**“Supporting Public Administration Reform in Georgia”**

**(PAR Project)**

**Mid-Term Evaluation**

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**Executive Summary**

This report presents the main findings of the mid-term evaluation of the “Supporting Public Administration Reform in Georgia” project, otherwise known as the PAR Project. The evaluation covers the period from the project’s initiation in 2016 to the end of December 2018.[[1]](#footnote-1) Given the project’s designated end date of December 2020, it represents a mid-term evaluation which allows the project stakeholders take stock of progress achieved and chart out the next steps in the process.

The PAR project was developed by UNDP and DFID in support of the implementation of the “Public Administration Reform” (PAR) agenda, which has been one of the government’s top reform priorities. PAR’s main goal is the establishment of an effective, efficient and transparent public administration system, underpinned by an independent, modern and competent civil service. These are seen as essential prerequisites for sustaining economic growth and delivering high-quality services to citizens. The PAR approach and agenda are articulated in a document called the “PAR Roadmap 2020” which outlines reform needs and plans in six major policy areas: i) policy development and cooperation, ii) human resource management, iii) accountability, iv) service delivery, v) public finance management, and vi) local self-government.

With a budget of GPB 4.5 million (USD 5,921,052) and an implementation timeframe from 2016 to 2020, the PAR project addresses three of the six priority PAR areas identified in Georgia’s PAR Roadmap – i) policy development and cooperation; ii) civil service and human resource management; and, iii) service delivery. The project’s goal is to enhance the capability of the Government of Georgia to implement its national development agenda through a more effective, professionally trained, unified and independent public administration that delivers public services with greater accountability and responsiveness to citizens’ needs.

During the project’s implementation period, the context around the PAR process has changed, and so has the project’s response to the context. Although the three main areas of work outlined above have been largely maintained, activities have evolved in specific areas where there have been openings and opportunities for collaboration with national institutions, contributions to the PAR process and impact on institutional change. The specific areas (within the three main pillars outlined above) where the activities have concentrated may be categorized as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Policy Making
2. Change Management
3. Civil Service Training
4. Performance Appraisals
5. Alternative Dispute Resolution
 | 1. Emerging Needs
2. Grant Initiatives
3. Service Delivery
4. E-government
5. E-services
 |

The PAR project is one of the most strategic projects of UNDP in Georgia and the region. It supports Georgia’s aspirations for accession to the EU and the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU. It has also been quite flexible in responding to the emerging challenges and evolving priorities and needs of the PAR reform agenda. The project team, comprised of professional and enthusiastic professionals with intimate knowledge and experience in PAR’s specific areas, has been the main driving force behind the reliability and flexibility of support. But also support from UNDP and DFID has been crucial in ensuring such high level of flexibility. Both organizations have operated under understanding that the project’s implementation modalities are subject to adaptation and that flexibility – as long as adaptation falls within broad parameters set for this project - represents one of the project’s key advantages.

The following is a brief overview of the project’s contribution in each of the ten areas of activity.

Policy Making

The project has supported the strengthening of the policy making process, which is one of the key dimensions of PAR agenda. The project has been supporting the formulation of policy making guidelines, as well as the deployment of the performance tracking, monitoring and evaluation tools by the Administration of the Government (AoG). The project has sought not only to make these processes truly operational and integrated into line-ministry routines, but also to use the generated data and analysis for guiding cabinet-level decisions. The project will continue to be engaged in the training and coaching of AoG staff, offering advice and support to the Head of AoG and Prime Minister, and providing support to line ministries on the policy making process. Overall, the project is well-positioned in this area. It has become the main go-to partner for the AoG and other involved government partners.

Change Management

The project has supported the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) in communicating about the Civil Service Reform and using human resource departments and managers as key "agents for change" within the civil service. One of the key results of this work has been the development of a National Change Management Plan and individual CMTs for nine ministries. Given PAR’s shift to a more de-centralized system than originally foreseen, the project has shifted its approach to working with individual line ministries and agencies – primarily those interested in upgrading their human resource management practices – to create change management approach at the ministerial level. The Human Resources Forum has become the change management instrument through which substantive discussions have taken place on emerging problems and needs related to the implementation of the new Law on Civil Service and its by-laws, while CSB has provided either immediate and hands on assistance, or – if the issue was of a generalized nature - developed guidebooks and instructions for human resource staff.

Civil Service Training

The focus of the PAR project in this area has been on strengthening the capabilities of the civil service, with a focus on training and skills. Initially, the prevailing idea was to have a centralized training institution for the civil service. More recently, the country’s leadership has opted for a decentralized model where different players inside and outside the public administration provide training for civil servants. The PAR project has assisted the CSB in developing the “Decree on Professional Development of Civil Servants” which lays out the main requirements to be observed by line ministries for the training of civil servants and mandates line ministries to provide their staff with two types of training – mandatory and elective (additional). The project has also supported the CSB in developing and establishing a system for the training of civil servants, which includes the regulatory framework, a mechanism for the accreditation of training bodies, content requirements for training, etc. As part of the above-mentioned system, support will be further provided for the establishment of an online training platform for the civil service, called the Unified Training System.

Performance Appraisals

In line with the requirements of the Law on Civil Service which obliges ministries to carry out staff performance appraisals, the PAR project has supported selected ministries to conduct performance appraisals of their staff. This was done in close cooperation with other development partners, especially USAID and GIZ, the PAR project. The project provided support by conducting an analysis of the needs of selected ministries in the appraisals process and developing a methodology for the appraisal, including draft standard templates. Further, training was provided to line managers and representatives of human resource units on how to conduct performance appraisal. At the moment, it is perhaps too early to talk about the real results of appraisals in terms of institutional and behavioural change in the public sector, as the effective use of performance appraisals requires a cultural shift that takes time to settle. Time and repeated iterations are needed before the appraisals really become an instrument of accountability and have a real impact on the behaviour of public officials.

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Another direction of the PAR project has been the exploration of potential dispute resolution mechanisms alternative the court system that could be installed in Georgia’s public sector. The need for such a mechanism has become more acute after the first round of performance appraisals because of the need for handling potential disputes in a structured and amicable fashion, rather than through disruptive and costly litigation. The project has supported the conduct of a study of international practices in public service Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and existing practices in nine government agencies. The possibility of the creation of a mediation team and the establishment of a consulting service for civil servants has been explored with CSB and discussions are ongoing. To support this conversation, the project has assisted with the design, preparation and delivery of trainings on “difficult conversations” with an associated training of trainer programme for CSB trainers. It has also supported the creation of a so called "risk register" which enables HR departments to track and preempt potential disputes. This area of work is seen as quite useful by many of the interviewees for this evaluation, given that the judicial system is clogged. However, there seems to be insufficient political will at the leadership level to establish such a system.

Emerging Needs

The “*emerging needs*” component has been a discretionary tool available to the PAR project to support specific issues connected to the larger components of the project. Given the rapidly shifting context and frequent changes in the PAR agenda, the component has proven to be crucial for providing additional flexibility to the project. Through this component, the project has supported initiatives in priority areas related to PAR, such as service delivery, civil service reform and policy planning and coordination. Five initiatives have been supported so far. Two initiatives have contributed to the improvement of e-governance, by enhancing the quality, usage and security of electronic services offered to the citizens and commercial entities via different channels, including the “my.gov.ge” e-government portal. Another initiative has supported CSB to enhance the level of awareness of civil servants about civil service reform and increase their readiness to embrace changes associated with it. A fourth initiative has supported policy planning of the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara through improved organizational structure and human resource practices. A fifth initiative has supported the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture to improve pest management services by applying behavioural insights. Overall, activities under this component have been synergetic with the other components of the project.

