

Administration of the Government of Georgia

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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION UNIT,

POLICY PLANNING AND COORDINATION DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA



### INTRODUCTION

In order to establish a transparent, accountable and effective state governance system Georgia started implementing the Public Administration Reform (Reform) in 2015, with the Administration of the Government of Georgia (AoG) being responsible for the leadership and coordination of the Reform. Successful implementation of the Reform plays a fundamental role in Georgia's European integration. In accordance with the Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part (Association Agreement), the country should carry out in-depth reforms in the fields of public administration and civil service.1

With the support from the experts of the European Union (EU) and Support for improvement in Governace and Management Programme of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/SIGMA) a Reform Roadmap 2020<sup>2</sup> was developed, which is a strategic document and defines main objectives of the Government for improving the public administration sector. For the purpose of the Roadmap implementation, three action plans have been developed for the period of 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

To ensure continuation of the reform and active involvement of the high-level decision-makers, Public Administration Reform Council (the Council), chaired by the Head of Administration of the Government of Georgia, was established by the order of the Prime Minister of Georgia in 2016.

The reform is based on the EU Principles of Public Administration and envisages five key policy areas and, considering the country's priorities, one additional area, listed below:

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION;

CIVIL SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT;

ACCOUNTABILITY;

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY;

PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT;

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

This document is the progress report of the Reform Action Plan 2019-2020<sup>3</sup> (Action Plan) and aims to demonstrate the progress achieved in implementing activities envisioned by the Action Plan, identify achievements and shortcomings, develop and deliver relevant recommendations to the stakeholders.

This report was developed by the Secretariat of the Reform Council (Public Administration Unit of Policy Planning and Coordination Department, Administration of the Government of Georgia) in collaboration with the public agencies, local and international organizations involved in the process.

While preparing the structure of the Progress Report, the secretariat referred to the Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook and the methods offered by the SIGMA Toolkit for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of public administration reform and sector strategies.

The Report covers the period between January and September 2019 (I-III quarters).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Association Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part, article 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Public Administration Reform Roadmap 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Public Administration Reform Action Plan 2019-2020.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

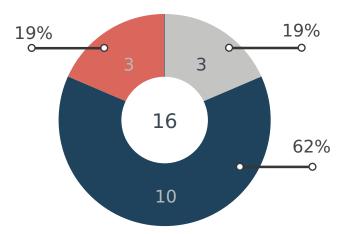
Implementation of the output indicators of the Action Plan activities

#### RATING











#### **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**

Rule on Elaboration, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy Documents and Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation with 10 annexes have been developed.

As a result, the legal framework and unified standard for result-oriented policy planning, monitoring and evaluation has been developed for the state agencies as well as interested institutions.

A law on Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of legislative acts has been adopted, which will introduce a practice of making evidence and consultation-based decisions in the process of preparing legislative amendments; it will facilitate correct evaluation of the impact of planned amendments on the citizens and businesses.

Accreditation Regulation of the Professional Development Program for the professional public servants has been elaborated. It ensures quality control of education programs developed for capacity building of the public servants. During the reporting period, basic professional development programs of three training centers were accredited.

Strengthening civil society engagement became a priority in the process of preparing the Action Plan 2019-2020 and the Progress Report

Action Plan 2019-2020 is one of the firsts in the country, which measures expected results in accordance with outcome indicators (quantitative/ qualitative baseline and target values).



#### **KEY CHALLENGES**



UNDERESTIMATION OF THE WORKLOAD AND, CONSEQUENTLY, INNACURATELY DEFINED IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME



LACK OF HUMAN RESOURCES





135 868

Planned

**76** 007

Spent



The third 2019-2020 Action Plan of the reform was adopted by the Decree N274 of the Government of Georgia on June 10, 2019.

The Action Plan was developed by the Reform Council Secretariat in close collaboration with OECD/SIGMA, local and international organizations. In order to measure the results of each objective of the Action Plan, outcome indicators were developed with specific quantitative or qualitative baseline and target values. Therefore, the analysis has been done on the baseline situation and the results, which are envisioned by the Action plan. It should be noted, that the electronic method of public consultations was employed for the first time in the process of developing the Public Administration Reform Action Plan.

#### PROGRESS REPORT DEVELOPMENT METHODOLOGY

Monitoring process of the Action Plan was divided into several stages:

I Stage

II Stage

III Stage

Action Plan Monitoring Framework was sent to the Action Plan responsible agencies to provide progress information to the Secretariat

In order to prepare an objective, evidence-based report, the Secretariat for the first time requested verification sources with regards to implementation of each activity

The Reform Council Secretariat After receiving comments from and submitted it for comments for 2 weeks to local and international

processed information received civil society, the Reform Council Secretariat processed the presented information and developed the organizations involved in the Reform Progress Report, evaluating implementation of the output indicators as of III quarters of 2019.

In accordance with the monitoring methodology, output indicators were evaluated based on the following criteria:

#### MONITORING CRITERIA

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Fully Implemented

All implementation stages planned for meeting output indicator have been fully implemented (100%)

Partially Implemented

At least half of the implementation stages planned for meeting output indicator have been implemented (at least 50%)

Not Implemented

Neither of the implementation stages planned for meeting output indicator has been implemented (0%)

#### **MONITORING CRITERIA**

# STATUS

Implementation process has not started

Implementation process is ongoing

Implementation process is suspended

Implementation process is cancelled

Implementation process is completed

Monitoring criteria reveal implementation of output indicators. In particular, rating evaluates implementation degree content-wise (the actual degree of implemented activity), while status provides information on the state of the implementation process. In order to identify challenges in real time, it is important to identify not only the degree of the implemented work but also the stage of implementation process. For example, it is possible that the

activity is partially implemented at the end of the reporting period, but its completion is not planned any more due to the changes in priorities or other reasons. Therefore, in the process of evaluation, the reform secretariat has a possibility to identify suspended and/ or cancelled activities and related reasons to develop appropriate measures in collaboration with the responsible agencies.

#### **OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRESS**

#### MADE DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

As a part of this Progress Report, in total 16 output indicators in four areas of Public Administration Reform 2019-2020 Action Plan have been evaluated, in particular: policy development and coordination, civil service and human resource management, accountability, public service delivery.

