

WOAM — Mongolia 2026: Crossing Frozen Lake Khuvsgul

10 days • 160 km • A Once-in-a-Lifetime Human-Powered Expedition on Ice



CHALLENGING OURSELVES TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Dates: 22th February - 3th March, 2026 (10 days - excluding international flights)

THE CHALLENGE

- 160 km crossing of frozen Lake Khuvsgul, by human-powered means; on foot, ice skates, and fat bike.
- 5-Day Crossing: Traverse the frozen lake from Khatgal in the south to Khankh at the northern tip — a route rarely attempted.
- Extreme winter conditions, with -30°C nights.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JOURNEY

- Cultural Immersion: Authentic encounters with Mongolian hosts and nomadic culture, sleep in gers and tipis, learn fireside lore and traditional lifeways.
- Wild Raw Beauty: Gaze across 100 miles of mirror-blue ice, hear the lake boom beneath your skates, and savor the silence of winter wilderness.
- Ice fishing & traditional cookery (if conditions allow).
- The final arrival at Khankh, near the Russian border
- Witnessing the Lake Khuvsgul Ice Festival
- Visit a local charity in Ulaanbaatar supporting women's empowerment



Trip description

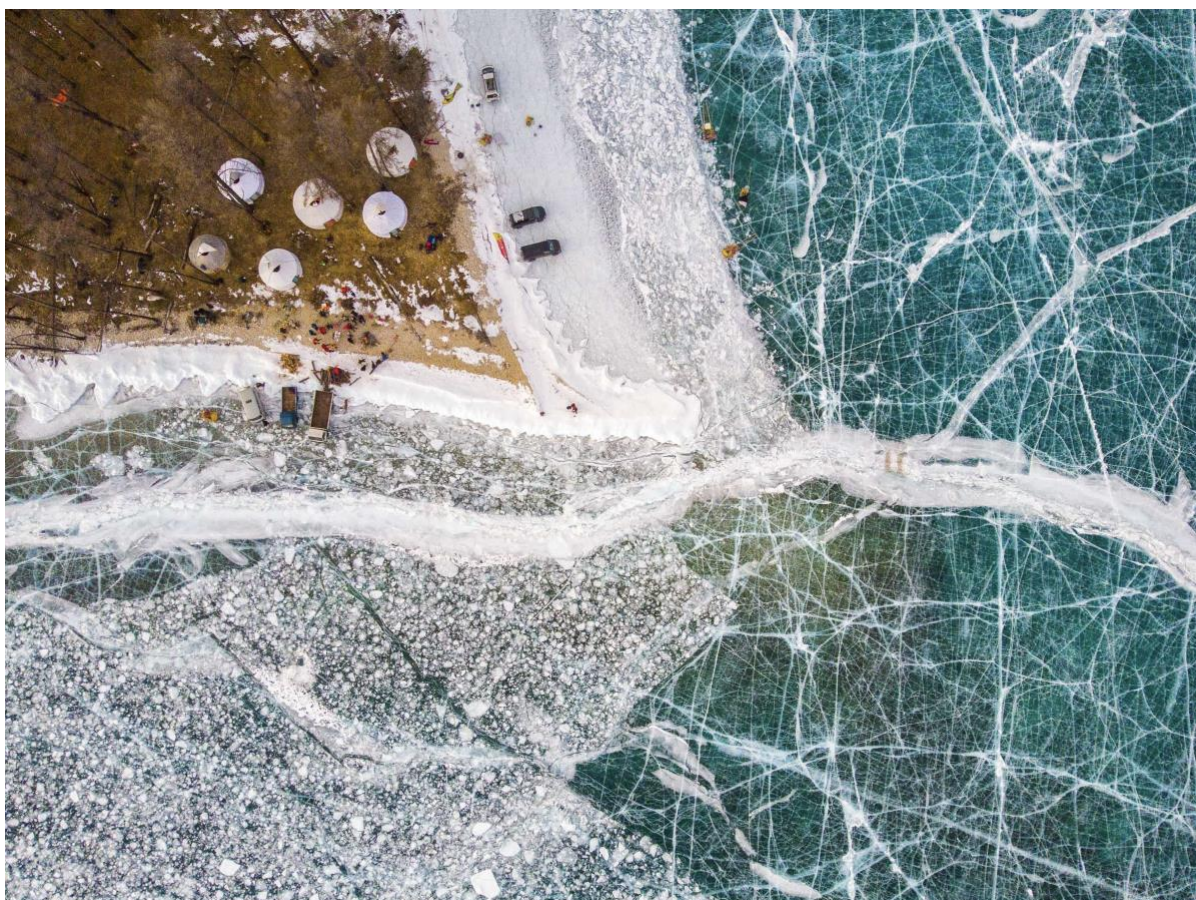
Join a team of bold women for an authentic, human-powered crossing of Mongolia's legendary Lake Khövsgöl in the heart of winter. Over nine days, we'll immerse ourselves in Mongolian culture, travel across a frozen inland sea by our own power, and support programs that help women rebuild their lives after war. This is an adventure with purpose.

