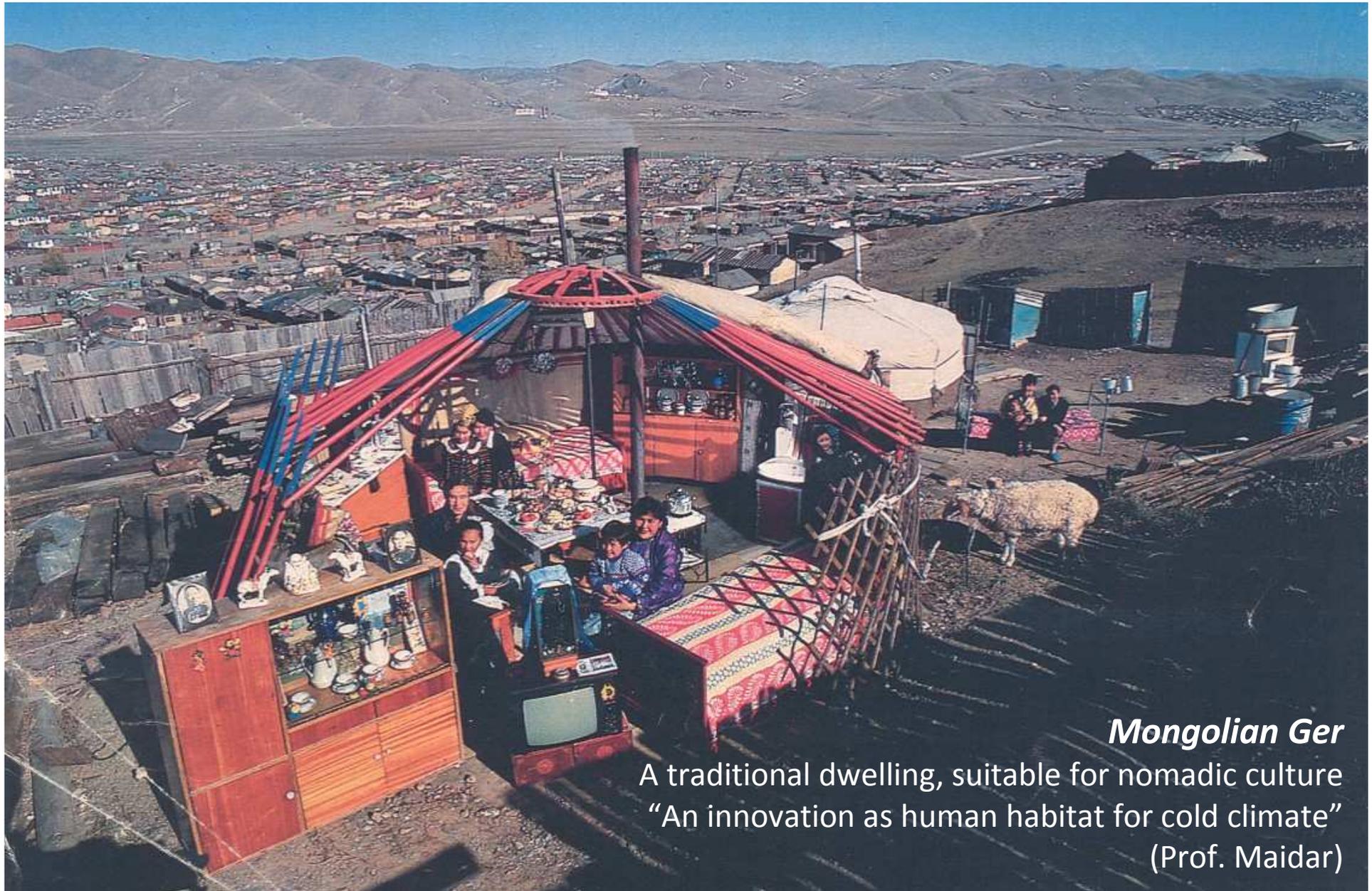
Peri-urban Ulaanbaatar

Ger areas

- With felt tent or Ger housing
- Home to over 60% of city population
- Urban poverty: ~45%