Since public financial management and local self-government directions do not include activities to be implemented by the end of III quarter of 2019, this document only generally reviews the work carried out by the responsible agencies in the reporting period.

## IIIQ

## OUTPUT INDICATORS ENVISAGED UNDER THE ACTION PLAN 2019, III

2019, III quarters

POLICY DEVELOPMENT
AND COORDINATION

CIVIL SERVICE AND HUMAN
RESOURCES

ACCOUNTABILITY

PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY 10

7

1

15

✓ As a result of analyzing the status reports and verification sources provided by the responsible public agencies and feedback of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), implementation status of the output indicators in the reporting period are as follows:



## **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**

Rule on Elaboration, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy Documents has been developed

Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation along with 10 annexes has been developed

Law on Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of legislative acts has been developed and approved

The final draft of Decentralization Strategy (2019-2025) has been developed

Accreditation Regulation of the Professional Development Program for the professional civil servants has been elaborated. Therefore, quality control mechanism of professional development programs has been implemented

International quality control mechanism developed and widely employed in the EU – Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been implemented in LEPL Public Service Hall

## KEY CHALLENGES

The main challenges in the reporting period for the implementation of the output indicators include underestimation of the workload required for completing the activity and, consequently inaccurately defined implementation timeframe; In addition, monitoring also revealed shortcomings due to insufficient human resources.

## INVOLVEMENT OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTOR IN MONITORING PROCESS

Level of civil sector engagement improved during both the elaboration of the Action Plan 2019-2020 and the preparation of the Progress Report.

At the planning stage, draft version of the action plan was submitted to the civil society and donor organizations for comments and recommendations. In addition, the Administration of the Government of Georgia organized additional consultation meeting to discuss the draft document with the civil society representatives. Some of the civil society recommendations were included

as activities in the Action Plan. For example, the commitment of the State Audit Office (SAO) on improved response to the recommendations issued by the SAO was proposed by the CSOs. Similarly, activities on advancement of Open Government process were added to the "Accountability" direction of the Action Plan.

A separate monitoring stage was dedicated to ensuring civil society participation in the development of the Progress Report. As part of the monitoring, the Reform Council Secretariat shared the status reports presented by responsible agencies with local and international organizations to provide feedback within two weeks.

The evaluation of the Reform Council Secretariat presented in this report is based on the analysis of the civil society opinions and verification sources presented by the responsible agencies. Considering the above-mentioned, ratings indicated by the responsible agencies were altered for the following output indicators:

OUTPUT INDICATOR	EVALUATION OF THE RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	FINAL EVALUATION OF THE REFORM COUNCIL SECRETARIAT
Ranking of the accredited professional development programs is developed and available for public <sup>4</sup>	Fully implemented	Not implemented
Basic training material on cyber security is updated on an electronic training platform <sup>5</sup>	Partially implemented	Not implemented
With the aim to develop the Anticorruption Council Electronic Portal concept, best prac- tice research is carried out and shared with the working group <sup>6</sup>	Fully implemented	Partially implemented

## FINANCES

The Action Plan budget envisaged donor assistance in the amount of 135 868 GEL for implementing activities of the III quarters of 2019. From the mentioned amount, 76 007 GEL was spent in the reporting period.

It should be noted that state budget funds were not spent during the reporting period, because administrative resources were allocated in accordance with the approved budget of the Action Plan.

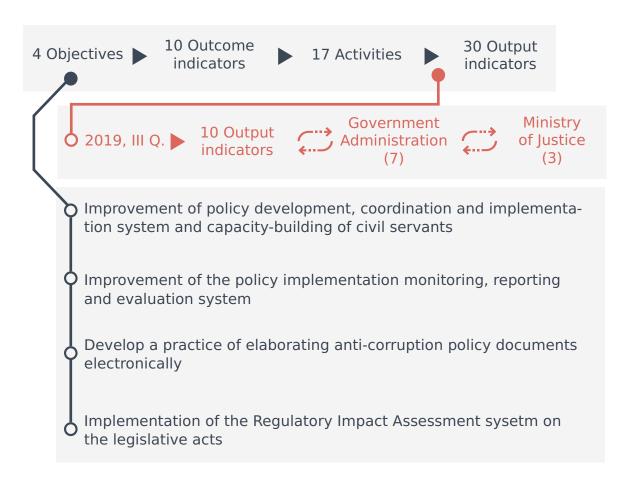
Full disbursement of the remaining part of the donor assistance will take place gradually, in the process of implementing delayed activities.

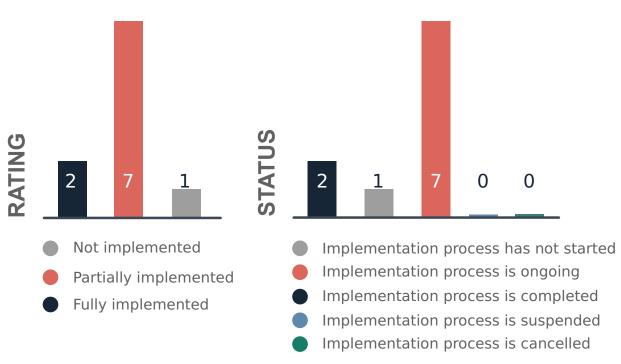
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Action plan 2019-2020, direction: "Civil Service and Human Resources Management", activity 2.1.4.2 Output indicator

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Action Plan 2019-2020, direction: "Public Service Delivery", Output indicator 4.7.3.2.