Khuvsgul nuur (Lake Khuvsgul) is located in the northwest of Mongolia near the Russian border, at the foot of the eastern Sayan Mountains. As the crow flies it is 136 kilometres (85 miles) long and 262 metres (860 feet) deep. It is the second largest freshwater lake in Asia and holds almost 70% of Mongolia's fresh water and 0.4% of all the fresh water in the world.



Our nine-day, fully supported expedition begins with an evening in Ulaanbaatar before we journey north to Lake Khuvsgul for seven unforgettable nights on the ice. Over five days, we will cross the frozen lake travelling by foot, ice skates, or fat bike with traditional Mongolian horse carts providing support.

Starting from the settlement of Khatgal, we make our way to Khankh, a tiny village at the lake's northern edge, nestled beneath the towering mountains of the Russian border. From there, we retrace the full length of the lake by vehicle, reflecting on the scale of our achievement. Each night, we will sleep in gers or tipis, gathering around the fire for hearty feasts of locally sourced reindeer, boar, or gazelle. And at the end of our journey, we return to Ulaanbaatar — where the warmth of a hot shower will feel like the ultimate luxury after days spent in the frozen wilderness.





Day by day – Draft itinerary

Sunday
Feb, 22th



Day 1 - Ulaanbaatar

First day in Mongolia's vibrant capital and meet the team over a traditional Mongolian dinner. A warm welcome, expedition briefing, and plenty of laughter set the tone for the adventure ahead.

Sleeping: Hotel

Monday
Feb, 23th



Day 2 - Khatgal, Lake Khuvsgul

Fly to Mörön and journey overland to Khatgal, where the vast sapphire expanse of Lake Khövsgöl begins. Settle into your ger by the frozen shore and meet the horse-sled crew who'll lead us into the wild.

Sleeping: Fixed Gers camp

Tuesday
Feb, 24th



Day 3 - Khatgal to Wild Camp 1

Our epic five-day journey across the mirror-blue ice of Lake Khövsgöl begins. We travel 32 km to our first wild camp — gers, firelight, and local reindeer dinner await. Surrounded by wildlife and endless views, it's a breathtaking start to the adventure.

Crossing: 32km – Sleeping: tipis, wild camp

Wednesday
Feb, 25th



Day 4 - Wild Camp 2, Modon Khui Island

After 40 km on the ice, we reach Modon Khui — a sacred island at the heart of the lake. To the north, mountains rise in breathtaking grandeur toward the Russian border. We spend the night in tipis, nestled among the island's quiet forests.

Crossing: 40km – Sleeping: tipis, wild camp

Thursday
Feb, 26th



Day 5 - Wild Camp 3, NE shore

After breakfast, we leave Modon Khui and head north to our next wild camp on the lake's northeast shore. As night falls, wolves may call beneath the frozen sky.

Crossing: 30-40 km – Sleeping: tipis, wild camp

Friday
Feb, 27th



Day 6 - Wild Camp 4, NE shore

A long day on open ice as we rotate leads and ride the lake's quiet rhythm. That night, we camp among spruce and larch, warm hands and warmer stories.

Crossing: 30-40 km – Sleeping: tipis, wild camp

Saturday
Feb, 28th



Day 7 - Khankh

The final leg takes us toward Mongolia's northern border with Russia, where wild mountains rise above ice. As dusk falls, the lights of Khankh beckon us to our goal; a well-earned feast and a heartfelt the celebration await.

