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ANNUAL **REPORT** 2021

2022 Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

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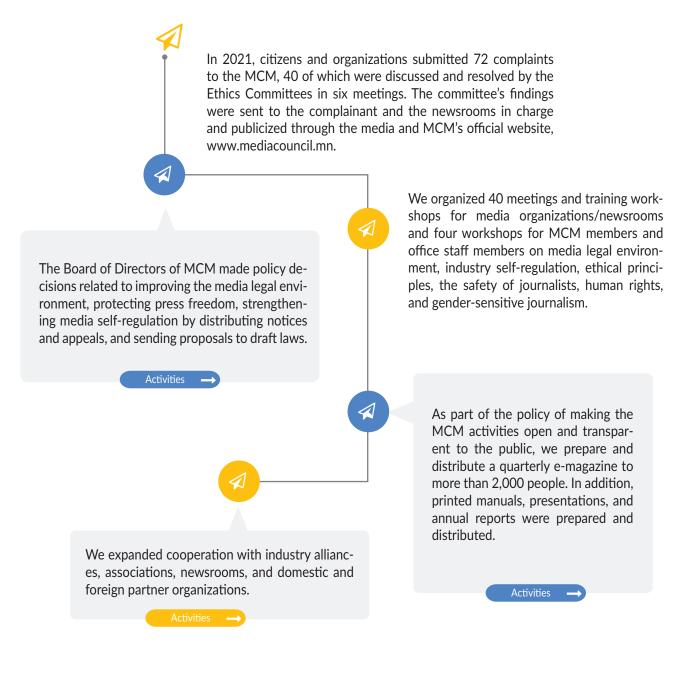
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# FOREWORD

The Media Council of Mongolia (MCM) is an independent self-regulatory organization of the press, broadcast, and online media industries established in early 2015 as a result of the initiative and successful cooperation of journalists, publishers, industry alliances, and professional organizations operating under the goal of:

- » Supporting press freedom;
- » Improving the responsibility of journalists and media organizations in society;
- » Developing and enforcing journalism ethics and professional standards;
- » Protecting the independence of journalists.

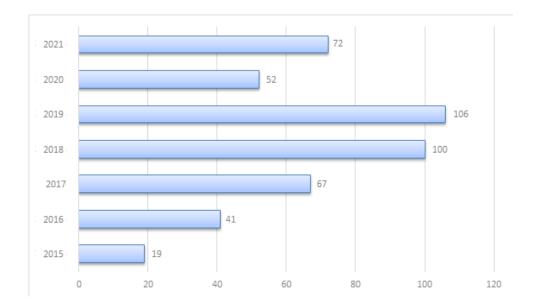
In 2021, the MCM successfully fulfilled its primary duties of assisting media organizations and newsrooms in maintaining professional, ethical standards and handling complaints filed by citizens, organizations, and enterprises regarding journalistic articles and programs.



# 1. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The MCM operates with the Print and Online Media Ethics Committee and Radio and Television Ethics Committee. Based on MCM's operational and complaints procedure and codes of ethics, they discuss and resolve complaints submitted by citizens and organizations.

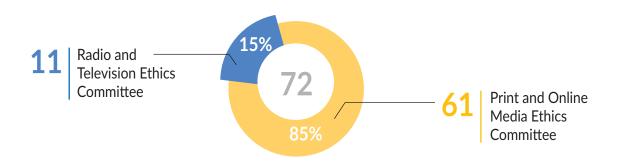
From 2015 to the end of 2021, the MCM received and resolved 457 complaints.



# Complaint numbers submitted to the MCM /2012-2021/

In 2021, we received 72 complaints which were addressed to the following:

- 11 (15%) to the Radio and Television Ethics Committee;
- 61 (85%) to the Print and Online Media Ethics Committee.



#### The status of the complaints resolution by MCM:

25 of the 72 complaints were reviewed in advance by the MCM secretariat and rejected according to Article 2.3 of the Complaint Procedure for the following reasons: they were overdue, the materials were not fully prepared, and they did not apply to the functions of the MCM.

Seven complainants withdrew their applications.