<sup>6</sup> Action Plan 2019-2020, direction: "Policy Development and Coordination", activity 1.3.1. Output indicator 1.3.1.1-1.3.1.2.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION





## RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA

**OBJECTIVE 1.1:** Improve the quality assurance control mechanism of policy documents and develop the capacity of the civil servants intending to further improve the system of policy planning and coordination

#### **OUTPUT INDICATORS:**

- "Rules of Procedure for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents" is developed and approved by the Government decree
- O Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation is developed, discussed in the working group and approved by the government decree
- Annexes of the Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation are elaborated and the Handbook is printed
- Study of the best practices for conducting public consultations at the policy elaboration stage is carried out, hence recommendations are developed
- O Policy documents submitted to/approved by the government along with relevant recommendations are systematized by dates and agencies

The Government of Georgia (GoG) committed itself to develop a transparent, accountable and efficient public administration system centered at the evidence-based policy-making, results-oriented management, and a whole of Government approach.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Baseline Measurement Report<sup>7</sup> carried out by the OECD/SIGMA in 2017, steps for further improvement of the policy development and coordination system and development of the respective legislative basis have been identified. Therefore, particular attention has been paid to the advancement of the policy development process and introduction of the European standards that ensures greater public participation, effective coordination between the government agencies and capacity-development of civil servants in the area of policy-making.



#### **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**



Rules of Procedure for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents has been developed and will be submitted to the Government for approval in December 2019

The rule aims to develop legislative basis and regulate evidence-based and result-oriented policy development, monitoring and evaluation system.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Baseline Measurement Report: The Principles of Public Administration, Policy Development and Co-ordination, Georgia, May 2018, available here.

#### FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE RULE:

Defines each stage of policy development and its sequence;

Defines hierarchy of policy documents and establishes unified standard for development, approval, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of national, sectoral and institutional policy documents;

In order to increase the level of coordination, establishes policy document initiation procedure and requires developing of the annual plan for government policy documents;

Defines quality assurance procedure for policy documents submitted to the government for approval;

Requires carrying out public consultations at the policy document development stage;

Strengthens AoG's role in supporting the executive government in policy development, monitoring and evaluation in terms of quality assurance.



## HANDBOOK ON POLICY PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION HAS BEEN DEVELOPED

In line with Rules of Procedure for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents, and in accordance with the European Principles for Public Administration, considering handson experience of civil servants and recommendations of OECD/SIGMA experts, the existing methodological package has been updated, improved and developed into a single Handbook.

#### THE UPDATED HANDBOOK:

- Defines interrelation of policy documents;
- Develops policy planning mechanisms and instruments;
- Develops policy document structure;
- Comprises of general instructions for the development of policy aims, objectives and their output indicators;
- Includes quality assurance mechanisms of policy documents;

- Comprises of the practical examples and recommendations:
- Defines clear instructions on budgeting and links between policy documents and the annual state budget as well as Basic Data and Directions (BDD) document;
- Unifies all stages of the policy cycle, including monitoring and evaluation and quality assurance instrument.



## 10 ANNEXES HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO THE HANDBOOK ON POLICY PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In order to develop specific guidelines and templates in relation to certain stages of the policy cycle, 10 annexes have been developed and added to the Handbook.

#### The annexes include:

- Manual for conducting situation analysis;
- Manual for designing logical framework;
- Manual for drafting of indicator passport;
- Manual for drafting an action plan;

- Budgeting instrument;
- Manual for developing a coordination mechanism;
- Quality assurance instrument;
- Glossary.



#### CATALOGUE OF POLICY DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO/AP-PROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED

Catalogue of the policy documents submitted to/approved by the Government has been developed. Recommendations on policy documents submitted to the government for approval and approved ones along with the recommendations issued on each document have been systematized according to date and agency.

#### The catalogue comprises of the following criteria:

Policy document type;

- Date of approval and validity;
- Policy document in a hierarchy;
- Monitoring and evaluation framework;

Coordinating agency;

Link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Initial version of the research report has been developed by thematic Inquiry Group of the Open Government Permanent Parliamentary Council, Parliament of Georgia, on the legislative basis and the best practice of organizing public consultations at the policy development stage, based on which the relevant recommendations have been developed

Citizen involvement in policy development and decision-making process is one of the most important components of European public administration, which provides an opportunity for the Government to inform citizens and receive feedback during the policy development.

In order to conduct a study on the best practices and legislative regulations for carrying out public consultations at the policy development stage, and at the same time stay resource efficient, the AoG joined the Thematic Inquiry Group of the Open Government Permanent Parliamentary Council.

For the reporting period initial version of the research report has been developed.



**OBJECTIVE 1.2:** Improve the quality of policy implementation Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation in order to ensure result-based management and increased public accessibility

#### **OUTPUT INDICATORS:**

- Monitoring and Evaluation Manuals are approved along with the Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook
- A document describing business processes of the unified E-System for elaboration, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of policy documents is developed in accordance with agreed concept



#### Monitoring And Evaluation Manuals Have Been Developed

Monitoring and evaluation are integral parts of the policy cycle and require significant human resources and qualifications. The rule defines obligatory procedural requirements, while the Handbook illustrates optional standards.

As part of refinement of the existing regulatory and methodological package of policy development and coordination system, along with updating the Handbook, the monitoring and evaluation manuals were developed,

#### **Including The Following Information:**

Monitoring purpose, monitoring report types and frequency, monitoring report templates and detailed instructions, report structure and principles for drafting;

Evaluation planning, scale, criteria and evaluation questions, impact assessment methods, report structure and the main principles for drafting.

#### ONGOING PROCESS

Within the framework of the policy development and coordination system reform, unified E-system for elaboration, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of policy documents is being developed. Consolidating all stages of policy cycle in a unified e-system will significantly improve coordination process between the government institutions.

Launching unified electronic system will simplify the entire process of development, reporting and evaluation of national and sectoral policy documents. Furthermore, it will enhance transparency of policy cycle and eliminate overlaps between objectives of the different action plans.

For this purpose, the AoG, in cooperation with the LEPL - Data Exchange Agency and with the financial support of United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is actively working on the development of a unified electronic system. The first draft version of the document describing business process analysis of the E-system has been developed during the reporting period. The process is ongoing with an active involvement of the stakeholders.



**OBJECTIVE 1.3:** Develop a practice of elaborating Policy Documents electronically in order to enhance the transparency of anti-corruption policy elaboration and effectiveness of inter-agency coordination

#### **OUTPUT INDICATORS:**

- In order to develop electronic portal concept of the Anticorruption Council, interim working group is established, composed of representatives of the Council member agencies and technical personnel
- The research on best-practice is conducted

In order to digitize the anticorruption strategy and respective action plan development process, as well as stages of monitoring and evaluation, the Interagency Anticorruption Coordination Council (Anticorruption Council) under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia (the Secretariat of the Anticorruption Council) carried out a research on the electronic portals of various countries including Georgia.