Grant Initiatives

The project’s “grant initiatives” component has supported the engagement of civil society organizations to provide evidence and practical solutions to enhance policy planning, civil service reform and public service delivery. This component has consisted of two types of activities – research and civic initiatives. Three cycles of research and civic initiatives had been launched by the time of this evaluation, funding16 initiatives out of which eight had been completed. The research and civic initiatives have created bridges of partnership and co-creation between government and non-governmental entities (civil society, think tanks and research institutions) in the area of PAR. They have helped both to expand the field of knowledge on the impact of the ongoing PAR reform, and to expand the scope of PAR efforts both geographically and thematically.

Service Delivery

The PAR project is one of the main supporters of the service delivery component of the PAR agenda. The project has assisted the Ministry of Justice, and its two subordinated agencies PSDA and DEA, in laying out strong foundations for the creation of unified standards for public service delivery. The project has supported the development of the “Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery” (PSDD), which offers a set of common guiding principles and standards on the design, delivery, pricing and quality assurance of public services. The project has also supported the Public Service Hall (PSH) to implement the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – Total Quality Management tool which provides a fairly simple, free, and easy-to-use framework suitable for the self-assessment of public sector organizations and improvement of performance. Support has also been provided for the development of the Public Service Delivery Baseline Assessment report which provides an in-depth overview of the public service delivery practices in Georgia based on design, delivery, pricing and quality assurance dimensions, and highlights best practices and existing gaps. Overall, the project is contributing to strengthening citizen involvement in the use of these services online, through improved e-governance platforms.

E-government

The focus of this component has been on e-training for public officials. The project has worked closely with the Data Exchange Agency (DEA) to facilitate the production of knowledge products and toolkits related to electronic governance and cyber security. More than 70 civil servants have been trained on design and development of e-services and information systems packages and cyber security. The project has also supported DEA to develop a concept document and relevant training material on usage of technical solutions that ensure access to an Open Data Portal, the transparency and accountability tool. With project support, DEA has customized the MOODLE platform for the delivery of training courses and has uploaded it into the DEA server. The plan for this area is to strengthen the training platform in order to facilitate access to training by means of electronic channels.

E-services

The focus of this component has been the digitalization of the application process for certain services offered by government agencies (through what are called e-services). The project’s main contribution in this area has been to support DEA in converting government services into an electronic format which can be delivered via the unified government portal of electronic services (*my.gov.ge*), which serves as the central government portal. The conversion of services into a digital format ensures easy accessibility and an opportunity for more effective feedback from citizens. As a result of the placement of more digital government services, the e-service portal has seen rapidly increasing rates of users. About 440 services have so far been digitalized and integrated into the “my.gov.ge” online platform. These are services provided by both central agencies and municipalities. UNDP’s support in this area has primarily consisted of financial support for DEA and exchanges with international partners (sharing of experiences).

From an efficiency perspective, project activities have been well-coordinated with other activities under UNDP’s governance portfolio. Project interventions have dovetailed with the other UNDP projects aimed at strengthening the system of checks and balances in the country’s governance system. The PAR project team has made efforts to cooperate with the other UNDP projects, especially the GRF project, the Parliamentary project and the project supporting local governance. However, there is room for further integration. The PAR project has coordinated well with the activities of other development partners on the division of labour when it comes to support for the PAR agenda. Going forward, it will be essential to maintain, and even strengthen, coordination with development partners, and especially with the newly started EU project in this area.

As far as sustainability of outcomes in concerned, the prospects are positive thanks to the strong national ownership and leadership demonstrated by national institutions, the significant support provided by UNDP CO and DFID to the project team, and the close coordination of all project activities with national counterparts – starting from planning, specification of technical requirements, development or installation of components, all the way to system maintenance and staff training. Sustainability has also been strengthened by making the PAR process more inclusive and by intensively engaging civil society initiatives in the reform implementation. Civil society inputs have been incorporated in PAR, providing research, designing policy and offering practical solutions in the context of civil service reform and service delivery.

Also, efforts have been made by the project team to integrate the gender dimension and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the activities of the project. There have certainly been contributions towards gender mainstreaming in the design and implementation of certain interventions, but overall the gender perspective could have been more prominent and results shown in a more gender-disaggregated fashion. With regards to the SDGs, the PAR project has directly contributed to targets related to SDG 16 under Georgia’s national SDG framework, which was developed with support by the UN Country Team and UNDP through Governance Reform Fund (GRF) project. However, the project team could give the SDGs more explicit recognition in project documentation and activities and embed the results of it work and the broader PAR agenda more firmly into Georgia’s SDG framework.

Overall, the project has provided important contributions to Georgia’s PAR process. While the establishment of an effective, efficient and transparent public administration system, underpinned by an independent, modern and competent civil service, remains work in progress, the activities of the PAR project have provided reformers with crucial tools which are necessary for maintaining the pace of reform and achieving gradual results towards established goals. The pace of the PAR reform in the coming months and years will depend on many factors, most importantly the commitment of the political leadership and a favourable external situation, but the PAR project is well-positioned to provide impetus to the process and the necessary tools to reformers. It will also be essential that the international assistance to the process, which includes the PAR project, is well-coordinated, synchronized and pointing in the same direction.

This evaluation makes the following recommendations which are derived from the analysis presented throughout this report.