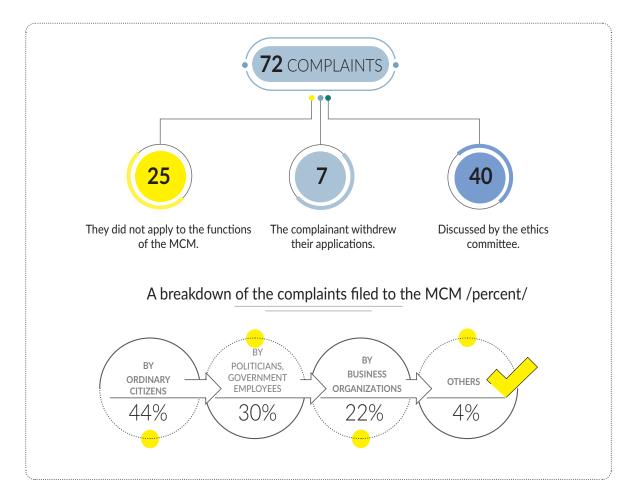
Thus, the two Ethics Committees thoroughly discussed the complaints addressed to 40 journalism contents in six meetings on whether or not they violated the code of ethics. The following conclusions were made under Article 6.3 of the Complaint Procedure.

- 1) Following Article 6.3.1 of the Complaint Procedure, we informed that 17 newsrooms did not violate the code of ethics;
- 2) Under Article 6.3.2 of the Complaint Procedure, we informed the public that nine newsrooms have corrected their violations and apologized without mentioning their names;
- 3) Following Article 6.3.3 of the Complaint Procedure, we informed the public by name that 14 newsrooms violated the code of ethics.

According to the conclusions of the ethics committees, responsible media organizations have commonly violated Article 1.1 of the Mongolian Media Ethics Principles: "Ensure that the information is accurate and avoid making accidental mistakes."

A breakdown of the complaints filed to the MCM:

- 44 percent by ordinary citizens;
- 30 percent by politicians, government employees, and government organizations;
- 22 percent by business organizations;
- Others 4 percent.





# 2. POLICY DECISIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The MCM Board of Directors comprises 15 members representing five sectors: newspapers/magazines, radio/television, websites, local media, and community/initiative groups.

According to Article 10.2 of the MCM NGO Rules, in addition to approving action plans and budgets proposed by the secretariat, monitoring performance, and giving recommendations, policy decisions are made related to protecting press freedom and strengthening media self-regulation.

In 2021, the Board of Directors of MCM held three meetings and discussed and approved the following policy documents.

- 1) Amended Article 2.2 of the Operational Procedure for the MCM.
- 2) YChairwoman of the Board Ch.Nomin was relieved of her duties as she was appointed as the Minister of Culture and started working in the public service (March 29).
- 3) MCM members are elected for a six-year term. In connection with the expiration of the first members' office period, the MCM Board expressed gratitude to the first members for their valuable contribution to develop-ing the industry's self-regulation system (June 16).
- 4) Director of ETV TV in Orkhon aimag, journalist B.Munguntuya was elected as a representative of local media on the Board of Directors. B.Undrakhjargalant, director of the News Department of NTV, G.Batzaya, journalist and editor at Mongolian National Broadcaster, and T.Atarbayar, editor of NBTV TV in Orkhon aimag, were appointed at the Radio and Television Ethics Committee. S.Amartuvshin, head of the Journalism Department at the Mongolian National University of Education, and N.Batzorig, founder and head of the Association of Professional Sociologists, were appointed to the Print and Online Media Ethics Committee as public representatives. Also, G.Lkhagvadorj, director of UBN.mn, and Ts.Tserendolgor, director of Peak.mn, were appointed to represent online media owners, while Sh.Oyunchimeg, editor-in-chief of News.mn, was chosen to represent journalists (October 20).
- 5) During the Covid-19 pandemic, accurate and reliable information has become vitally important in the lives of citizens. To raise awareness of the rights of journalists to obtain and distribute information, the need for effective information communication among the three stakeholders, media-citizen-government, increased dramatically. Therefore, the Board of Directors supported the creation and capacity-building of the Crisis Communication Chapter, the network of media, local authorities, and civil society organizations to disseminate reliable information under the motto "Reliable Information Saves Lives," in collaboration with Deutsche Welle Academie (October 20).



- 6) On October 20, the MCM Board of Directors discussed and approved strategic planning of the NGO's midterm (2021-2023). The following four main activities were selected as strategic priorities:
  - Improve the quality by transferring the experience accumulated so far and increasing the capacity of receiving and settling complaints.
  - Support sustainable development by developing a diversity of media self-regulation financing.
  - Support and improve the legal environment to protect and strengthen freedom of the press through various activities that ensure the participation of different stakeholders.
  - In specific social situations, protect and support freedom of the press and the right to information by strengthening the cooperation and mutual understanding of the stakeholders.

