

## Teachers' Notes

### Description of the Fieldwork Sites

The research in the Gobi Desert was carried out by Troy Sternberg in three contrasting study regions:

i) Minqin county in China is an arid area which has long been settled by Han Chinese farmers and the region is now an important food exporter to the rest of China. There is modern high technology investment in the settled mainly arable farming in Minqin (reservoirs, irrigation and greenhouses) and the government control the farming market here.

ii) Xilingol in a semi-arid region slightly further east in the Gobi desert and in Inner Mongolia in China. Historically the land here has been used by Mongolian nomadic herders who have managed the physically challenging landscape by moving around to find suitable conditions to herd. However, the herders now have more restrictions on how and where to graze.

iii) Omnogov and Dundgov provinces in Mongolia are very arid areas and are located in an economically contrasting country to China. Here Mongolian herding has long been practised and approximately 60% of the population in these areas are still semi nomadic herders. The herders in Mongolia have more freedom over where and when they can move. However there is less government intervention and support in the face of natural hazards. This area is also changing though; herding is increasingly profit driven and this has have changed the way in which they herd. In addition there is increasing outmigration – some to the capital city Ulan Bator and University life and some to the rapidly increasing mining sector in rural Mongolia. Both of which are increasingly seen as a more secure way to make money by Mongolians.