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| **Recommendation 1****Policy Making** |
| In the area of policy making, the project should focus on strengthening the system for the monitoring and evaluation of policies and the engagement of citizens, Parliament and local governments in the policy making process. The project should also promote stronger links between the policy making and public financial management processes and improved coordination among development partners in this area.* ***Policy M&E System*** – The project should support AoG and line ministries to define in clear terms the parameters of the policy-making M&E system. This is complex work that will require a systematic assessment of what is feasible and what are the best options for Georgia. The following are some key aspects that the project should focus on:
	+ The establishment of the electronic M&E system will be an important step of the process, but the critical problem of the implementation of these policies and strategies will remain. The question is how to strengthen implementation through M&E and other actions to be identified? This needs to be further thought through and incorporated in the project approach.
	+ The project should assist AoG to consider options for integrating the electronic policy M&E system with the electronic SDG system developed by DEA. It seems cumbersome to have two parallel systems playing similar functions in the country.
	+ Also, the focus of the PAR project should not only be on the building of the electronic policy M&E system, but also on the process on the basis of which it will be operated. Defining roles, responsibilities and operating procedures should be a crucial part of the process.
	+ Also, the system’s open interface for the public is another crucial dimension that should be the focus of the project.
* ***Citizen Engagement*** – The issue of citizen engagement in the policy making process is being discussed, but requires clarity on how it will be actually accomplished. Here the project could play a greater role, if not directly, through coordination, advice and advocacy. There are many options for how to proceed with this, but a first step could perhaps be a quick review of current practices and options for engagement, cognizant of the role of development partners such as USAID and others in this area.
* ***Parliament*** – UNDP and the project team should reassess the project’s role in supporting the involvement of the Parliament in the policy making process and see how AoG could be supported in giving Parliament more attention in the process. The steps that have been made towards involvement of the Parliament with the support of UNDP’s parliamentary project are encouraging, but a more direct engagement of the project with the Parliament will strengthen the process.
* ***Sub-national Level*** – The project should also assess the application of policy guidelines to the sub-national level. This evaluation does not provide a clear recommendation on whether to engage with the sub-national level in this area, but it does recommend that the position of the sub-national level in the context of policy making is taken into account and assessed appropriately before making a well-founded decision in one direction or the other.
* ***Public Financial Management*** – No links between these activities and the Public Financial Management system seem to have been identified yet. Given that financing is key to the implementation of policies, it is crucial that the project support AoG in exploring options for linking the policy making process to the country’s public financial management system. The project could also play a more important role in donor coordination in this area by enabling development partners such as the World Bank and IMF to become more involved with the PAR process.
 |
| **Recommendation 2****Change Management** |
| * The project should articulate in clear terms the benefits of the change management process, especially cultural changes, and whether there is any usefulness in pursuing any activities related to this component in the future. If a decision is made to do anything in this area, it should be designed in a well thought out process and should be linked to other reform processes in the public sector, such as the PFM reform. Further, the change management approach should be further institutionalized through the Human Resource forum.
* On the issue of the “Senior Civil Servant”, what seems feasible for the project at this point is to work with the CSB and government on exploring different options and help them figure out what makes more sense for Georgia’s context. Any steps taken in this direction should be gradual and being cognizant of the political and cultural context. The important thing at this stage will be to encourage a discussion of the different options.
 |
| **Recommendation 3****Civil Service Training** |
| * The project should encourage and support CSB to think through the business model for the online training platform (Unified Training System for Civil Servants). This is more than just the technical aspects of the system and includes the process, roles and responsibilities through which the system will be operated.
* The project should advocate for a decision by CSB on whether existing platforms will be used for the delivery of the training, or a new platform will have to be created from scratch. The ultimate decision is for CSB to make, but it will be important that the project (alongside other partners) provides the right advice in making sure that the “wheel does not get reinvented in the process” and resources are used efficiently. If any of the existing systems is assessed to be good enough for the purpose, then then project should advocate for its use, rather than the creation of a new one.
 |
| **Recommendation 4****Performance Appraisals** |
| * It seems that line ministries are still not able to conduct appraisals on their own. Support seems necessary for at least one more year, so the project should plan for that accordingly.
* One idea that has been discussed in the context of PAR is that in the future appraisals should be linked salary levels, so that employees have an incentive to perform better. This evaluation does not make a recommendation on whether appraisals should be linked to salary levels, as there are clearly advantages and disadvantages to that. What it does recommend though is that the project take a close look at this issue by assessing the advantages and disadvantages in a more systematic way. The results of the assessment should be shared and discussed with all relevant stakeholders.
* Further awareness raising on performance appraisals among civil servants is required and the project should continue to provide support in this area.
* There is also a need to institutionalize training on performance appraisals and make it more sustainable. At the moment, training support has to come from development partners. The ideal solution is for CSB to provide this training to government agencies, but CSB does not have that capacity yet. The project should work with the CSB on identifying options for building that capacity.
* The project should also support CSB and line ministries to link performance appraisals more closely to the training needs of individual public officials and government agencies.
* The project should further support CSB in developing an analytical tool for the aggregation and analysis of the data generated by the performance appraisals. As a first step, it will be important to understand what data is available and in what form, and subsequently how this data can be analyzed and utilized most effectively. In the medium to long run, CSB should have the ability to analyze the broader results that emanate from the appraisals process and understand their ultimate effect – behavioural and institutional changes they have generated in the public sector. A cost-benefit analysis of performance appraisals will be necessary at some point in time to establish their usefulness for the Georgian context and identify options for improvement.
 |
| **Recommendation 5****Alternative Dispute Resolution** |
| In the area of “alternative dispute resolution”, the project should maintain its cautious approach and monitor opportunities for more substantive support based on evolution of the political situation. In the meantime, the project should consider focusing on the following activities:* Continue support for CSB in the establishment of a mediation team and consulting service for civil servants.
* Refine the “difficult conversations” training and extend it to new departments and ministries.
 |
| **Recommendation 6****Emerging Needs** |
| * The project is advised to further explore the use of “emerging needs” initiatives to also test high-risk innovative solutions to PAR-related challenges, rather than replicating or reinforcing activities undertaken through the other components. This is an opportunity for exploring the feasibility of solutions which might or might not work. Risk-taking is an essential part of innovation.
* The project could also explore the possibility of using the “emerging needs” initiatives for closer engagement with local governments and communities. The initiative with the Ajara government is an example of this, but cooperation could be extended to lower levels of government and even to the community level. This does not have to be done necessarily directly through the project, but ways of creating impact at these levels could be explored through the interventions of other ongoing initiatives by UNDP or other development partners.
 |
| **Recommendation 7****Grant Initiatives** |
| The project could consider the following measures related to grant initiatives:* Track more effectively the implementation of the recommendations derived from the studies conducted through the research grants.
* Strengthen criteria for the practicality of the commissioned studies.
* Establish a system of peer review for the commissioned studies to strengthen the quality of research.
* Compile at the end of the project all the studies conducted under this component into a publication.
 |
| **Recommendation 8****Service Delivery** |
| In the area of service delivery, the project may consider the following measures:* Support PSDA with the development of PSDD compliance mechanisms and guidelines for service design.
* Support authorities with the establishment of the special unit for monitoring the enforcement of PSDD.
* Support PSDA on developing and piloting training for government departments on the implementation of PSDD.
* Obtain clarity from the Ministry of Justice on the conduct of the assessment of existing PSDD-related legislation to reveal any gaps for its implementation and identify necessary amendments required for the PSDD.
* Support the development of guidance and training for public agencies on the pricing of services.
* Support PSDA in reviewing all available options for the platform that can be used for the delivery of training in this domain, with a view to selecting the most effective and sustainable solution.

The project team could also advocate for a re-examination of the mandate of PSDA, in light of the challenges related to its sub-ordination under the Ministry of Justice. |
| **Recommendation 9****E-Government** |
| * In this area, the project should advocate for clarity among government counterparts with regards to the electronic platforms used by the different branches of government (in particular, CSB and DEA). The project is supporting a number of electronic platforms in a range of areas (policy making, civil service training, etc.). Given that there seem to be a number of ideas or pilots of such platforms in circulation, it will be important that the project advocate for the use of existing platforms where feasible.
* With regards to the electronic platform for the delivery of training, the project should explore whether it is possible to have one integrated electronic platform for government training - a sort of one-stop-shop for training which different agencies could use to place their material. The project is well positioned to facilitate a discussion about this among the relevant government agencies.
* The project should also support the government in clearly defining roles, responsibilities and operating procedures for the e-training platform, once a decision is made on how to proceed with it.
 |
| **Recommendation 10****E-Services** |
| In the area of e-services, the project should continue to facilitate DEA’s interactions with other government agencies, especially at the local level, with the view to easing the other agencies’ compliance with the requirements for integration of their services into the unified online portal. |
| **Recommendation 11****Adjustment of Project Planning Documents** |
| * The project team should reflect more effectively in project planning documents changes in the political context and the PAR agenda and the approaches taken in response in terms of how project outputs and outcomes are defined.
* The project’s results and resources framework could be adjusted to reflect more faithfully the adaptations that the project team has taken in the last couple of years. This will provide clarity and transparency for stakeholders outside the project.
 |
| **Recommendation 12****Absorption and Sustainability of Training**  |
| * Given the significant amount of training involved in this project (policy making, civil service, performance evaluation, service delivery standards, etc.), the project team should track more effectively the extent to which this training is being absorbed by recipients. A more systematic tool could be conceived for this purpose, allowing the team to easily track the quality of training over time.
* Also, the project should strengthen the sustainability of training by ensuring that the respective government institutions are capable to continue its delivery after the project has ended.
 |
| **Recommendation 13****Communication and Coordination with National Partners** |
| * The project should continue to place considerable emphasis on strengthening communication and coordination with national partners and citizens. This includes not only the project’s communications to external partners and audiences, but also support for the authorities’ communications on aspects of the PAR agenda that are related to project activities.
 |
| **Recommendation 14****Support for Civil Society** |
| * The project should explore opportunities for expanding support to non-governmental actors not only in the area of research, but also strengthening their watchdog capacity. Given the space that exists in Georgia for civil society, NGOs could be used in a sensible way for the monitoring the implementation of certain components of the PAR agenda by the respective government institutions.
 |
| **Recommendation 15****Political Support and Advocacy** |
| * UNDP leadership should advocate more vigorously at the political level for PAR initiatives that the project is promoting (and which are outlined throughout this report). UNDP political support for reforms should complement, and be closely coordinated, with technical support from the PAR project (and other relevant UNDP projects).
 |
| **Recommendation 16****Gender** |
| * The project team should further integrate gender equality into project activities and articulate the gender perspective more clearly in project documents. Overall, the project’s initiatives and results should be assessed with the gender perspective in mind.
* Also, given the political nature of this project, roles and power within decision making in the public administration should be assessed from the gender perspective. A gender-sensitive political economy analysis is always useful in initiatives that support public sector reforms. Also, project related data (including on things such as beneficiaries, participants, etc.) should be collected and reported on a gender-disaggregated basis.
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**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ADR Alternative Dispute Resolution