In addition, members of the Board of Directors participated in a one-time training workshop. They discussed plans for improving the operation of the MCM and building financial models to support the sustainable development of an independent self-regulatory organization.



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# 3. "MEDIA POLICY" ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

The MCM has been organizing a series of "Media Policy" roundtable discussions since 2018 in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Country Office in Mongolia. The sixth discussion was held under the theme of "Social Media Regulation" on September 29, 2021.

Representatives from the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, the Prosecutor's General Office of Mongolia, the General Election Commission of Mongolia, the Authority for Fair Competition and Consumer Protection, the Communications Regulatory Commission of Mongolia, the Judicial General Council of Mongolia, National Human Rights Commission of Mongolia, and editors, representatives from media sector's coalitions or associations, Mongolian Bar Association, Faro Group LLC, Civil Society organizations, public and private organizations participated the discussion.

Ts.Tamir, executive director at the Mongolian Center for Investigative Reporters, presented on the topic "Monitoring Facebook during the election campaign," lawyer and researcher L.Galbaatar gave a presentation, "Legal environment for freedom of expression and publication in the online platforms during the presidential election." G.Battulga, Specialist, Internet-Based Services and Technology Division, CRC, presented on "Regulation of social media during the presidential election campaign," followed by the presentation of B.Purevsuren, Globe International Center's lawyer, on "Social media regulation: Some countries' experiences and recommendations."

As a result of the "Media Policy" sixth series of roundtable discussions, participants made recommendations to relevant stakeholders within the "Social Media Regulation" framework.

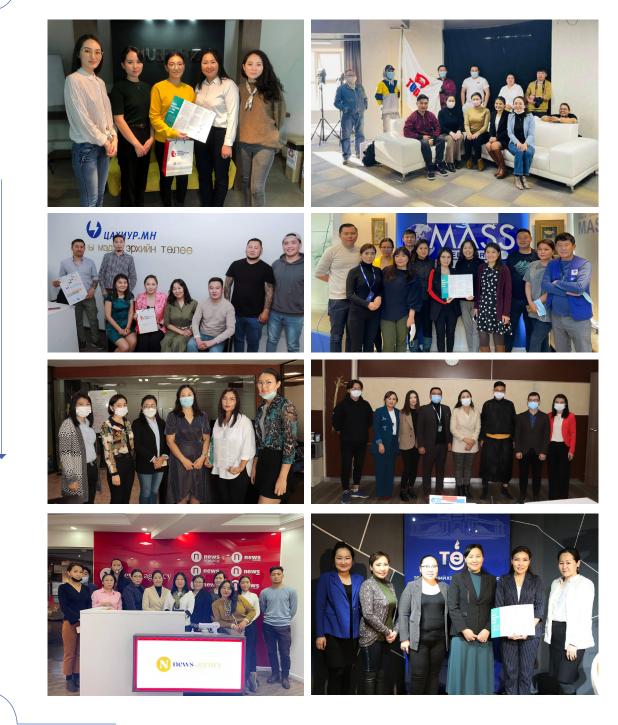




# 4. SERIES OF MEETINGS AND TRAINING WORKSHOPS ON QUALITY JOURNALISM

#### January-December

The MCM secretariat regularly held editorial meetings, visited nine media organizations, and provided information on media self-regulation, code of ethics, and safety of journalists. It includes Mass agency and news sites humanz.mn, tug.mn, peak.mn, ubn.mn, tur.mn, news.mn, presscenter.mn, tsahiur.mn.



#### March

In cooperation with the Legal Information and Research Cooperation Association, the MCM discussed the legal consequences of the current Criminal Law Article 13.14, the need to modify it, and the draft amendment to the law by members of the Parliament. Member of Parliament B.Enkhbayar participated in the discussion and presented his views on the draft law, while lawyers D.Orosoo and B.Purevsuren participated and gave information as speakers.



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#### March

The MCM organized an online "Crisis Communication and Journalism" meeting with the Local Media Association and the Association of Local Televisions. At the meeting, experts gave information and exchanged opinions about the role of journalism during the Covid-19 pandemic, the policies, and ethical principles of the newsrooms in times of crisis.



#### March

During the "Public Relations of Prosecutors" workshop organized by the General Prosecutor's Office of Mongolia, G.Gunjidmaa, executive director of MCM, presented "Current Status of the Mongolian Media sector and Media Self-Regulation." More than 60 managerial-level staff from prosecutor's offices from the capital city and 21 aimags attended the training.