Initial versions of the research and portal concept were developed in the reporting period.

In order to launch a portal, the action plan envisaged establishment of a temporary working group from representatives of the Anticorruption Council member agencies and technical staff and sharing the results of the research. According to the Anticorruption Council Secretariat, there was no need for establishing the working group until the development of the concept, however, forming the group and sharing the outcomes of the study is still planned.

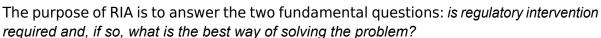


**OBJECTIVE 1.4:** Establish the evidence-based policy development system through implementation of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on legislative acts

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**

O Draft law on Regulatory Impact Assessment of legislative acts is elaborated

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) aims to develop evidence-based decision-making, by setting an obligation to evaluate legislative initiatives based on respective costs, benefits and risks, which significantly affect the society in economic, environmental and social directions.







#### **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**

## A DRAFT LAW ON REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (RIA) OF LEGISLATIVE ACTS HAS BEEN ELABORATED AND ADOPTED

For the purpose of implementation of the Regulatory Impact Assessment system, the amendment has been introduced to the Organic Law of Georgia on Normative Acts.<sup>8</sup>

#### Based on the amendments:

Respective legislative initiatives will be evaluated according to their costs, benefits and risks;

Better understanding of regulatory outcomes will be ensured (who will receive benefits, who will bear costs), along with the identification of the direct and indirect impacts;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Legislative Herald, the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts, article 171.

Based on the evaluation of the Reform Council Secretariat, the state of implementation of output indicators planned for III quarter of 2019 in Policy Development Direction is as follows:

№	OUTPUT INDICATOR	IMPLEMENTATION RATING:	IMPLEMENTATION STATUS:
1	"Rules of Procedure for Development, Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy Documents" is developed and ap- proved by the decree of the Government	Partially implemented <sup>9</sup>	Implementation process is ongoing
2	Handbook on the Elaboration, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy Documents is developed, discussed in the working group and approved by the decree of the government	Partially implemented	Implementation process is ongoing
3	Annexes of the Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation are developed, entire Handbook is printed	Partially implemented <sup>10</sup>	Implementation process is ongoing
4	Study of the best practices for conducting public consultations at the policy elaboration stage is carried out, and relevant recommendations are developed	Partially implemented	Implementation process is ongoing
5	Data on policy documents submitted to/approved by the government along with relevant recommendations is systematized by date and agencies	Fully implemented	Implementation process is completed
6	Monitoring and Evaluation Manuals are approved along with the Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook	Partially implemented	Implementation process is ongoing
7	Document describing business processes of the unified E-System for development, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of policy documents is developed in accordance with agreed concept	Partially implemented	Implementation process is ongoing
8	In order to develop electronic portal concept of the Anticorruption Council, interim working group composed of representatives of the Council member agencies and technical personnel is established	Not implemented <sup>11</sup>	Implementation process has not started
9	The research on best-practice is conducted in order to develop electronic portal concept of the Anticorruption Council	Partially implemented12	Implementation process is ongoing
10	A draft law on Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of legislative acts has been elaborated and adopted	Fully implemented	Implementation process is completed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> In order to fully implement the output indicator, the document should be submitted to the Government for approval.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> In order to fully implement the activity, instruction of conducting public consultations should be developed and the unified package should be submitted to the Government for approval.

11 Interim working group was not formed during the reporting period.

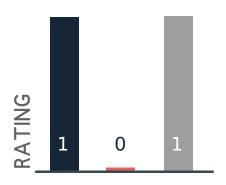
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Initial version of the research was available during the reporting period.

# CIVIL SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

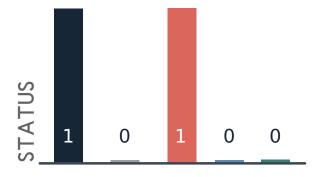


Establish professional development system of professional civil servants at the level of ministries and promote prevention of political influence on managerial positions in the civil service in order to enhance merit-based career advancement and neutrality principles

Institutional strengthening of the CSB in order to promote enforcement of the Civil Service Law and establish a unified approach



- Not implemented
- Partially implemented
- Fully implemented



- Implementation process has not started
- Implementation process is ongoing
- Implementation process is completed
- Implementation process is suspended
- Implementation process is cancelled





**OBJECTIVE 2.1:** Establish professional development system of professional civil servants at the level of ministries and promote prevention of political influence on managerial positions in the civil service in order to enhance merit-based career advancement and neutrality principles

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**

- Accreditation Regulations of professional development programs for professional civil servants are developed
- Ranking of the accredited professional development programs is developed and available for public

Until 2015, there was no legal act regulating systemic issues of professional development of civil servants. As a result, the trainings were chaotic and did not address the real needs of civil servants' professional development.

The Law of Georgia on Public Service for the first time created the legal basis for the formation of a unified professional development system. In addition to the legal aspect, the focus was on the degree of regulation and its content. Therefore, in accordance with the law, on May 22, 2018, the GoG adopted a Decree on "Approving the Rules for Determining the Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants, Standard and Rules for Professional Development." <sup>13</sup>

This Decree sets out (1) the rules and procedures for determining professional development needs, (2) the standard for professional development, and (3) the quality control of mandatory professional development programs.

In order to implement the aforementioned legal regulation, it became necessary to:

- Determine the conditions for accreditation of professional development programs for the professional civil servants;
- Elaborate the provision and fees for accreditation of professional development programs for the professional civil servants;
- Form an Accreditation Experts Corps;
- Set up an Accreditation Board for the civil servants professional development programs.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Decree of the Government of Georgia (N242) on "Approving the Rules for Determining the Professional Development Needs of Civil Servants, Standard and Rules for Professional Development."



