

# Mongolia

Mongolia's development since its peaceful transition to democracy and a market economy in 1990 is a story of both success and untapped potential. Mongolia's continued progress will require efforts to strengthen governance and reduce corruption, respond to climate change, diversify the economy, and continue to promote gender equality and inclusion. The Asia Foundation supports Mongolian partners in government, civil society, and the private sector to find solutions to these critical issues.



The Foundation has been working with Mongolia since its democratic transition in 1990 and was one of the first international nongovernmental organizations to open a country office in 1993. The Foundation contributed to the democratic development of Mongolia with technical assistance, early support for Mongolian civil society, and critical investments in government capacity and international exposure. In recent years, the Foundation has built on its long-term presence with context-specific programs developed and implemented with trusted partners.

## **STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The Foundation has supported anti-corruption efforts in Mongolia for over 15 years. Past projects have helped generate government action plans, supported the development of the Independent Authority Against Corruption, and increased public understanding of corruption. With recent support from the Asian Development Bank, the Foundation

is engaging justice sector stakeholders to study and improve the handling of corruption investigations and cases. These efforts complement support for the Mongolian justice sector with funding from the United States Department of State. Current programs are improving training and mentorship opportunities for young legal professionals with the Mongolian Bar Association, General Prosecutor's Office, and Judicial General Council, and enhancing justice sector capacity to respond to illegal mining and money laundering.

The Foundation also remains engaged with the development of Mongolia's vibrant democracy. In partnership with the International Republican Institute and funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the Foundation is working with local partners to engage youth in elections and political processes. Additionally, the Foundation supports Mongolia's parliament to promote innovative citizen participation tools, build the capacity of members of Parliament, and improve

the functioning of the Parliamentary Research Institute.

## PROMOTING URBAN GOVERNANCE

Ulaanbaatar's rapid urbanization has created governance challenges and the Foundation has been working to improve living conditions for the city's 1.5 million residents for over a decade. Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Foundation is supporting the Municipality of Ulaanbaatar to plan and deliver local public services and investments in underserved areas of the city. The Foundation has helped introduce a permanent system of capacity building and culture of continual improvement within the city's civil service, supported the decentralization and digitization of service delivery, and initiated efforts to improve decision-making through data and citizen participation.

## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Foundation promotes employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, supports local advocates for Mongolia's LGBTQ community, and actively supports progress towards gender equality. Efforts to combat gender-based violence (GBV) include a strong focus on ending human trafficking with support from the United States Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Foundation's Lotus Circle, and the Korean Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. This focus on ending violence is complemented by efforts to promote women's economic empowerment with funding from Global Affairs Canada. This project supports local civil society coalitions and key government stakeholders, including the National Committee on Gender Equality, to advocate for women's economic empowerment and introduce critical policy

reforms. This complements the work of the Foundation's Women's Business Center (WBC), which was launched with support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency, and provides training, mentorship, and an incubator program to thousands of women entrepreneurs. The WBC has also been central to Covid-19 response programs that provide entrepreneurs with important financial, advisory and psycho-social assistance during the pandemic with funding from the Foundation's Lotus Circle, and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

## SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Foundation is supporting the reduction of emissions and climate adaptation in Mongolia. In partnership with the United Nations Environment Program current programs are introducing innovative solutions to reduce emissions from the food waste in Mongolia and promote the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle). Other initiatives include raising awareness about climate change on social media, support for improved urban forestry management in Ulaanbaatar in collaboration with UNESCAP, and cooperation with the International Conservation Caucus Foundation to support the Mongolian parliament to form a conservation caucus, with funding from the United States Department of State.

## BOOKS FOR ASIA

The Foundation has distributed English language materials in Mongolia since the early 1990s. Currently, with support from the Lorinet Foundation, the Books for Asia program promotes reading through community engagement, awareness raising on the importance of reading, translation of books into Mongolian, and promoting the Foundation's Let's Read online library.

*The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.*



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