#### May

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G.Gunjidmaa, executive director of the MCM, participated in the online discussion "Communication with a sense of human rights and without violence in online platforms," organized by the National Committee on Gender Equality and the Asian Development Bank and presented on the topic "Information and gender in the media and social networks."



#### May

As World Press Freedom Day is celebrated under the theme "Information as a public good," the MCM called on all governmental and non-governmental organizations to allow journalists and editorial staff to work independently and create an environment to follow the code of ethics.

More than ten media organizations supported the invitation and disseminated the call through their media channels.



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#### May

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The MCM developed a survey questionnaire and prepared a methodology to study Media Organizations' Economic Capability and Business Situation during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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The MCM organized an "A right to source confidentiality" online discussion on May 27, 2021, and discussed the requirements for legal confirmation of the right to keep sources confidential. Lawyer D.Orosoo and journalism trainer Ts.Chimeddondog presented on the topic. About 30 people participated, including journalists, editors, media researchers, and lawyers from Ulaanbaatar and rural areas.



#### June-September

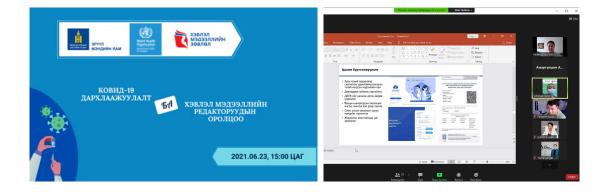
The MCM organized a series of six online training and discussion in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization support from June 23 to September 15.

The purpose of the training and discussion was to provide science-based knowledge and information on immunization against coronavirus infection, to serve as a "bridge" between the media professionals and independent scientists and researchers, and to support the dissemination of reliable and accurate information through media outlets.

Besides the training workshops, joint meetings, and discussions of stakeholders on topics such as "How we worked during the COVID-19?", "How to cover immunization issues?", "Let's discuss the COVID-19 vaccination" were held among journalists, editors, and scientists.

MCM conducted a media monitoring to analyze how the media reports on immunization against infection to develop recommendations for planning information and communication work based on it.

More than 200 news journalists and editors from Ulaanbaatar and the local provinces participated in training workshops and discussions.



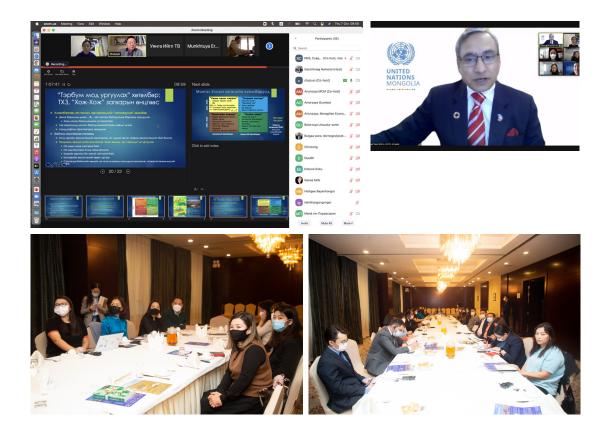


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#### **October - November**

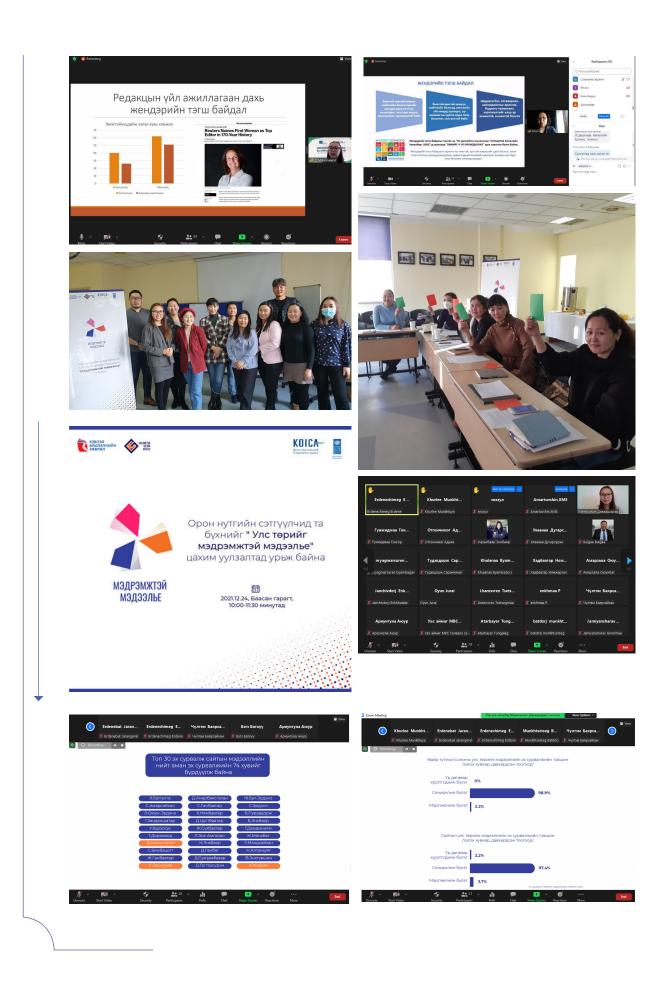
The MCM organized training for journalists to raise awareness about the 17 Sustainable Development Goals in cooperation with the United Nations country team in Mongolia. The training was held online from October 6 to 8, and more than 40 journalists from Ulaanbaatar and local media organizations participated. A grant competition for journalism content was announced among the participants, and five journalists received grants to produce quality content that met journalism's professional and ethical requirements. Also, we organized a Breakfast Business Meeting to strengthen and expand UN and media cooperation on November 11, attended by the UN country team, UN agency managers, and editors-in-chief of about 20 media organizations.



