

# Mongolia

## OVERVIEW

### 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 democratic 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.

However, despite many positive developments, elected officials at the local levels of government remain locked in a continued struggle to progress from overly centralized governance throughout the country. As such, in recent years IRI has shifted its focus to assist the parliament and local governments in, public opinion analysis and civic engagement in order to improve the responsiveness of government and participation of citizens at the local level.

### Parliament and Local Governance Strengthening

Through its parliamentary strengthening program, IRI supports the increased role members of the State Great Hural play in legislative oversight and their efforts to effectively represent their constituents. In addition, IRI offers workshops on parliamentary research and provides professional development for parliament staff.

IRI's democratic governance program focuses on bringing together local government official and citizens to address community concerns and play a more effective role in policy making process at the national level. IRI's experience and knowledge is used to achieve the following goals with local officials at the provincial level (aimag), county level (soum) and town level (bagh): 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. Through these programs IRI also increases citizen engagement by connecting citizens, political parties, local governments and the State Great Hural.

### Public Opinion Analysis

Public opinion analysis is also a large component of IRI's work in Mongolia. IRI's public opinion research 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 so they are better able to respond to citizens' needs and incorporate citizen input into public policy.