#### **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**



## Accreditation Regulation of professional development programs for professional civil servants has been developed

On March 6, 2019, Order N 46/n of the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia on "Statute and Cost of Accreditation for the Professional Development Program of Professional Civil Servants" was approved. The order defined the following:

- Professional Development Program accreditation standards, which establish minimum requirements regarding the content of the program and the resources required for the implementation;
- Methodology for determining compliance of the civil servants development programs with the accreditation standards;
- The procedure for checking the fulfillment of accreditation conditions as a quality checking mechanism;
- Terms of Reference for the Accreditation Council The Council shall make a final decision on granting accreditation based on the oral hearing.



# DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD ACCREDITATION HAS BEEN GRANTED TO THE BASIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS OF THREE TRAINING CENTERS, THE LIST OF WHICH IS PUBLICLY AVAILABLE

- During the reporting period, a group of accreditation experts composed of members of the expert corps<sup>14</sup> was formed;
- By Order No. 479/SA of June 14, 2019 of the Head of the Civil Service Bureau (CSB), the Accreditation Council for Professional Development Programs was approved, with one-year term of office;
- In order to accredit basic programs,<sup>15</sup> training centers applied to the LEPL
   National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, which provides accreditation of the professional development programs;
- During the reporting period, accreditation was granted to the basic training programs of the three training centers. 16

The list of the training centers and accredited basic programs are available on the CSB's website. 17

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> By order N227 / d of March 29, 2019 of the Director of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement "Procedure for the Selection of Experts, Activities and Termination of Expert Corps Membership Accreditation of Professional Public Servants" was approved. The expert corps consists of experts with a wide range of experience taking into account the specifics of the program.
<sup>15</sup> Resolution of the Government of Georgia N242 of May 22, 2018 identified two types of professional development programs: basic and supplementary. Taking basic program within the period of one year is mandatory for all persons who are appointed to an official position on the basis of open or closed competition for the first time. Additional programs are provided to the civil servant within two years after the need is identified by the public agency.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> LEPL – Training Center of Justice of Georgia, LEPL – the Academy of the Ministry of Finance; LEPL - Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>The listing is available <u>here</u>.

#### **WORK IN PROGRESS**

After completing both the basic and supplementary training programs, each civil servant is required to evaluate the completed training program, and the public institution is obliged to submit the evaluation to the CSB's electronic system of Human Resource Management, according to the template developed by the Bureau. Based on the generalization of these assessments, the Bureau will publish rankings of educational institutions / programs on the website, which is an additional control mechanism.<sup>18</sup>

The action plan envisaged the development of ranking during the reporting period. However, since the accreditation process of the training programs was ongoing at the end of III quarter, 2019, they were not yet available for the civil servants, therefore, the rankings could not have been calculated during the reporting period.

Based on the evaluation of the Reform Council Secretariat, the state of implementation of output indicators planned for III quarter of 2019 in civil service and human resources management is as follows:

№	OUTPUT INDICATOR:	PERFORMANCE RATING:	IMPLEMENTATION STATUS:
1	Accreditation Regulations of professional development programs for professional civil servants are developed	Fully fulfilled	Implementation process is completed
2	Ranking of the accredited professional development programs is developed and available for public	Not fulfilled	Implementation process is ongoing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "Professional Development System in the Civil Service of Georgia" (Civil Service Bureau, 2019).

# ACCOUNTABILITY



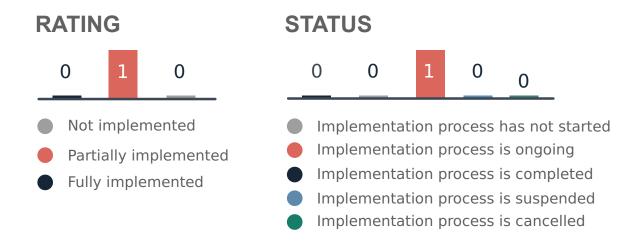
Suggest the institutional set-up to the LEPLs covered by the Law of Georgia on Civil Service in order to strengthen the principles of economy, effectiveness and efficiency

Improve access to open data by strengthening existing mechanisms

Develop electronic monitoring tool on recommendations issued by the State Audit Office in order to improve the feedback mechanism

Raise awareness of civil servants on the open government agenda and existing engagement mechanisms in order to promote the implementation of the open government policy principles in civil service

O Improvement of the existing legislation on the access to information in order to enhance openness, transparency and accountability of the public agencies and its consistent application in practice



Improving open, transparent and accountable governance is a continuous commitment of the Government of Georgia. With the initiative of the Reform Council Secretariat's, the Public Administration Reform Action Plan 2019-2020 no longer duplicates the activities envisaged in the Anti-Corruption and Open Government Action Plans. This initiative, on the one hand, eliminates duplication of activities, and on the other hand, focuses on ensuring open governance with the new, reform-oriented policy directions.

#### **OPEN GOVERNMENT IN GEORGIA**

Georgia became a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2011

In 2014, Georgia was elected as a member of the OGP's Steering Committee for a twoyear term

In 2017, Georgia became a Lead Chair country of the Partnership for one-year term

In 2018, Georgia hosted the 5th Open Government Partnership Global Summit in Tbilisi. The event brought together representatives of hundreds of civil society and international organizations, academia and the media from over 70 countries. About 80 panels and sessions were held during the Summit

The current OGP Georgia's Action Plan for 2018-2019 is a fourth National Action Plan

Until April 2019, Georgia's Open Government Action Plan was developed by the Open Government Georgia Forum, that brought together public institutions, local NGOs and donor organizations

According to the Government Decree N197 of April 22, 2019, coordination of Georgia's membership in the OGP at the national and international levels, as well as the development, and monitoring of the OGP

Action Plans including subsequent reporting, and facilitating the implementation of the activities were designated to the AoG

Development of the Open Government Georgia's communication strategy is ongoing

The Prime Minister of Georgia nominated the country in the OGP Steering Committee elections. As a result, on April 1 2019, Georgia, along with Germany and Indonesia, were elected to the OGP steering committee for a three-year term. The Head of Administration of the Government of Georgia represents country in the Steering Committee

Based on analysis of Georgia's achievements and challenges regarding the open governance, the following priorities were identified for 2020:

Enhancing cooperation with civil society and initiating even more ambitious reforms in the field of open government

The decision was made to establish a high-level OGP Georgia's Council. The forum continues its work in the form of standing working group of the Council

Work is underway to create an Open Government Georgia online platform (website) where all required documents, news and public consultation modules will be published

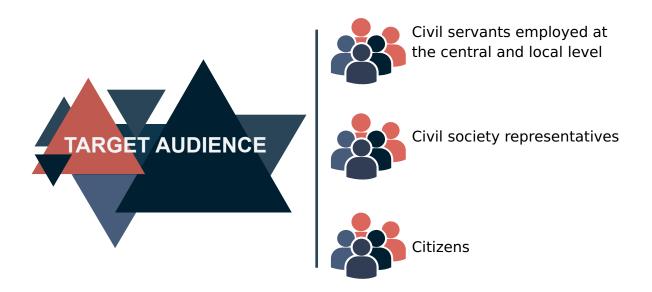
## RESPONSIBLE AGENCY: ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA

**Objective 3.4:** Raise awareness of civil servants of central government bodies on the Open Government agenda in order to enhance implementation of the Open Government policy principles

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**

Open Government Communication Strategy is elaborated; One component of the strategy focuses on raising awareness of civil servants

In order to provide consistent and comprehensive information on the reforms implemented under the OGP umbrella in the country and to raise awareness on the issues of the Open Government, the Open Government Georgia Secretariat (Administration of the Government of Georgia, Public Administration Unit of the Policy Planning and Coordination Department) has started to develop the Open Government Communication Strategy.



During the reporting period a draft version of the Open Government Georgiua's Communication Strategy was developed, which will result in:

- Increased awareness of public servants, NGOs and citizens on open governance;
- Increased interest and involvement of target groups in the open governance processes;
- Increased support for public officials towards the open governance processes;
- Increased involvement of civil servants in the development of the new action plans;
- Increased involvement of NGOs and citizens in the elaboration and implementation of the relevant policy documents.



With the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) program Good Governance Initiative in Georgia (GGI), the OGP Georgia Secretariat plans to launch the very first online platform of the Open Government Georgia. A detailed description of the website was elaborated during the reporting period.

The website will contain information on the Partnership; Georgia's participation in the OGP and its steering committee; OGP-related policy documents will be publicly available; The online platform will provide information on the involvement of different institutions, such as the Parliament of Georgia, municipal bodies and Tbilisi City Hall in the process of open governance. It will also contain information on the co-creation process with the civil society and public consultations.

Based on the evaluation of the Reform Council Secretariat, the state of implementation of the output indicators planned for III quarter of 2019 in the Accountability direction is as follows:

№	OUTPUT INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE RATING	IMPLEMENTATION STATUS
1	Open Government Communication Strategy is elaborated; One component of the strategy focuses on raising awareness of civil servants	Partially implemented	Implementation process is ongoing



# PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY



Develop a unified standard for public service development focusing on citizen engagement in order to ensure citizen-oriented service delivery

Increase access to public services through introduction of a unified, user-oriented standards of service delivery

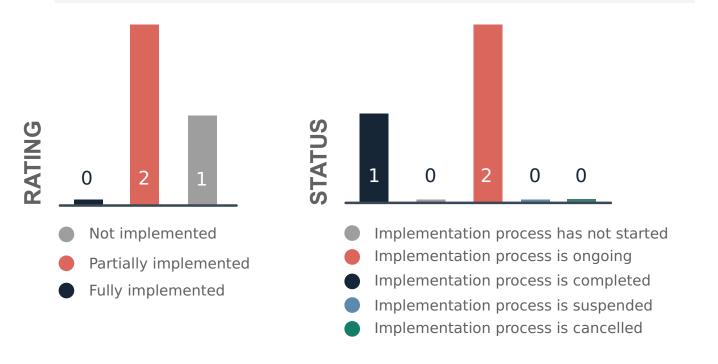
Ensure quality of public services through the implementation of the Unified Standard of Quality Examination and Improvement

Establish a fair and effective approach to the pricing of public services through the elaboration of unified methodology of service pricing

Improve access to public and private sectors' electronic services by strengthening My.gov.ge

Introduction of the interoperability framework to develop e-governance and ensure the access to information

Strengthening critical infrastructure security through raising awareness and establishing the teaching methodologies





#### **OBJECTIVE 4.1:**

Develop a unified standard for Public Service Development focusing on citizen engagement in order to ensure citizen-oriented service delivery

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**



In the frames of the Public Administration Reform, it is the GoG's priority to improve the quality, accessibility of public services and increase customer satisfaction with the latter. In order to achieve this, it is essential to develop, approve, and implement a unified policy for the creation, delivery, quality assurance and pricing of the public services.

## THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A UNIFIED POLICY SERVES THE FOLLOWING:

- Increasing access to the public services;
- Improving openness, accountability and customer orientation of the service providers;
- Ensuring more efficient spending of the public funds.

#### PROGRESS ACHIEVED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

As a result of active consultations with the <u>Public Service Reform Working Group</u> set up within the <u>Public Administration Reform Council</u>, the <u>final version of the policy document</u> has been developed, which takes into account recommendations and suggestions of the Working Group members.

The process of developing a unified policy document was divided into several stages; The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Government of the United Kingdom supported the LEPL Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) throughout this process:

Baseline assessment and analysis of the public services Elaboration of the concept and main principles of policy paper on the creation and delivery of the public services

Elaboration of a draft version of the Unified Public Services Policy Document and Action Plan

Discussion of the policy document with all the public agencies

Engaging civil society in the process

X

A unified policy document was not approved in the reporting period. The document will be submitted to the GoG after incorporating final reflections and comments from the last two stages of consultations (consultations with all the public agencies and civil society representatives).



**OBJECTIVE 4.5:** Improve access to public and private sectors' e-services by enhancing My.gov.ge

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**

- Trainings on usage of My.gov.ge are conducted for:
  - 1. The employees of the Public Service Hall and Community Centers;
  - 2. Central and local government officials;
  - 3. Private sector and media representatives;
  - 4. Students.