#### September - December

To eliminate gender bias in political news coverage, the Media Council of Mongolia teams up with the Unlimited Media Group to support journalists and newsrooms to implement gender-sensitive reporting by building News for Equality coalition. It works with the Promoting Gender Equality in Public Decision-Making project support, funded by KOICA and implemented by UNDP.

With this project, the MCM conducted a baseline study and found that only 1 out of 10 sources of political news are women. Based on the study findings, we developed two days training curriculum for journalists and journalism students on "Gender Equality in Political News." In 2021, the MCM provided 13 training workshops and events involving more than 260 people in media.



#### December

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The MCM regularly conducts capacity-building training for all its members every six months. This time, a training workshop was successfully organized on December 18 and 19 at the Khaadiin Tamga Resort. More than 30 MCM's Board, Ethics committees, and Secretariat representatives attended the workshop. They have introduced the MCM's 2021 annual reports and discussed their achievements and lessons learned.

On the first day of the workshop, L.Galbaatar, lawyer of the MCM, D.Narantuya, Acting Chairwoman of the Print and Online Media Ethics Committee, Sh.Sukhbaatar, Chairman of Broadcast Ethics Committee, S.Sharavdorj, a member of the MCM Board, and Ts.Chimeddondog, Deputy Chairman of the Broadcast Ethics Committee, gave presentations and held a discussion. On the second day, journalism trainer D.Munkhchimeg presented "Gender-sensitive reporting: Good international practices and opportunity to join BBC's 50:50 project". The debate continued with case studies on journalists' common mistakes in gender issues.









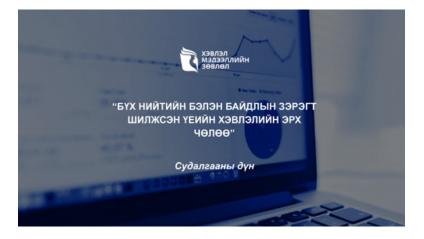






# 5. ACTIVITIES FOR THE PUBLIC:

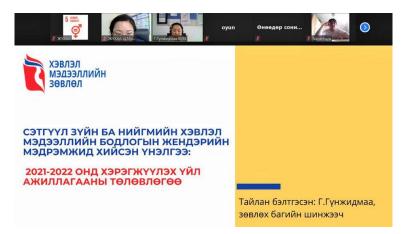
The MCM conducted a "Press Freedom in the Age of Uncertainty/Lockdown" survey involving 300 journalists and presented the results to editors, journalists, and government institutions. According to the survey results, 91 percent of all participants said freedom of the press was reduced during the pandemic. The main obstacles were the dominance of one-way information, lack of sources, difficulties verifying information due to discrepancies in official information, discrimination against media organizations, and lockdowns (February, March).



The MCM updated its official website, mediacouncil.mn, adding a menu for accepting complaints online in the fall of 2020: /https://www.mediacouncil.mn/signin/. As a result, from January 2021, complainants start filing complaints online (January).