Ger – a cross-section



Mongolian Ger

A traditional dwelling, suitable for nomadic culture

“An innovation as human habitat for cold climate”

(Prof. Maidar)

Problems with Ger areas' haphazard expansion

- Little understanding of Ger areas' morphology
- Lack of policy focus → “Ger areas are not urban settlements”
- Absence of urban planning inputs, except “redevelopment”
- Environmental problems (forests, groundwater, hazardous areas)
- Lack of basic infrastructure and services → poor quality of life
- Urban poverty
- Air pollution
- Nomadic culture → poor social cohesion in the urban context

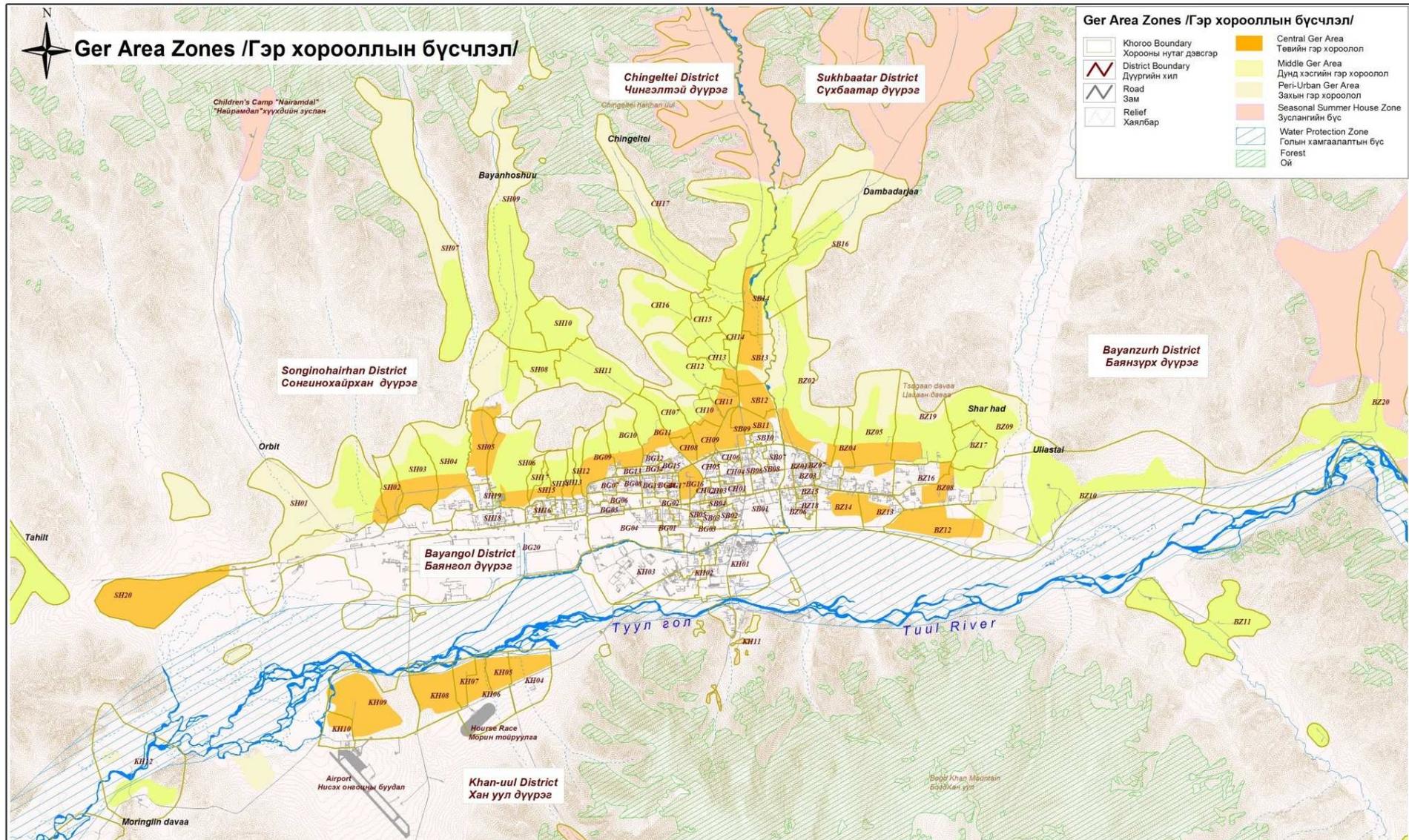


Addressing Urban Policy and Planning Barriers (1)

First step: Analytical study and the conceptualisation of three types of Ger areas

-- Central Ger areas; Middle Ger areas; and Peri-urban Ger areas

Second step: Official recognition by Municipality of Ulaanbaatar & Govt of Mongolia



Addressing Urban Policy and Planning Barriers (2)

Steps 3-6:

3. Citywide Pro-poor *Ger* area Upgrading Strategy

- Information inventory and sharing
- Information collection, review and analysis
- Setting the strategy's scope and framework
- Consultative preparation

4. From Strategy to Policy

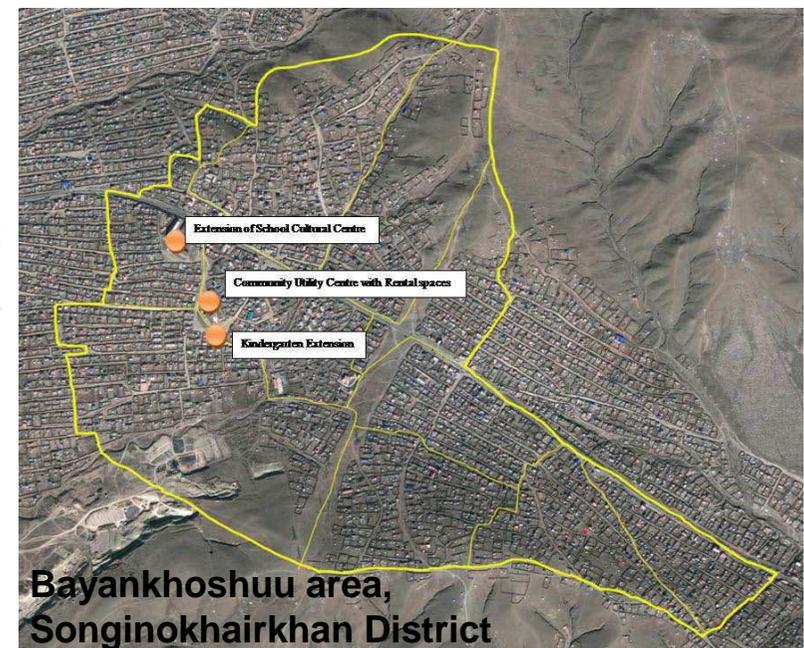
- Approved by Mayor's Council
- Approved by Citizens' Representative Council...
- ...that advised the Mayor to implement it

5. Detailed Guidelines

- Redevelopment of Central *Ger* areas
- Comprehensive upgrading of Middle *Ger* areas
- Incremental upgrading of Peri-urban *Ger* areas

6. People-led *Ger* area Upgrading

- Social mobilization and organization
- Community Action Planning
- Community Contracting



Challenge of managing natural environment and resources

Forest cover receding fast

- ***Ad hoc*** attempts at increasing tree cover
- ***Fragile Steppe*** ecosystem (long gestation period)

Ground water resources under threat

- Over 90 per cent water supply comes from groundwater
- ***Ger*** area residents use pit latrines