**Public Service** 

Development

Social Service

Ministry of Internal

Agency

**Affairs** 

Agency

The objective of the current action plan is to make the unified portal of electronic services (My.gov.ge) more accessible to the user. To this end, the training cycle for various target groups began in 2018 and ended in the reporting period. The main purpose of these trainings

was to provide information to the general public on the key changes in functioning of the portal, reliable e-services and e-signatures, and development of practical skills. In compliance with the plan, more than 450 people were retrained, including:

- Representatives of the central and local government;
- Representatives of the private sector, NGOs and the media;
- Students;

2018

19 698

27 657

9467

Staff of the Public Service Hall (PSH) and Community Centers.

During the reporting period, trainings were not conduced for the staff of the PSH and Community Centers. This target group was trained within the 2018 training cycle.

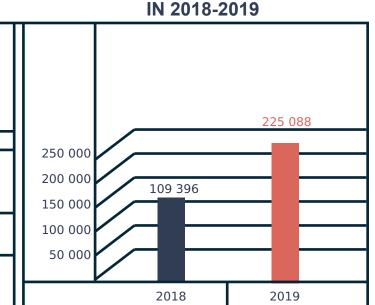


2019

74 392

59 256

16 121



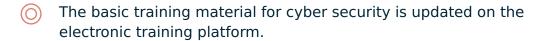
#### Note:

The purpose of this report is not to conduct a thorough study to determine causality between the trainings and the increasing trend illustrated in the MY.GOV.GE service utilization chart during the reporting period. The latter maybe a result of activities aimed at developing the portal along with the provided training.



**OBJECTIVE 4.7:** Enhance critical infrastructure security through raising awareness and developing the teaching methodologies

#### **OUTPUT INDICATOR:**



To ensure high standard governance, critical infrastructure security and high level of cyber security, skilled and knowledgeable specialists are essential. The activities set out in the new Action Plan are aimed at protecting such systems and raising awareness of cyber and

information security in general. During the reporting period, the LEPL Data Exchange Agency (DEA) started the process of updating the basic cyber security training materials available on the electronic training platform (elearning.dea.gov.ge).

## The following basic training materials have been updated during the reporting period:

- E-mail security;
- Safe web browsing;

- Password security and management;
- **O** PC security

## The following materials are planned to be updated by the end of 2019:

- Security of smartphones;
- Physical security;
- Security of social networks;
- Cyber-incident review;

During the reporting period, a third National Strategy on Cyber Security was developed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. For this reason, due to limited human resources, the materials could not be updated by the end of the third quarter of 2019 as envisioned in the Action Plan.

- Wireless network security;
- Personal data protection;
- Information security;
- O Identification of the information source.

The process of updating materials, their visual processing and publication of up to date materials on the portal elearning.dea.gov.ge will be completed by the end of 2019. Additionally, video tutorials on training materials are also being developed, which will also be available to the portal users.



## The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) methodology has been implemented in one pilot service provider agency

An important achievement under the Public Service Delivery subchapter of the Action Plan 2019-2020 is the implementation of CAF by the PSDA - an activity that started earlier than envisaged by the Action Plan and was fully implemented during the reporting period.

The PSH is the first organization in the South Caucasus region to implement international quality management mechanism elaborated and tested in the EU - the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).



The CAF is a tool that assists public sector

in measuring the risks / opportunities associated with an organization's operations; improving the quality of products and services, increasing the motivation, qualification and productivity of employees, strengthening performance evaluation, quality management system and crisis management, ensuring continuous development and advancement of the organization.

In June 2019, the work on the PSH selfassessment document was completed. As a result, priority areas of the PSH were identified and a twoyear action plan was developed aimed at improving performance.

Based on the evaluation of the Reform Council Secretariat, the state of implementation of the output indicators planned for III quarter of 2019 in Public Service Delivery is as follows:

№	ACTIVITY OUTCOME INDICATOR:	PERFORMANCE RATING:	IMPLEMENTATION STATUS:
1	Policy document on Evaluation, Delivery, Quality Assurance and Costing of public services is discussed with stakeholders and is submitted to the Government	Partially implemented <sup>19</sup>	Implementation process is ongoing
2	Trainings on usage of My.gov.ge are conducted for: 1. The employees of the Public Service Hall and Community Centers; 2. Central and local government officials; 3. Private sector and media representatives; 4. Students	Partially implemented <sup>20</sup>	Implementation process is completed
3	The basic training material for cyber secu- rity is updated on the electronic training platform	Not implemented <sup>21</sup>	Implementation is process ongoing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> The final version of the policy document has been developed, but it is planned to be shared with all the government agencies and relevant NGOs before submitting to the government. As a result, the output indicator is partially implemented.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The trainings planned in 2019 were not conducted for the employees of the PSH and Community Centers. As a result, the output indicator is partially implemented.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> At least half of the training materials (50%) was not updated during the reporting period, therefore the output indicator is not implemented.

## PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT



A number of significant reforms have been introduced in the recent period in order to improve public finance management practices and bring them closer to the international standards.

Progress is evident in the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) 2017,<sup>22</sup> Fiscal Transparency Evaluation Report<sup>23</sup> developed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Technical Assistance Mission and the Budget Transparency Survey 2017 published by the International Budget Partnership.<sup>24</sup> According to the latter, Georgia received 82 points, ranked fifth out of 115 countries in the world, and was moved to the group of countries with Extensive transparency.

Within the frames of the current action plan, in line with the government priorities, the goal of the public finance management is to enhance the sustainability of the medium-term planning, enhance the effectiveness of fiscal risk management, and ensure greater transparency of the budget process and citizen engagement.

The Public Finance Management Component of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan 2019-2020 does not include activities to be implemented within the three quarters of 2019, though the Ministry of Finance has taken significant steps during the reporting period:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Performance Assessment Report, Georgia, June 2018, available here.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Fiscal Transparency Evaluation Report, Georgia, 2017, available <u>here.</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Open Budget Survey, 2017, available here.

In order to improve budget revenue forecasts, the Ministry of Finance has started to take measures for the implementation of Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (DSGE) model necessary for analysis and forecast of the macroeconomic and fiscal indicators.