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□ With the support of the World Health Organisation, the MCM implemented a capacity-building program for the Covid-19 emergency response team. With this framework, we monitored every day 11:00 am press briefings, developed the training workshops and manuals, and organized training of trainers in collaboration with professional organizations under the theme "Crisis Communication and Journalism." As a result, the MCM implemented the "Training of Trainers" workshop with a team of professional teachers in information communication (February). MCM executive director G.Gunjidmaa conducted an evaluation study, "Gender Sensitivity in Journalism and Social Media Policy," with the advisory team of experts under the National Gender Committee. Based on the assessment, G.Gunjidmaa introduced the MCM plan and guidelines to develop Editorial guidelines on gender-ethical news reporting at the online meeting organized by the National Gender Committee (March).



- The OSCE organized an open meeting with media professionals to share its experiences on how legal regulations affected media organizations and journalists covering the 2020 parliamentary and local elections. D.Narantuya and O.Ariunbileg, members of the MCM Print and Online Media Ethics Committee, Ch.Bayarsaikhan and S.Nasanjargal, MCM Radio and Television Ethics Committee members, and G.Gunjidmaa, executive director of MCM, attended the meeting (March).
- MCM executive director G.Gunjidmaa participated in the online training "Fair and Ethical Elections and Media" organized by Globe International Center NGO for journalists and media workers and presented a report on media self-regulation and ethics (March).
- □ With the British Embassy's support, the MCM made four posters and four short video stories and distributed them on television, news, and social media channels. The contents aimed at developing a legal environment for ensuring the right of citizens to speak and express their opinions and protecting press freedom, increasing the understanding of the nature and values of media self-regulation to journalists and consumers, as well as to decision-makers (March-June).





#### ЁС ЗҮЙН ХОРОО ШИЙДВЭРЭЭ ГАРГАЛАА

- □ Following the implementation of the Complaints Procedure, the MCM made six press releases on how the complaints were received and resolved. The press releases were publicized through the MCM website: (http:// www.mediacouncil.mn/as/shiidver) and disseminated through mass media (April-October).
- G.Gunjidmaa, executive director of MCM, talked to news media such as Tovch.mn, Gogo.mn, Urug.mn, "Udriin sonin" newspaper, and JargalDeFacto on the following issues:
  - Press freedom during the Covid-19 pandemic;
  - Citizens are facing the risk of being involved in the crime of spreading fake news during the elections;
  - Ensuring human rights and press freedom in online media;
  - The principal difference between ethical and legal regulations.

Also, MCM project coordinator N.Ganchimeg talked to TV9 and Eagle TV about the results of the "Press Freedom in the Age of Uncertainty/Lockdown" research (January-June).



The MCM approved a temporary complaint procedure for the Mongolian presidential election to resolve complaints by citizens on the news content about political parties, coalitions, and candidates during the election campaign (May, June).



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| 2.2 Гомдлын өргөдөлд дараах материалыг заавал хавсаргасан байна. Үүнд:  |
| 2.2.1 Огноо, цаг хугацаа, хэвлэл мэдээллийн хэрэгслийн нэр  |
| 2.2.2 Гомдол гаргаж байгаа үндэслэл, шалтгаан, тайлбар  |
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The MCM developed, published, and distributed Newsroom Guidelines on Gender-Ethical Journalism in collaboration with gender and journalism experts. It was supported by the National Gender Committee and UNFPA (June-October).



The MCM established a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Gender Committee to support the community of journalists for the next three years. Within the framework, we established a club of journalists specializing in human rights and gender, and two organizations agreed to support its activities. On July 26, we organized an online meeting with more than ten journalists experienced in reporting on human rights and gender issues, as well as those who want to join the club, and exchanged their opinions. On August 5, we organized a morning meeting for journalists interested in joining the club.



- 22 -

A representative of MCM joined the board of the project Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Participation in Public Decision-making implemented by the United Nations Development Program and funded by KOICA. In this framework, the MCM teams up with the Unlimited Media Group to support journalists and newsrooms to implement gender-sensitive reporting by building News for Equality coalition (July-November).



The MCM organized two e-learning courses to introduce Newsroom Guidelines on Gender-Ethical Journalism to journalists. During the training, we exchanged opinions with participants on topics such as gender and development, gender equality in newsrooms and journalism content, and gender balance in news sources (August-September).

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The MCM developed a training guide for journalists and editors on immunization against COVID-19 and a "50 frequently asked questions about the Covid-19 vaccine" information package to publish and distribute to journalists and media organizations with the support of the World Health Organization and the Ministry of Health (July-October).



To publicize and promote Mongolian Media Ethics Principles, we prepared an electronic poster showing the provisions of the Code of Ethics and distributed it on MCM's Facebook and Twitter pages (August-September).



