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Implemented by:



ХУУЛЬ ЗҮЙ,
ДОТООД ХЭРГИЙН ЯАМ

Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

FACTS

Programme name:

Governance and Decentralisation
Programme

Project name:

Civic Engagement Project

Duration:

2017 - 2018

Budget:

400.000 CHF

Target group:

- Government of Mongolia
- District, soum, bagh khoroo
Governors offices
- Citizens Representative Khurals
- Bagh and khoroo Public meetings
- Civil society organizations
- Journalists
- Citizens

Target area:

Nationwide and some selected
districts, soums, khorooos and baghs

The Government of Mongolia views decentralisation and democratisation as key reforms to ensure more efficient and inclusive development. Authorities are aiming to increase civic engagement – a fundamental component of good local governance - and improve government accountability. SDC's Civic Engagement Project reaffirms Switzerland's support to Mongolia in strengthening the legislative framework for citizens' participation and ensuring effective implementation.



Herders in Tsetseg Soum, Khovd aimag discuss collective
pasture management in their herding community.

BACKGROUND

As stipulated in the 1992 Constitution, Mongolia aspires to be a humane, civil, democratic society. State power is vested in the people of Mongolia, who exercise that power through direct participation in state affairs and through elected representative state bodies (Constitution of Mongolia, Article 3.1). It is therefore incumbent on state organisations to allow citizens to participate in decision-making processes. Official decisions are based on laws and regulations, and are implemented after consultations with citizens.

Progress has been made in recent years with Parliament approving laws on public hearings and involving discussions with citizens on legislative drafts. According to a legal baseline study conducted by the Civic Engagement Project Phase I, of

all the laws that are currently enacted in Mongolia, there are 105 with provisions on citizens' engagement, such as accessibility of information, transparency, consultations with citizens prior to decision-making, and citizens' participation, oversight and monitoring. However, many provisions were not implemented as they were deemed to be too general, overlapping or contradictory. Despite the progress that has been made in increasing citizens' participation, the appropriate mechanisms are still not fully established, and both the approach itself and the results elicited are inadequate. The project is aimed at increasing citizens' participation in decision-making at the local level with emphasis placed on strengthening the involvement of vulnerable groups within Mongolia.

SDC's Strategic Goal:

To contribute to equitable and
sustainable social and economic
development in Mongolia

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT PHASE I: MAIN OUTCOMES

During the implementation of the Civic Engagement Project Phase I from October 2015 to April 2017, a comprehensive study on the legal framework was conducted and a draft Law on Implementation of Citizens' Political Rights that included new participatory mechanisms for citizens was submitted to Parliament. Although it was not approved, it was an important step forward.

Project activities aimed at improving the knowledge of local officials, civil servants, civil society organisations (CSOs) and citizens were held to provide motivation and enable the sharing of experiences. The lessons learned and insights gained during the study are the foundation of the Civic Engagement Project Phase II.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT PHASE II: OBJECTIVE

Strengthening citizens' engagement for improved government responsiveness to the needs and preferences of men, women, and vulnerable groups

ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED RESULTS:

Legal and regulatory framework for citizen engagement is strengthened:

Based on the legal study undertaken in the previous phase, proposals targeting improvements to the legal framework will be drafted and submitted. An impact assessment will also be conducted of administrative acts that have been enacted to assess their compliance with laws and regulations covering human rights and freedoms, and citizens' participation. In the event of non-compliance, improvements will be drafted and submitted. The project will assist in improving the legal framework for NGOs, which play a significant role in promoting citizens' participation in state affairs.

Enforcement of legal and regulatory provisions on citizens' engagement is strengthened:

Some of the citizens' participation mechanisms defined in current laws will be piloted in

targeted soums, districts, baghs and khoros in cooperation with the state, civil society and citizens. This will demonstrate the benefits of meaningful civic engagement, and will be jointly led by the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs of Mongolia and the National Legal Institute. Key stakeholders are state organisations, citizens, CSOs and the media. The experiences and lessons learned will be used to further improve the legal framework.

Awareness and capacity of stakeholders in citizens' engagement is strengthened:

Activities will focus on capacity building and increasing the general knowledge of local officials, CSOs, the media and citizens. In addition to improving their level of knowledge, participants will also gain the skills needed to effectively fulfill their roles within those selected participatory mechanisms.

Partner organisations:

- National legal institute
- National Academy of Governance
- Law School of National University of Mongolia
- Civil society organizations

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Citizens express their opinions on the draft law on citizens' political rights. Bayankhongor aimag.

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