ADR Alternative Dispute Resolution

AoG The Administration of the Government of Georgia

BIT Behavioural Insights Team

CC Community Centres

CiDA Civil Development Agency

CMT Change management team

CO UNDP Country Office

CPD Country Programme Document

CRM Customer Relationship Management

CSB The Civil Service Bureau

CSSP Centre for Study of Social Practices

DCFTA Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area

DCU Donor Coordination Unit

DEA Data Exchange Agency

DRC Disability Research Centre

GGI Good Governance Initiative

GIPA Georgian Institute of Public Affairs

GIZ German Society for International Cooperation

GoG Government of Georgia

GRF Governance Reform Fund

IDFI Institute for Development of Freedom of Information

IMF International Monetary Fund

IRC Innovations and Reforms Centre

LEPL Legal Entities Under Public Law

M&E Monitoring & Evaluation

MoFEA Ministry of Finance and Economy of Ajara Autonomous Republic

NAP National Action Plan

NAPR National Agency of Public Registry

NVU New Vision University

OECD Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PAR Public Administration Reform

POPP Operations Policies and Procedures

PPU Policy Planning Unit

PSDA The Public Service Development Agency

PSH Public Service Hall

QEC National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement

R-CSN Regional Civil Society Network

Sida Swedish Development Cooperation Agency

SIGMA Support for Improvement in Governance and Management

SoP Service Delivery Standard Operating Procedures

TAC Training Accreditation Council

TAS Tbilisi Architecture Service

ToR Terms of Reference

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNPSD UN Partnership for Sustainable Development

USAID United States Agency for International Development

VLAP Visa Liberalization Action Plan

YSC Young Scientist Club

# INTRODUCTION

## Project Background

With the exception of the Baltic countries, Georgia is perhaps the country that has gone furthest in the post-Soviet space in transforming its institutions and governance system. Starting from 2004, it has undertaken comprehensive and deep reforms that have had a significant impact on the society, economy and political system. One important component of this ambitious reform agenda has been the area of public administration.

The so-called “Public Administration Reform” (PAR) has been one of the government’s top reform priorities. Box 1 below provides a brief overview of how the process has unfolded. PAR’s main goal is the establishment of an effective, efficient and transparent public administration system, underpinned by an independent, modern and competent civil service.[[2]](#footnote-2) These are seen as essential prerequisites for sustaining economic growth and delivering high-quality services to citizens. The PAR approach and agenda are articulated in a document called the “PAR Roadmap 2020”[[3]](#footnote-3) which outlines reform needs and plans in six major policy areas: i) policy development and cooperation, ii) human resource management, iii) accountability, iv) service delivery, v) public finance management, and vi) local self-government.

Box 1: Process around the PAR Agenda

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| The Government of Georgia (GoG) has prioritized civil service and public administration reform since 2013, adopting for the first time a system of coherent policy and legislative decisions in this regard. The Administration of the Government of Georgia (AoG) initiated the process of Public Administration Reform (PAR) with the support of the EU and OECD/SIGMA, the main supporters in the PAR area. The Government Planning and Innovations Unit within the AoG developed the “Public Administration Reform (PAR) Roadmap 2020,” outlining reform needs and plans in six major policy areas: policy development and cooperation, human resource management, accountability, service delivery, public finance management, and local self-government.The civil service reform concept, adopted in November 2014, led to the passing of the Law on Civil Service in October 2015. The Law came into force in January 2017, paving the way for the development of a professional and unified civil service built around the principles of public administration. A broader Public Administration Reform Roadmap and accompanying Action Plan became operational in May 2015. In 2015-2016 the Government began implementing the Action Plan for PAR Roadmap 2020. Throughout this period the main actions entailed the creation of the legislative basis for reforms in multiple areas, but especially as relates to Civil Service Reform (CSR), as well as the establishment of a baseline for reforms through the initiation of a functional review process in the line ministries.Alongside these efforts, measures have been taken to sustain highly visible successes that drive the public support for PAR reforms. Building on the system of Public Service Halls – innovative one stop shops for public service delivery – the concept of Community Centres (CC) continues to deliver public services to the rural areas complementing them with additional services targeting agricultural workers and rural inhabitants. Specific emphasis has been placed on socially vulnerable populations, as well as areas populated by ethnic minorities. |

One motivating factor behind this agenda has been the desire of the political leadership for a more effective public administration. But it has also been driven by Georgia’s aspirations for accession to the EU. The implementation of PAR is a key requirement of the Association Agreement with the EU. Box 2 below provides a more detailed summary of the EU approximation process.

Box 2: EU Approximation Process

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| EU integration is central to the country’s priorities. The main instrument in the integration process is the Association Agreement (AA), which includes the agreement on the establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with the EU, signed in June 2014 and ratified by all EU members by February 2016. The Government has drawn up Action Plans to facilitate the adoption of hundreds of EU directives (including those related to PAR) to further align itself with the EU’s *acquis communautaire* and integrate into the EU internal market. Many of these directives concern the free trade area, but their implementation entails a comprehensive reform program affecting various governance areas, including economic policy making, rule of law, democratization and respect of human rights. Georgia has also implemented the Visa Liberalization Action Plan with the EU which has led to the lifting of visa requirements for Georgian citizens in the Schengen area.[[4]](#footnote-4)Approximation with the EU requires that every administrative domain and industrial sector of a state respects the acquis. Implementation of the acquis in an administrative domain depends on the availability of capacity and resources, but more importantly all the components of the administration must meet the standards and requirements of the EU. Most European countries have developed broadly compatible systems of public administration which helps to ensure that the performance of civil servants is in line with general standards. These key principles are widely accepted as standards but not codified in EU legislation. Countries wishing to integrate themselves with the EU must have these principles embedded in institutions and administrative procedures at all levels. Actors in the public sphere are legally obliged by their national legislations to comply with these broad principles, which must be upheld by independent control bodies, systems of justice and judicial enforcement, parliamentary scrutiny, and by ensuring opportunities for hearing and redress to individuals and legal persons. |

PAR is a complex process, which involves many stakeholders, agendas and moving parts. The whole process is overseen by the PAR Council. The Administration of the Government of Georgia (AoG), and in particular its Policy Planning and Coordination Department, has been primarily responsible for the Policy Planning component. The Civil Service Bureau (CSB) has been primarily responsible for the Civil Service and Human Resource Management component. The Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) and Data Exchange Agency (DEA) have been responsible for the Service Delivery component.