Crossing: 30-40 km – Sleeping: Fixed Gers camp

Sunday
March, 1st



Day 8 - Khankh to Khatgal

We retrace our route by heated vehicle to Khatgal, then celebrate local culture at the Khuvsgöl Ice Festival — a vibrant gathering of Mongolia's nomadic communities.

Sleeping: Fixed Gers camp

Monday
March, 2nd



Day 9 - Transfer to Murun, Ulaanbaatar

Fly back to the capital for departures or a slow day in the city. Hot showers, strong tea and full hearts.

Sleeping: Hotel

Tuesday
March, 3rd



Day 10 - Ulaanbaatar

Spend time with a local women's charity and witness the powerful work transforming lives across Mongolia. Connecting our journey of challenge with a mission of empowerment, a heartfelt reminder of why we walk.

Sleeping: Hotel

Note: Itinerary may adapt to ice and weather conditions to keep the team safe





The Commitment – Budget and fundraising

BUDGET

Budget: € 3,000 per participant based on a 12-14 people

This cost includes:

- All accommodation, at 3/4-star standard (hotels and gers)
- All transfers including arrival and departure
- Meals, as indicated on itinerary, and some alcoholic drinks
- Visits, all fees, taxes for the special zone
- Vehicles, horses, sleds, guides and a risk assessed ice route (very important!!)
- Camping equipment
- English speaking guide
- Full liability Insurance
- Wilderness first aider and evacuation policy
- Satellite Tracking

This cost does not include:

- International flights
- Additional nights in Mongolia, not included in the itinerary
- Personal travel Insurance
- Visas (requirements depend on nationality)
- Local gratuity (optional)

FUNDRAISING

At the heart of every WOAM expedition is our mission: **“Challenging Ourselves to Empower Women.”**

With the guidance and support of the WOAM team, each participant commits to raising both funds and awareness for Women for Women International (WfWI), our trusted charity partner for over 13 years. Your fundraising efforts directly fuel programs that equip women survivors of war with the tools, knowledge, and resources they need to rebuild their lives, support their families, and strengthen their communities.

Since our founding, WOAM expeditions have raised more than USD 1.5 million for women’s organisations worldwide. By embracing both the physical challenge of the expedition and the fundraising commitment, you join a global movement of solidarity and empowerment, demonstrating that together, we can transform courage into impact and adventure into lasting change.



More information

FITNESS LEVEL

Crossing Lake Khuvsgul is a demanding yet rewarding challenge. While each day’s distance is manageable on its own, the expedition will be challenging due to the continuous, immersive nature of travelling across ice in extreme winter conditions.

Prior experience with ice-skating, fat biking, or winter trekking is helpful but not essential. Our local team will provide guidance and support throughout, ensuring you have the skills and confidence to move safely on the ice.

Participants should be prepared to cover 30–40 km per day over five consecutive days. Progress across the frozen lake can vary greatly depending on surface conditions: smooth ice may make the journey seem effortless, while snowdrifts, cracks, wind, or sudden cold snaps can significantly increase the difficulty.

Beyond the physical effort, this adventure requires a team spirit. Everyone will contribute to communal responsibilities, such as setting up and maintaining camp, helping with meals, and caring for shared equipment. The strength of the group lies in shared effort and camaraderie.

Nights will be spent in gers, tipis, or wilderness camps, where temperatures may plunge below -30°C . Staying warm, managing layers, and keeping gear dry are essential to your comfort and safety.

If you have concerns about your suitability for this expedition, or would like advice on preparing physically and mentally, please reach out to us. This journey is designed to challenge you — but with preparation, determination, and teamwork, it will be an unforgettable achievement.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

Passeport & Visa:

Most travellers require a passport that is valid for at least six months after the return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required. You can check your requirements on the website provided by the government of Mongolia.

Vaccination:

It is your responsibility to check whether you need any vaccination for this trip.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day bag at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.





