

A story of success and friendship between parliamentary services in Switzerland and Mongolia



Visit by the Parliamentary Control of the Administration unit of the Swiss Parliament to the office of the Mongolian parliamentary unit tasked to scrutinise legislation (April 2019)

In partnership with the Swiss Parliamentary Services, Mongolia has created a new unit to improve parliamentary scrutiny as part of an SDC-led project run in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Mongolia has made significant political, social and economic progress since the fall of the Berlin Wall, after which it adopted its democratic constitution. In 2017, the Mongolian parliamentary administration expressed an interest in working with the Swiss Parliamentary Services to further the country's democratisation efforts. "A new law required the Mongolian parliamentary services to scrutinise the implementation of legislation," explains Alexandre Füzesséry, Senior Advisor of technical cooperation at the Swiss Parliamentary Services. "Since they had no experience in this field, they approached us to share our knowledge with them. This support is part of the SDC–UNDP project to support the Mongolian parliament.

From April 2018 to the end of 2019, staff members of Switzerland's Parliamentary Control of the Administration (PCA) unit supported their counterparts in the scrutiny of Mongolia's new land allocation act. "We accompanied them through the vari-

ous stages, from formulating questions to data collection and the drafting of the final report," says Füzesséry. At each stage, the Swiss unit provided an appraisal with feedback and developed manuals based on international standards. Much of the support was provided remotely, but three trips to Mongolia and three study visits to Switzerland were also organised. According to Füzesséry, during these six years of cooperation, considerable progress has been made in the quality of the parliament's scrutiny of legislation and assumption of its oversight function. "The Mongolian parliamentary administration has set up a new 'evaluation unit' and recruited new employees with training in both law and social policy". The PCA unit also benefited from this sharing of expertise. "My colleagues had to think about and critically examine their own evaluation tools before they could present them in another country," says the expert, also recalling the friendships that formed over the years.

Since the land allocation act, the evaluation unit has scrutinised other laws in accordance with international standards and good practices acquired during the Swiss–Mongolian collaboration. “The Mongolian parliament and its committees now have to figure out what to do with the outcomes of these evaluations. And the government must decide how to respond to the parliament’s recommendations,” Füzesséry points out. In 2024, the SDC will phase out its 20-year bilateral cooperation in Mongolia. In September, the PCA unit will return to Mongolia to explain to parliamentarians how they can use the legislative appraisals by the evaluation unit and apply the recommendations.



Visit to Bern by the Mongolian parliament’s working group responsible for legislative scrutiny (October 2018)