

Who knows Oyu Tolgoi best?

The Oyu Tolgoi I know

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Today, our country has a 1,566.6 square km area and 2.8 million populations. From this, 1.3 million live in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city which covers 4,704.4 square km. This population growth that has exceeded the initial plan of the capital city has become the main condition for water, soil and air pollution which has reached a level of disaster. However, in rural areas when I visit sometimes, there are very few people like stars that appear during the daytime, and youth drinking alcohol and driving motorcycles becoming the subject for older people who discuss about how they spend their days. This picture of life continued in Umnugobi until recently.

People have more desire to move and live in Umnugobi. It is understandable. For example, my uncle is a native resident of Umnugobi. He was one of thousands of rural migrants that came to UB. He moved to UB with his wife and joined the ranks of the unemployed. He tried to engage in private business, however, failed several times, coming under the tax burden and scarcity of funding. During that time, Oyu Tolgoi project began to be implemented in Umnugobi aimag and my uncle was very interested to find employment there and made much effort to find the tuition fee to study in university majoring in mining studies. Then, my uncle heard about Oyu Tolgoi's one year training that does not even charge training tuition, pays the students, and even provides guaranteed jobs after graduation. My uncle immediately registered to this training course and began to attend the training. He was worried about where to live when working at Oyu Tolgoi after the graduation. I remember he was talking about renting a small house with a fence around it and try to live there. He became an employee of Oyu Tolgoi and worked there for some time, then he came back to UB to take his wife with him back to OT. He also told us vividly about the development work that is going on in Umnugobi aimag, developing right in front of his eyes, and how good the work environment is and how the company pays much attention to social issues of the employees and their leisure time and health. I still remember clearly that my uncle was talking about interesting things like what equipment and uniforms the workers should wear before going to work to ensure safety, and his eyes, which were full of sadness before with business failures, were shining with excitement. My uncle and aunt now tell us they are going to have a baby soon and their life is prospering more. In addition to this, Oyu Tolgoi provides them with housing in support of a young family. Initially, my perception about mining was it destroys the natural environment in rural areas, but after hearing my uncle, I began to think if mining companies realize their social responsibility and focus on social issues of people and natural rehabilitation, it will be a good step to reduce urban overcrowding and re-direct development to the rural area.

Now looking back, I think Oyu Tolgoi brought light to the lives of 8,000 Mongolian people like my uncle. Not only this, the company contributes to all aspects of social sectors, especially, investment in youth and students, the most valuable capital of the country, and provides them scholarships and establishes vocational educational training centers. All this makes the contribution of Oyu Tolgoi to the bright future of Mongolia immensely valuable.