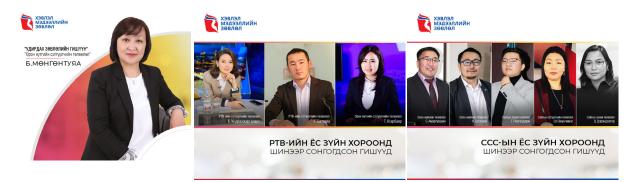
□ With the support of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany, the MCM launched a pilot project on Crisis Communication Chapter in cooperation with Deutsche Welle Academie. The project is implemented in Mongolia, Kenya, and Zambia under the motto "Reliable Information Saves Lives." It aims to reduce information inequality and create a structure to disseminate reliable information by supporting the cooperation of three stakeholders: citizens-government-media in times of crisis (August-December).



- 24 -



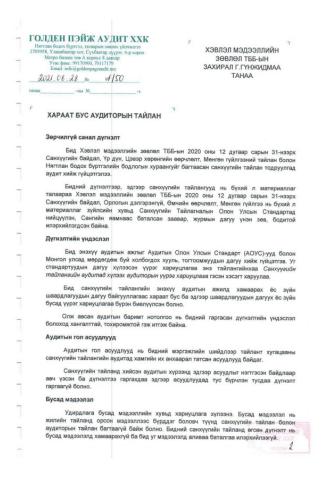
To re-elect 13 members for the MCM board of directors and Ethics Committees, we made public announcements and registered candidates' applications. As a result, nine members were selected to join MCM. As some positions did not have enough application submissions, we decided to organize re-election again (May-December).



The MCM publishes an online quarterly newsletter according to its policy of being transparent to the public about its activities. In 2021, the MCM delivered four newsletters in Mongolian and English and sent them to more than 1800 local and 100 foreign people.



The independent audit organization "Golden Page Audit" LLC reviewed MCM's 2019-2020 operations and financial results and concluded no violations.



An annual report with information on the 2020 activities and funding of the MCM was published and distributed to newsrooms and supporting organizations



## 6. PUBLICATIONS AND PRINTED PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

In 2021, MCM prepared the following manuals, publications, handouts, and promotional materials and distributed them to the newsrooms and other target groups.

 The Media Self-regulation Manual (1000 copies)





 MCM Annual Report 2020-2021 (800 copies)



 "50 Frequently Asked Questions About the Covid-19 Vaccine" information package (500 copies)



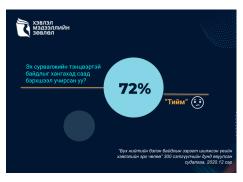
 Newsroom Guidelines on Gender-Ethical Journalism (500 copies)



Prepared and distributed a series of posters expressing the opinions of representatives of the media industry on the topics such as "Importance of media self-regulation" and "How to ensure media self-regulation that protects press freedom from partisan government interference."



The MCM prepared posters based on the results of a survey, "Press Freedom in the Age of Uncertainty/Lockdown," conducted among 300 journalists and distributed them on the MCM Facebook page.



 An electronic poster was prepared and distributed through the social media channels of MCM to inform the public about the Mongolian Media Ethics Principles.

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□ The MCM prepared posters with the newsroom editors' quotes on media self-regulation, code of ethics, and editorial policies and distributed them on social media.



- A series of short video stories on topics "How to file a complaint with the MCM?", "How are complaints resolved?", "Why is media self-regulation important?", "Promoting independence of the news media through self-regulation" were prepared and disseminated via newsrooms. Links:
  - » Video 1 https://youtu.be/J8EVk1QP4xI
  - » Video 2 https://youtu.be/qqhFkRZM4ic
  - » Video 3 https://youtu.be/guCYc8wLZqk
  - » Video 4 https://youtu.be/EThkB-bEabw



# 7. LOCAL COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

#### **D** The MCM worked with industry unions and associations.

» An online meeting on "Crisis communication and journalism" was held on March 27, 2021, in cooperation with the Association of Local Media and the Association of Local Televisions. Experts gave information and exchanged opinions with participants about the role of journalism during the COVID-19 pandemic, the policies, and the ethical principles of the newsrooms during the crisis.



» In cooperation with the Confederation of Mongolian Journalists, the MCM organized a meeting with representatives of media unions and associations on August 27, 2021, to discuss the revised draft of the Law on Freedom of the Media. Participants identified the strengths and weaknesses of the draft law. They decided to continue to study in detail the implementation of the Law on Freedom of the Press of 1998, organize a series of relevant multilateral meetings and discussions, and determine the next steps based on them.