A Citizen's guide has been developed in

The Guide will include the following information:

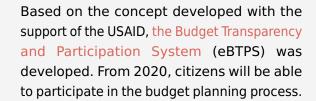
accordance with the draft law on State Budget

2020, which will be updated after the approval

of the budget and published on the Ministry

of Finance website in an editable format.

- Definition of the Budget;
- Components of the budgetary system;
- Stages of the budgeting process;
- Legal basis of the budget process;
- Reforms that have been implemented and what results have been achieved in managing public finances;
- Priorities of the state budget.

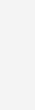


In order to improve fiscal policy planning and forecasting, the Ministry of Finance has launched a Dynamic Stochastic General Equilibrium (DSGE) model. This model will be incorporated in the budgeting process from 2020.

A draft of the relevant Decree was developed to identify State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) as Public Interest Enterprises (PIEs).

The purpose of defining SOEs as PIEs aims to:

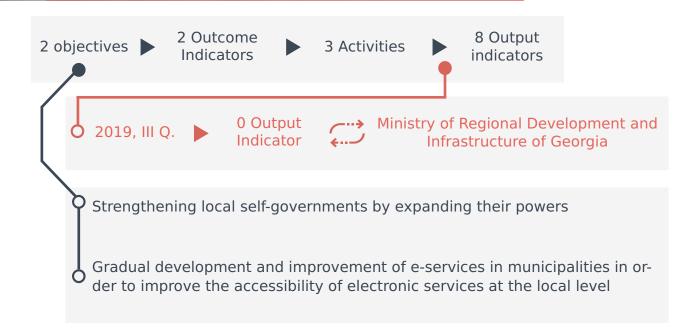
- Increase quality of accountability of the enterprises;
- Increase trust;
- Protect the interests of partners and third parties.







## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT



The Public Administration Reform 2019-2020 Action Plan does not include activities to be carried out in the Public Finance Management Component in the three quarters of 2019, However, during the reporting period, significant steps were taken by the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI) to strengthen self-governments and increase their authority.

## **KEY SUCCESS STORIES**

## The final draft version of the decentralization strategy (2019-2025) has been developed

Decentralization of governance, which is related to the realization of the fundamental right of citizens, involves development and strengthening of local self-government. The elaboration of a decentralization strategy is an important prerequisite for the governance system to respond effectively to the needs of the public and to ensure citizen participation in decision-making.

During the reporting period, a draft version of the Decentralization Strategy (2019-2025)<sup>25</sup> was developed with the support of the UNDP, which was discussed with relevant stakeholders (Parliament of Georgia, Municipalities of Georgia, representatives of local and international organizations). The strategy will be submitted to the GoG for approval by the end of 2019.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> The name of the strategy mentioned in the Public Administration Reform Action Plan 2019-2020 is formulated as "Medium-term (2019-2025) Strategy on Good Governance at the local level".

A list of essential modules of the electronic services to be implemented in municipalities has been developed

A necessary component for strengthening local self-governance is the gradual development and improvement of electronic services in municipalities. This issue is reflected in the Reform Action Plan 2019-2020.

During the reporting period, in order to identify E-services to be implemented in municipalities a number of meetings with stakeholders were held and, as a result of consultations, a list of necessary modules of the electronic services was developed. From 2021, these services will be provided to citizens locally in electronic format.

# CHALLENGES, RISKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## CHALLENGES IN THE PROCESS OF ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Incorrect determination of the implementation deadlines due to the underestimation of the amount of work required to implement the activity during the planning stage

The implementation of the number of output indicators were not carried out within the set timeframe.

In some cases, on the contrary, the activities were implemented earlier than envisaged, and mostly fully, which indicates underestimation of the workload at the planning stage. For example, one of the most time-consuming activities of the Action Plan is the elaboration, review, approval and printing of a regulatory package for the policy development and coordination system.

Despite the fact that the package was developed during the reporting period, given its content and purpose, it was critically important to conduct a comprehensive consultation with the public agencies and other partners involved in the process. Hence, this activity required more time than it was initially planned. Likewise, due to the content and scope of the document, a thorough review of the unified policy paper on the elaboration, delivery, quality assurance and pricing of public services took longer than envisaged by the Action Plan.

#### V

#### **Lack of Human Resources**

Human resource scarcity was a challenge in several cases. For example, due to the insufficient human resources within the scope of the Action Plan objective 4.7, basic cyber security training materials were not fully updated on the electronic training platform.

However, it should be noted that this issue was caused by implementing the other major commitment simultaneously. Specifically, much of the resources during the reporting period were devoted to developing a national cyber security strategy, which is a very intricate task requiring a great deal of effort.

#### V

#### **Duplication of Activities**

Creation of a unified electronic system for the elaboration, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the policy documents (Activity 1.2.3), itself involves the activity of transferring the Anti-corruption Council policy documents into an electronic platform (Activity 1.3.1-1.3.2). Additionally, the Handbook on Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation makes it mandatory for the executive government to develop, monitor and evaluate policy documents in a unified electronic system of government.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

## Based on the existing challenges and risks analysis, it is recommended that:

- in close coordination with the Secretariat, the responsible agencies provide a detailed analysis of the activities to be carried out in the following quarters in order to correctly identify the time and human resources needed for their implementation;
- the timeline for the implementation of the activities set out in the Action Plan are reviewed in great detail, and in case of the delay, new dates are determined;
- in close coordination with the Secretariat, responsible agencies exclude instances of activity duplication to avoid wasting time, financial and human resources in the process of planning a new phase of public administration reform.



In case of the failure to follow the recommendations, there is a high risk that the objectives of the action plan will not be fulfilled within the set timeframe, since the implementation of each activity precisely serves the purpose of achieving the outcome indicators. Consequently, in order to meet the challenges it is important to eliminate the shortcomings that hampered the implementation process during the reporting period.

#### Annex:

Monitoring Framework for Public Administration Reform Action Plan 2019-2020 (as of the end of Q3, 2019).



"This report has been produced with the assistance of the European Union, in the frame of the EU project "Support to Public Administration Reform in Georgia". Its contents are the sole responsibility of AOG and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union"

