



Background

Through the International Republican Institute (IRI), USAID/Mongolia has offered training and technical assistance to Mongolia's political parties since 1992. Training has covered the full range of political party functions, from grassroots organization and party-building, to message design and communications. Technical assistance has been provided to the State Great Hural (SGH) to raise ethical standards and develop procedural legislation. Despite the challenges of its transition, Mongolia is the only country in Central Asia that continues to boast a pluralistic multi-party system.

Funding Period

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Current Program

IRI currently implements a program of parliamentary development and political party strengthening. The parliamentary program helps the SGH to conduct its legislative oversight and representative responsibilities more effectively. One of IRI's biggest accomplishments was helping to draft and encouraging the passage of two Parliamentary Procedures amendments that alter the way MPs legislate. These amendments increase transparency and accountability within the SGH by opening hearings to the public and decentralizing power from the Secretariat's office. As part of this support, IRI brought U.S. Congressional experts to Ulaanbaatar to advise committee chairpersons, MPs and their staffs on how to hold committee hearings, draft legislation, and define the duties and responsibilities of MPs and staff alike.

USAID/Mongolia also supports the work of an IRI-SGH Joint Working Group on drafting of both Ethics Legislation and amendments to the Election Law. Concurrently, IRI undertakes a range of activities to help Parliament implement key elements of this legislation.

In its political party work, IRI trained poll-watchers in all 21 *aimags* in preparation for the 2004 and 2005 Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Because of that work, both were relatively free of fraud. IRI's suggestion that opposition parties coalesce behind single candidates in 2004 also led to a dramatic impact on proportional representation: 49% of the electorate was represented by only four MPs after the 2000 election, but by 34 MPs after the 2004 election. Nation-wide public opinion polls in the lead-up to the two elections helped candidates on both sides identify key issues important to the Mongolian electorate. IRI also sponsored the inaugural "Women in Politics and Governance" forum in 2005, which brought women political activists together to get them more involved in the political process.