- » On October 13, the MCM organized a discussion among media professionals on the draft law on the legal status of whistleblowers in cooperation with the Mongolian News Websites Association. Discussion results were submitted to the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs as a proposal.
- » On October 19, the MCM organized a discussion on the draft Law on Public Information in cooperation with the alumni association of Young Journalists Participation in Governance program. The proposals from the meeting were submitted to the prominent members of the parliament.



» The MCM representatives worked on #2 and #8 working groups to submit proposals to the Open Government Partnership action plan to ensure everyone's right to freedom of opinion and expression and to receive balanced and objective information from independent news media.



The MCM partnered with international organizations to improve the media industry's legal environment, ensure press freedom, and improve ethical standards in journalism. Deutsche Welle Academie, OSCE, the British Embassy, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the World Health Organization, UN country team, UNDP, and UNFPA supported our work in 2021.









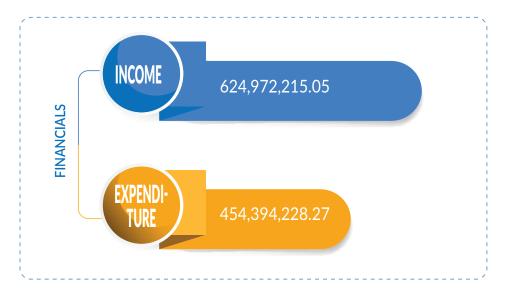
# 8. FINANCIALS

In 2021, MCM worked with a total cash income of MNT 624,972,215.05 and a total cash expenditure of MNT 454,394,228.27.

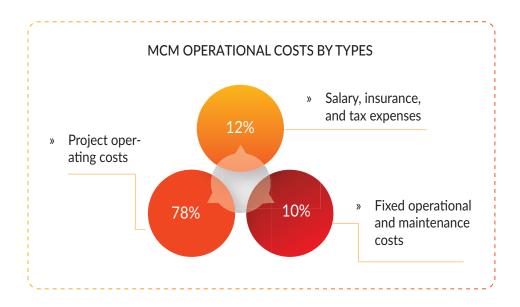
Income generation: internal sources 10%, project sources 90%.

The sources of income consist of donations, support from media organizations, and funding for project activities.

- » Salary, insurance, and tax expenses 12%
- » Fixed operational and maintenance costs 10%
- » Project operating costs 78%

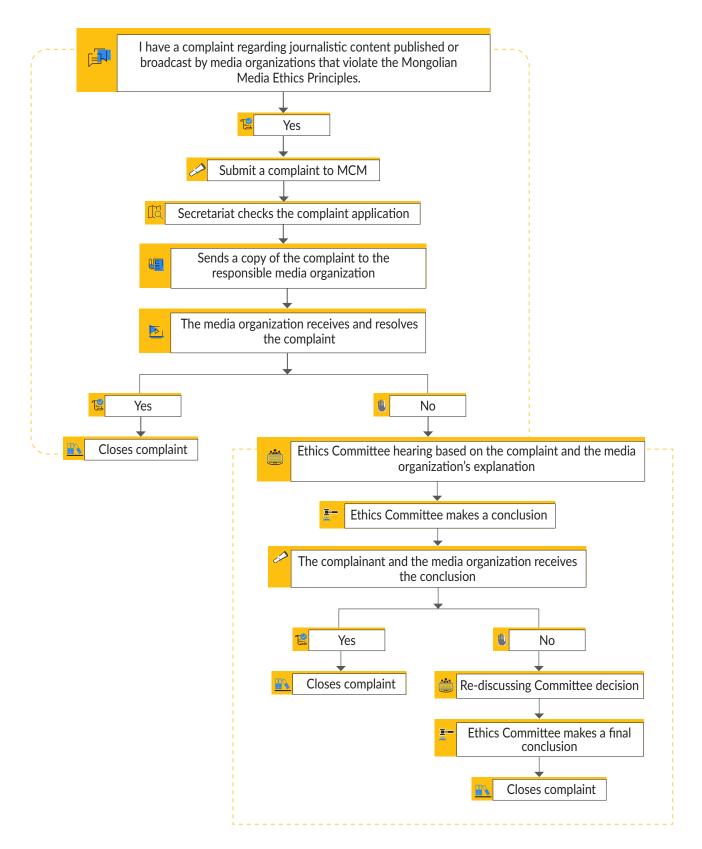


**Note:** Some of the projects implemented by MCM continue until March 31, 2022, so the related budget expenses have yet to be spent.



Attachment 1

### MEDIA COUNCIL COMPLAINTS SCHEME



#### MCM STRUCTURE