Rapid changes in the country’s political landscape and government have been associated with changes in the leadership of key organizations involved with PAR.[[5]](#footnote-5) These changes, as well as several protracted periods when managerial positions in key organizations have been vacant or temporarily filled, have created low predictability, uncertainties and delays. PAR Council meetings have not been regular and the same can be said about the meetings of Working Groups, which are crucial for carrying forward the reform’s technical aspects.

The pace and direction of the PAR reform has been largely dependent on the personal approaches of the prime ministers.[[6]](#footnote-6) Two trends can be traced since the beginning of the reform process in 2013 - an initial drive for a highly centralized civil service[[7]](#footnote-7) which has more recently given way to a more decentralized approach.[[8]](#footnote-8) Based on the opinion of the majority of stakeholders met for this evaluation, there also appears to have been a decrease in the commitment of the country’s leadership to PAR. It seems that PAR is not as high in the government’s agenda as it used to be a few years ago. Priorities seem to have shifted and the focus of the government seems to be on other matters. Despite the initial drive, which is reflected in the original strategy and roadmap documents, a whole-of-government approach to PAR has been lacking so far. As will be discussed further in this report, many activities have been conducted in a piecemeal fashion, under the leadership of specific institutions in their mandate areas.

The PAR process has received significant support from development partners who have been helping leading national institutions to maintain the strategic focus and guide the process in a holistic manner. PAR’s main supporters have been EU[[9]](#footnote-9), USAID[[10]](#footnote-10), GIZ, UK and UNDP. Also, the Swedish Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) have provided support in specific areas. In the area of Public Financial Management, the World Bank and IMF have provided support to the relevant institutions - primarily the Ministry of Finance, Revenue Service, and National Bank.

## Project Description

The “*Supporting Public Administration Reform in Georgia*” project (PAR project) was developed by UNDP and DFID in support of the implementation of the PAR agenda described in the previous section. The PAR project was born out of UNDP’s “Governance Reform Fund” (GRF), a multi-dimensional programme launched in 2003 and currently funded by the Government of Sweden. GRF is a comprehensive assistance programme in support of Georgia’s public sector reforms. Soon after its launch, the PAR project was separated from GRF and has been implemented independently by a dedicated project team, under the supervision of UNDP Country Office (CO).

The project’s budget is GPB 4.5 Million (USD 5,921,052) and the implementation timeframe 2016-2020. The project addresses the following three of the six priority PAR areas identified in the PAR Roadmap:

1. Policy development and cooperation;
2. Civil Service and human resource management;
3. Service delivery.

The project’s goal is to enhance the capability of the Government of Georgia to implement its national development agenda through a more effective, professionally trained, unified and independent public administration that delivers public services with greater accountability and responsiveness to citizens’ needs. The project is designed as a set of targeted interventions to address priority needs identified through a needs’ assessment and gap analysis, and in line with available funding. Box 3 below outlines the project’s outcomes and outputs, as defined in the project results framework.

Box 3: Project Outcomes and Outputs as Defined in the Results Framework

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| The project consists of one outcome and three outputs, formulated as follows:**Output 1:** ***Policy development and cooperation: AoG ready to effectively manage (plan and implement) and guide (monitor and evaluate) PAR process.**** Indicator 1.1. Frequency of AoG leadership (HAoG /DHAoG, HoCSB) communicating directly on PAR vision objectives to the line ministries and the public. Number of PAR coordination meetings held and the proportion of the Action Plan tasks related to the three pillars of the project accomplished.
* Indicator 1.2. Number of agencies using new policy planning and M&E practices. AoG showing qualitative improvement in assessing agencies’ performance against SDG, OGP and AA objectives

**Output 2: *Civil service and Human Resource Management: Professional civil service established by strategically managed process, civil servants uniformly trained and mechanism established to protect from arbitrary decisions.**** Indicator 2.1. Share of civil servants understanding and supporting change associated with Civil Service Reform.
* Indicator 2.2. Proportion of civil servants undergoing unified induction and in-service trainings.
* Indicator 2.3. Share of government entities using the staff appraisal system in practice.
* Indicator 2.4. The number of cases reviewed/ settled through new alternative dispute resolution mechanism established by CSB.
* Indicator 2.5. Number of projects supported by PAR offering targeted support to emerging needs.
* Indicator 2.6. Number of innovative civil society initiatives incorporated in PAR process: providing research, designing policy and offering practical solutions in service delivery.

**Output 3: *Service delivery: Quality services delivered based on innovative, consistent and replicable method-logy, as well as analysis of usage data patterns and consumer feedback.**** Indicator 3.1. Proportion of public services delivered based on unified Service Delivery Standards. Change in the level of citizen satisfaction with offered public services.
* Indicator 3.2. Extent to which knowledge- and expertise-management in e-governance are improved.
* Indicator 3.3. Usage rate of unified e-governance platform (my.gov.ge); Proportion of public services offered through my.gov.ge.
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The theory of change identified by the project team is presented in the figure in the next page. It outlines the logic of the project intervention as a set of interrelated changes which contribute to the achievement of project outcomes. The figure shows how moving from the bottom up project activities generate output-level changes, which subsequently lead to outcome level changes. The high-level outcomes identified by the project team are three – i) government’s capability to implement policy; ii) effective, professional, unified and independent public administration; and, iii) responsive service delivery. The figure also shows a set of key assumptions that are necessary for making the transition from outputs to outcomes. The figure also shows how change is expected to happen through the three project components – identified with different colours.

This depiction of the theory of change is only a partial and very simplified snapshot of the complex processes of change that is expected to take place at the level of institutions and mentality of public officials and broader society. The ultimate outcome of project activities (as well as the PAR agenda) is the delivery by the government of high-quality services to the citizens and the effective and efficient regulation of the sectors of the society and economy facilitating balanced and sustainable development. In this sense, improved capabilities of the government and the professionalism and independence of the public administration are instruments for the achievement of these higher-level outcomes.

Figure 1: Project’s Theory of Change

 

# EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The mid-term evaluation was commissioned by UNDP Georgia and was carried out during the period December 2018-June 2019 by two independent evaluators. This chapter provides an overview of the objectives of the evaluation and the methodology employed for the collection of information and the analysis of data. Readers who are not interested in the methodology can skip this chapter and go straight to Chapter 3 on the evaluation’s main findings.

## Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation’s goal was to assess the project’s overall progress towards expected results, identify how activities were designed and implemented up to this point and derive lessons and recommendations for the remainder of the implementation period and the continuation of activities in this area. More specifically, the evaluation was conceived and conducted with the following specific objectives in mind:

* To assess overall project performance against project objectives and outcomes as set out in the Project Document, the Logical Framework, and other related documents;
* To assess the extent to which results have been achieved, partnerships established, capacities built, and cross cutting issues such as gender equality addressed;
* To establish whether the project implementation strategy has been optimal and recommend areas for improvement and learning;
* To identify gaps and weaknesses in the project design and provide recommendations as to how it may be improved in the future;
* To assess project strategies and tactics for achieving objectives within established timeframes;
* To critically analyze the project’s implementation and management arrangements;
* To provide an appraisal of the project’s relevance and efficiency of implementation;
* To review and assess the strength and sustainability of partnerships with government bodies, civil society, private sector and international organizations;
* To draw lessons that may help improve the selection, design and implementation of project activities in the remainder of the project;
* To provide the project team and partners with feedback on issues that are recurrent and need attention, and on improvements regarding previously identified issues.

