

Mongolia Program Summary

Mongolia is one of the few countries throughout Asia that boasts dynamic institutions of democracy. Mongolia embarked on its democratic path in 1989 with widespread public support for democratic reforms and began its transition to a democracy in 1990. Throughout this 21-year period, Mongolia has created and strengthened democratic institutions, including the national legislature, the judiciary, political parties and civil society. The International Republican Institute (IRI) has supported the development of democratic practices and good governance in Mongolia since 1992. IRI's long-standing presence in Mongolia has enabled the Institute to establish a reputation as an expert organization willing to work with all political parties and civil society organizations, both in Ulaanbaatar and at the grassroots level in provinces across Mongolia. In recent years, IRI has focused on parliamentary and local governance strengthening, public opinion analysis and civic engagement.

Parliament and Local Governance Strengthening

IRI's parliamentary strengthening program has assisted the members of the State Great Hural in conducting legislative oversight and their representative responsibilities more effectively, while at the same time enhancing parliamentary research capacity and providing professional development for parliament staff.

IRI's local governance program works to increase the capacity of government officials to be more responsive to citizens' needs and work with the national parliament to increase public input in decision-making. IRI's experience and knowledge is used to achieve the following goals with local government officials at the provincial level (*aimag*) and county level (*soum*) level: improve local government responsiveness to citizen priorities; develop mechanisms for meaningful, inclusive and participatory decision-making at the local level; and enhance the ability of local public officials to advocate to authorities at higher levels of government.

Public Opinion Analysis

Public opinion analysis has also been a large component of IRI's activities in Mongolia. Through public opinion research in the form of national polls and focus group discussions, IRI identifies citizens' needs, knowledge of government functions, experiences interacting with local and national government and satisfaction with government services. The information obtained is used to brief government institutions, members of parliament and their staff, local government officials and political parties. The content generated from the public opinion research is also integrated into other IRI programming: policy development program, government institution training, government official training and constituent dialogue initiatives.

Civic Engagement

IRI's civic engagement work has centered on creating a larger political space for youth. IRI's youth program currently focuses on developing the skills of college and secondary education level students by bridging the gap between youth and decision makers, thereby allowing youth to make an impact in their community and their country. IRI has created opportunities for the next generation of Mongolian leaders to develop their skills through debates, youth forums, and roundtables on active civic involvement.