CLOTHING

- Base layer(s), Multiple base layers for top and bottoms, plus spares
- Mid layer(s), Multiple mid layers for top and bottoms, plus spares
- Outer layer, Good insulating outer garments for top and bottoms. These do NOT need to be waterproof (in fact, it is better if they are not). Precipitation is negligible in this area, so insulation is king, not waterproofing. For moving on the ice, lightweight down and loft-style outer layers are best. Windbreaker-style and soft-shell trousers and tights are recommended for bottoms
- Underwear: A good pair of wicking underpants or sports knickers/ bra. Plus at least one change of underwear
- Socks, Minimum of one liner sock and a thicker sock. Plus spares.
- Liner gloves – fingered
- Outer gloves – fingered
- Over mitten or down/ loft mitten
- Hat (plus spare)
- Balaclava (plus spare)
- Neck gaiter, Buff, snood or fleece tube (plus spare)
- Goggles
- Sunglasses
- Footwear with spiked/ studs embedded in the soles OR a spiked/ studded attachment that can be fitted to the shoe or boot.
- Daypack: A small daypack (15 – 30l) to carry spare clothing, med kit and mandatory safety gear plus food/ drink. NB items like gels and energy bars are best kept in pockets close to your person, so they do not freeze. As is water.
- Sleepwear kit: Base layer top and leggings, gloves, hat and socks. This should be kept just for sleeping ensuring you always have a comfortable, warm and dry layer.

CAMP LIFE

- Head-torch with spare batteries
- Thick down jacket for use in camp (separate to outer layers used on the route)
- 2 x Water bottles – preferably with insulation
- Knife, fork, spoon set
- Plastic plate and bowl
- Personal toiletries and medications**
- Antibacterial wet wipes (baby wipes are best)***
- Roll of toilet paper***
- Anti-bacterial handwash***
- Suncream
- Blister kit/ adhesive blister patches
- Holdall (to put all of your spare kit and overnight kit that you won't be carrying in your daypack)

OTHER RECOMMENDED PERSONAL ITEMS (not mandatory)

- Pee bottle*
 - Books
 - Playing cards
 - Moisturiser – very good for weathered skin from the cold
 - Lip balm – good for those cracked lips
 - Music devices
 - Phone
 - Camera
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More about our Expedition Partner Sand Baggers

We are proud to once again partner with Sand Baggers, the expert team who organised, ran, and delivered such a superb experience during our expedition to Namibia. Their professionalism, expertise, and spirit of adventure will accompany us once again — this time onto the frozen expanse of Lake Khuvsgul.

With over 25 years of experience leading international expeditions, Sand Baggers have crossed deserts, jungles, and for the past decade focused much of their work on ice. Over the years they have built solid connections in Mongolia, ensuring both safety and authenticity in our journey. Their long-standing local partner is Banzragch Enkhtuya of Gobitour LLC, who has worked with Sand Baggers since 2001. A native of the Gobi Desert, now based in Ulaanbaatar, Enkhtuya leads a fantastic team and is recognised as a key figure in the development of adventure tourism in Mongolia.

Together, Sand Baggers and Gobitour will provide the knowledge, logistical expertise, and support that make this extraordinary adventure possible.



About Women on a Mission (WOAM) and our charity partner WfWI

ABOUT WOMEN ON A MISSION (WOAM)

Women on a Mission (WOAM) is a non-profit that combines self-funded expeditions to remote, awe-inspiring locations with impactful fundraising events and workshops. Its mission is to raise awareness and vital funds for women survivors of war, violence, and abuse. Through annual campaigns and expeditions, each self-funded by participants, WOAM amplifies visibility for women's issues while directing resources to trusted charity partners with established programmes supporting vulnerable communities.

Learn more: www.womenmission.com

ABOUT OUR CHARITY PARTNER WOMEN FOR WOMEN INTERNATIONAL (WFWI)

Women for Women International champions equality by supporting women survivors of war and conflict. Since 1993, our global community has invested in the power of over 550,000 women across 17 conflict-affected countries, to create a ripple effect that makes the world more equal, peaceful, and prosperous. Through the Stronger Women, Stronger Nations Programme, women gain skills to rebuild their lives and communities in countries including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, and South Sudan. Participants form support networks, learn income-generating skills, and advocate for their rights, creating sustainable change. The goal for the next decade is to expand this impact, aiming for a world where all women achieve their full potential.

For more information, visit womenforwomen.org.uk.



READY TO STEP ONTO THE ICE WITH US ?

Spots are limited. For more information and to sign up, please contact:

Women On A Mission
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www.womenmission.com
[@woamsingapore](https://www.instagram.com/woamsingapore)