The results of this mid-term evaluation will be used primarily to:

* Support the decision making of the project team and UNDP CO management, government partners and donor on: i) implementation modalities of the present stage, and ii) strategic planning of activities in this area in the coming years.
* Provide project stakeholders with lessons from this particular project on overall project implementation and delivery, including potential corrective/adaptive measures that need to be applied to the design/implementation of other country programme interventions to enhance their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability prospects.

## Evaluation’s Scope and Methodology

This evaluation covers the period from the project’s initiation in 2016 to the end of December 2018 (certain sections of this report contain observations that pertain to the period during which this report was written, which extends up to July 2019). Given the project’s designated end date of December 2020, it represents a mid-term evaluation which allows the project stakeholders take stock of progress achieved and chart out the next steps in the process. The Terms of Reference (ToR) that guided the evaluation process are attached in Annex I of this report. Key issues on which the evaluation focused were:

* Project design and its effectiveness in achieving stated objectives.
* Assessment of key financial aspects, including planned and realized budgets, financing, etc.
* The project’s effectiveness in building the capacity of local institutions and strengthening policy framework to encourage sustainable development.
* Strengths and weaknesses of project implementation, monitoring and adaptive management and sustainability of project outcomes including the project’s exit strategy.
* Recommendations, lessons learned, best practices that may be used further in the project or in future interventions.

The evaluation used OECD DAC criteria and definitions and followed the norms and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group. It was guided by UNDP’s evaluation toolkit, and in particular the “*Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results*”[[11]](#footnote-11).

The methodology was based on mixed methods and involved commonly applied evaluation tools such as documentary review, interviews, information triangulation, analysis and synthesis. A participatory approach was taken for the collection of data, formulation of recommendations and identification of lessons learned.

Evaluation activities were organized according to the following stages: i) planning; ii) data collection; and, iii) data analysis and reporting. Figure 2 below shows the three stages and the main activities under each of them.

Figure 2: Evaluation Stages



Table 1 (below) further details the main activities that were undertaken by the evaluators under each stage.

Evaluation Planning

The planning and preparation phase included the development of the ToR by the project team and UNDP CO and the design of the evaluation framework by the evaluators. The evaluators developed a detailed programmatic scope of evaluation activities, visits, as well as sample interview guides for interviews with stakeholders.

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| I. Planning* Development of the ToR (by the project team and UNDP )
* Start-up teleconference and finalization of work plan
* Collection and revision of project documents
* Elaborated and submitted evaluation work plan
* Mission preparation: agenda and logistics
 |
| II. Data Collection* Interviewed key stakeholders
* Further collected project related documents
* Mission debriefings
* Mission report summary
 |
| III. Data analysis and reporting* In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected
* Follow-up interviews
* Developed draft evaluation report
* Circulated draft report with project team and stakeholders
* Integrated comments and submitted final report
 |

 Table 1: Evaluation Steps

Data Collection

The data collection process involved a comprehensive desk review of project documents and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders and partners (see Table 2 for a list of data sources).

* ***Desk Review*** - The evaluators started by analyzing relevant documents, project documents and progress reports, as well as national policies and strategies. Documents from PAR-related initiatives, as well as reports on the specific context of the project formed part of the analysis.
* ***Semi-structured Interviews*** – A country mission took place in the first week of April 2019. Interviewees included, among others, project staff, representatives of UNDP country office, representatives of DFID and other development partners, government officials, civil society representatives, etc. Open-ended questions were used to enable interviewees to express their views freely and raise the issues they considered most important. A questionnaire was designed to guide the semi-structured interviews and ensure that questions would be investigated consistently across all interviews (the questionnaire can be found in Annex III). The list of stakeholders interviewed can be found in Annex IV.
* ***Evaluation of grant initiatives*** – This evaluation benefited from the information generated by the evaluation of a component of the PAR project that was undertaken by the project team. This component was the “grants initiatives” which basically consisted of research and civic initiatives funded by the PAR project. The findings of that evaluation are integrated in this evaluation.

Table 2: Data Sources

| **Evaluation tools**  | **Sources of information** |
| --- | --- |
| Documentation review (desk study) | General documentation | * UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures
* UNDP Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluating for Results
 |
| Project documentation  | * Annual work plans
* Project Implementation Reviews
* Project Board Minutes
* Updated risk logs
* A large number of reports produced by the project.
 |
| Governments documents/papers | Including relevant policies, laws, strategies, etc. |
| Third party reports | Including those of independent local research centres, etc.  |
| Interviews with project staff and key project stakeholders | These included: | * Interviews with key project personnel including the Project Manager and technical experts.
* Interviews with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, development partners, civil society, etc.
 |

Data Analysis

Information obtained through the documentary review and interviews was triangulated against available documented sources and was synthesized using analytical judgement. The method of triangulation is depicted in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Method of Triangulation



Figure 4 shows the steps that were taken for the analysis which was conducted on the basis of the standard criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability (see Annex II for a more detailed list of questions that were used for the analysis of information).

* ***Relevance,*** covering the assessment of the extent to which outcomes were suited to national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time;
* ***Effectiveness,*** covering the assessment of the achievement of the immediate objectives (outputs) and the contribution to attaining the outcomes and the overall objective of the project; and an examination of the any significant unexpected effects of the project;
* ***Efficiency,*** covering the assessment of the quality of project implementation; adequacy of financial management; efficient implementation;
* ***Sustainability,*** covering likely ability of the intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion.

Figure 4: Steps in Analysis Process

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Step 1.** Develop the results chain | **Step 2.** Assess the existing evidence on results | **Step 3.** Assess the alternative explanations | **Step 4.** Assemble the performance story | **Step 5** Seek out the additional evidence | **Step 6** Revise and strengthen the performance story |

The analysis also covered aspects of project formulation, including the extent of stakeholder participation during project formulation; design for sustainability; linkages between project and other interventions; adequacy of management arrangements, etc.

## Evaluation Limitations

No serious limitations were encountered in the conduct of this evaluation. All relevant stakeholders were interviewed, and their opinions are reflected in this report. The project team provided great support in organizing all the necessary meetings and helping with the logistics of the mission. The only addition that would have been suggested to the set up of this evaluation is perhaps a visit to Batumi (Autonomous Republic of Ajara), where the project conducted some activities that will be outlined further in this report. This would have certainly required more time available for interviews and the analysis of the collected information.

## Structure of the Report

The report begins with an introductory section that provides a description of the project and the country context (previous chapter). The second (current) chapter provides an overview of the evaluation objectives and methodology. The third chapter presents the main findings of the report and consists of two parts: the first part assesses key aspects of project design and formulation; the second part focuses on implementation and presents an assessment of the project’s achievements along the standard dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The fourth chapter identifies key “lessons learned” drawn from the experience of this project. The fifth chapter summarizes the main conclusions and the last (sixth) chapter provides a set of recommendations for the consideration of project stakeholders. Additional information supporting the arguments made throughout the document is provided in the annexes attached to this report.

# FINDINGS

While the amount of information generated by this evaluation was enormous, the findings presented in this chapter cover only the most essential aspects of the project and, given the mid-term nature of this assessment, are to a considerable extent focused on those aspects that require the attention of project stakeholders. The findings, and the rest of this chapter, are organized in the following two sections: ***i) Project Design*** and ***ii) Project Implementation and Achievements***.

## Project Design

This section of the report provides an assessment of the design of the project. Findings related to the implementation and results of the project are presented in section 3.2 of this report (Project Implementation and Results).

### Project Stakeholders

The following is an overview of the project’s stakeholders playing a key role in the PAR process.

* The ***PAR Council*** is the highest oversight body of the PAR process. The Council is the inter-ministerial political forum where key policy decisions are discussed and taken. At the technical level, there are a number of sectoral ***Working Groups*** which operate under the aegis of the Council and which involve experts from the respective line ministries.
* The ***Administration of the Government of Georgia (AoG)*** is responsible for the overall implementation of the national institutional reform agenda, including PAR. Under the AoG, the ***Policy Planning and Coordination*** (PPC) department has been the principal government body involved in the PAR process, and as such a key stakeholder of the PAR project.[[12]](#footnote-12) Two units of PPC have a particularly important role in PAR – the ***Policy Planning Unit*** (PPU) and the ***Donor Coordination Unit*** (DCU).
	+ ***PPU*** serves as the Secretariat for the PAR Council and PAR expert-level Working Groups and is responsible for producing guidelines for the government on the policy making process and enforcing those guidelines by checking the quality of the policy making process.[[13]](#footnote-13) As such, it is primarily responsible for the PAR’s Policy Planning component and Roadmap. Obviously, PPU is the PAR project’s primary stakeholder for the Policy Planning component.
	+ ***DCU*** is responsible for coordinating donor support for institutional reforms, including the PAR process.[[14]](#footnote-14)
* The ***Civil Service Bureau (CSB)*** is directly responsible for planning and executing the civil service reform. It is the project’s key partner in the area of civil service development and human resource management.
* The ***Public Service Development Agency (PSDA)*** coordinates government’s efforts to create modern, user-friendly, and accessible public services country-wide, by establishing common standards for public service design, delivery, quality assurance and pricing.
* The ***Data Exchange Agency (DEA)*** is responsible for fostering ICT development and the introduction of e-government in various areas at the national level. Both DEA and PSDA are responsible for the Service Delivery component of the PAR process.

In addition to the above-mentioned partnerships, the PAR project has worked closely with a range of line ministries and public agencies, as well as ministries of the Ajara Autonomous Republic, across different dimensions. A particular role in the project is played by Legal Entities Under Public Law (LEPLs), quasi-governmental agencies operating under profit-making and competitive rules. Other important partners of the project have been civil society organizations which have been supported to engage with the PAR agenda (as will be described further in this report). The project has also closely coordinated with international donors and key external players such as the EU, OECD, USAID, GIZ, Sida, etc.

### Project Approach, Structure and Logic

As mentioned in the project description (section 1.2 of this report), the PAR project was designed to address three of the six priority areas identified in the PAR Roadmap: i) policy development and cooperation; ii) civil service and human resource management; and, iii) service delivery. These three areas have constituted the three pillars of the project which may be summarized as follows.

* ***Policy Development and Cooperation*** – This pillar is intended to support the Government of Georgia in developing the policy making process and enhancing policy planning and coordination by strengthening the capacity of policy units of line ministries. It is also intended to strengthen the role of the Administration of the Government (AoG) in effectively managing and guiding the PAR process. Policy planning, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are expected to be strengthened through creation of unified, government-wide tools to enable AoG holistically track and monitor national level programs.
* ***Civil Service and Human Resource Management*** – This pillar is intended to support the development of an increasingly professional, uniformly trained civil service that enjoys protection from arbitrary decisions. This is expected to be achieved by increasing knowledge and awareness among civil servants about ongoing civil service reform and its implications through interactive trainings, operationalization of a unified civil servants training system, introduction of staff performance appraisal system based on effective international models, development of tools for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and engagement of civil society organizations to provide evidence and practical solutions for enhancement of policy planning, civil service reform and public service delivery.
* ***Service Delivery*** – This pillar is aimed at developing Common Standards and Principles of Public Service Design and Delivery to help the government address the discrepancies in the quality of service delivery between various service provider agencies, but also between the national and local levels. Creation of the common service delivery standards and their subsequent implementation is intended to impact the overall quality of public services and to also have a knock-on positive effect on the level of support to PAR among citizens and civil servants.

During the project’s implementation period, the context around the PAR process has changed, and so has the project’s response to the context (as will be described in the adaptive management section of this report). Although the three main areas of work outlined above have been largely maintained, activities have evolved in specific areas where there have been openings and opportunities for collaboration with national institutions, contributions to the PAR process and impact on institutional change. The specific areas (within the three main pillars outlined above) where the activities have concentrated may be categorized as follows:

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| 1. Policy Making
2. Change Management
3. Civil Service Training
4. Performance Appraisals
5. Alternative Dispute Resolution
 | 1. Emerging Needs
2. Grant Initiatives
3. Service Delivery
4. E-government
5. E-services
 |

These ten areas are shown in Figure 5 below. They are color-coded to show the pillars to which they have contributed. Areas marked in green belong in the “policy making” pillar, those in blue to the “civil service” pillar and those in orange to the “service delivery” pillar. Two areas – emerging needs and grant initiatives – have flexibly contributed to all pillars.

Figure 5: Project Components

The following is a brief description of the focus of the PAR project in each of these ten areas.

1. Policy Making

This component is focused on strengthening the policy making process across the government. Activities in this area are driven by the PAR Roadmap (adopted in 2015 and running till the end of 2020). Another major document that will guide activities in this area is the PAR Action Plan for 2019-2020. At the time of this evaluation, this document had been finalized, but had not been adopted yet. As has been mentioned, the leading organization for this component is AoG and the key unit under AoG is the Policy Planning Unit (PPU). As noted above, PPU is responsible for producing policy making guidelines for government entities and enforcing these guidelines by monitoring the quality of the policy making process.

The PAR project has supported AoG/PPU in three main areas:

* Updating the existing guidelines and regulations on the policy making process (in other words, how policy is developed, monitored and evaluated).
* Organizing training and coaching for government officials on policy analysis and planning.
* Developing a government-wide electronic system for monitoring the implementation of policies across government (officially called “Unified Electronic M&E System”).[[15]](#footnote-15)

In addition to AoG, selected line ministries are involved in this component. The PAR project involves lines ministries in “*policy making*” activities through the “Policy Planning Network”, an informal coordinating mechanism established by AoG with the support of the PAR project to bring together in a more structured fashion policy planning focal points from all involved ministries.

Policy making is not a new area in which the government is receiving support from development partners. Previous support provided by SIGMA (OECD) in 2015 resulted in the formulation of a separate set of guidelines for the policy making and M&E process. However, these guidelines contained inconsistencies, which led to the need for revision (which the focus of the PAR project now). Also, other development partners, such as USAID, have been involved in supporting the policy making process by working directly with selected line ministries on certain aspects of policy analysis and formulation.[[16]](#footnote-16)

1. Change Management

The PAR project was developed around the philosophy of change management, implying that public administration reform is more than a set of technical (legislative, procedural, personnel) adaptations, but an attempt at effectuating change in organizational culture through visionary leadership and practical learning. This is easier said than done. Therefore, the idea behind this component was to support CSB and AoG kick-start the civil service reform and build momentum in the initial stages. The project’s primary focus in this area has been on training line ministries’ HR departments on change management and the development of change management plans.

1. Civil Service Training

The focus of this component is on strengthening the capabilities of the civil service, with a focus on training and skills. Initially, the prevailing idea was to have a centralized training institution for the civil service. More recently, the country’s leadership has opted for a decentralized model where different players inside and outside the public administration provide training for civil servants.

The PAR project has assisted the CSB in developing a “*Decree on Professional Development of Civil Servants*” that lays out the main requirements to be observed by line ministries for the training of civil servants. The decree mandates line ministries to provide their staff with two types of training – mandatory and elective (additional). It stipulates that incoming civil servants should receive basic mandatory training within the first year of joining the administration. Other civil servants should undergo additional (or even basic) training at least once every two years.

CSB has limited training capabilities and provides training only on ethics, which it is reported of doing quite well. It has also started providing training on the new aspects of the Civil Service Law. With the support of GIZ, it has also been providing some basic training for managers in the public sector.[[17]](#footnote-17) Besides these areas, decisions on training needs for civil servants are made by the respective line agencies independently. Most ministries have their own training centers, which with few exceptions, such as the training centers of the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Finance, have weak capacities. These training centers cover the training needs of ministries in areas related to the mandate of the respective institution. But on certain subjects related to the management of the civil service, the ministries require external training. Generally, ministries have a small budget which they can use for external training, but it is typically insufficient to cover their needs.

The key challenge with this training model is that such a decentralized system needs to be harmonized and regulated. Certain standards and criteria need to be in place to ensure that staff of all agencies benefit from training of comparable quality.

In this context, the PAR project has pursued two key objectives:

* Assisting CSB in developing and establishing a system for the training of civil servants, which includes the regulatory framework, a mechanism for the accreditation of training bodies, content requirements for training (syllabi), etc.
* As part of the above-mentioned system, establishing an online training platform for the civil service (called the Unified Training System).

Other development partners are involved in the area of training for the civil service. For example, FAO helped in 2018 the Ministry of Agriculture to conduct a training needs assessment, on the basis of which the ministry organized trainings. CSB was not directly involved in this process. On the other hand, GIZ has supported the CSB in developing an online platform for the delivery of two courses on ethics in the public service. Also, USAID has supported the CSB in the development of its website.

1. *Performance Appraisals*

The Law on Civil Service and related by-laws envisage a decentralized model of performance appraisal and establish a minimal framework of standards and procedures. Thus, line ministries/agencies are tasked with elaborating specific formats and procedures of appraisal, in accordance with their particular needs and organizational context. The Law on Civil Service obliges ministries to carry out staff performance appraisals at least once a year. With the entry of the law into force on July 1st, 2017, last year (2018) was the first full year of its implementation. During 2018, appraisals were conducted twice – mid-year and end of the year. Overall, they seem to have proceeded well, with CSB playing a coordinating and standard-setting role and line ministries making adjustments to the overall policy based on their current state of affairs and needs.

There is significant flexibility in the conduct of appraisals. Each ministry is free to design its own methodology and model based on CSB’s guidance which provides a broad framework (source methodology).[[18]](#footnote-18) As the policy making body, CSB provides broad guidance on the appraisals process, monitors their conduct and summarizes findings across the government. At the ministry level, the appraisal process is managed by the HR departments. Ideally, the appraisals process should be managed by the “permanent secretaries” in the ministries, but since this position has not been created, the next best fit are the HR departments. The Ministry of Economy is most advanced with appraisals, as it has been doing them for about six years. It was reported that only now they are beginning to see the benefits of the exercise. Also, the Ministry of Finance is a quite mature organization with high capacity in conducting appraisals.

Appraisal results are collected at the level of each ministry. Their analysis is done on paper, as no electronic tools exist for the analysis of the information. HR departments prepare a report for the ministry’s leadership and share a summary of results with CSB. Using this information, CSB conducts a basic review of the collected information, but it does not have the capacity and resources to conduct a more thorough analysis.

One of the purposes of the appraisal process is to help agencies identify the training needs of their staff and prepare a training plan. Although the appraisal form contains a section on training needs, which enables an agency to collect better information on training needs, existing training plans of line ministries are reported to be weak and require a lot of improvement.

Training for line ministries on the appraisal process itself has been crucial in the first year of its full implementation. Overall, CSB is responsible for coordinating training on the conduct of the appraisals, but development partners have been active in supporting the training process in coordination with CSB. Besides the PAR project, a number of development partners have provided support in this area and coordination between them has been commendable. GIZ has supported performance appraisals in the Ministry of Finance and the Administration of the Parliament, whereas USAID has supported the conduct of performance appraisals in other institutions.

1. *Alternative Dispute Resolution*

Another direction of the PAR project has been the exploration of potential alternative dispute resolution mechanisms alternative the court system that could be installed in Georgia’s public sector. The need for such a mechanism has become more acute after the first round of performance appraisals because of the need for handling potential disputes in a structured and amicable fashion, rather than through disruptive and costly litigation. This area of work is seen as quite useful by many of the interviewees for this evaluation, given that the judicial system is clogged. However, there seems to be insufficient political will at the leadership level to establish such a system.

1. *Emerging Needs*

The “*emerging needs*” component is a discretionary tool available to the PAR project to support specific issues connected to the larger components of the project. Given the rapidly shifting context and frequent changes in the PAR agenda, the component has proven to be crucial for providing additional flexibility to the project. Overall, activities under this component have been synergetic with the other components of the project.

1. *Grant Initiatives*

The project’s “*grant initiatives*” component has supported the engagement of civil society organizations to provide evidence and practical solutions to enhance policy planning, civil service reform and public service delivery. This component has consisted of two types of activities – research and civic initiatives. Grant initiatives are selected to create bridges of partnership and co-creation between government and non-governmental entities (civil society, think tanks and research institutions) in the area of PAR.

1. *Service Delivery*

The focus of the PAR project in this area is to further institutionalize service provision and ensure that services are sustainable and replicable across agencies that provide services to citizens. The project also aims to increase citizen involvement in using these services online, through improved e-governance platforms. PAR project is the government’s main supporter in this area. Another major player is USAID, which is primarily focused on the decentralization of services at the sub-national level.

1. *E-government*

The focus of this component is on e-training for public officials. The idea is to facilitate the access to training by using electronic channels for its delivery. The key government agency in this area is DEA, whose mandate is focused on e-government and e-services.

1. *E-services*

The focus of this component is the digitalization of the application process for certain services offered by government agencies (through what are called e-services). The services at the center of this work are those that involve documentation – such as birth certificates, property records, passports, etc. The key government agency in this area is DEA. Its role is to digitalize the process through which applications are filed for different services. Although public agencies are mandated to digitalize their services, they often exercise resistance to digitalization, so the process is not always smooth. About 440 services have so far been digitalized and integrated into the “*my.gov.ge*” online platform. These are services provided by both central agencies and municipalities. UNDP’s support in this area has primarily consisted of financial support for DEA and exchanges with international partners (sharing of experiences).

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As can be seen from the above description of activities, PAR is a complex project with many components which correspond to key dimensions of Georgia’s PAR agenda. To understand how this project works it is essential to comprehend how all these different pieces work together. The theory of change presented in Figure 1 in the project description section of this report provides a good understanding of how the PAR project contributes to the strengthening of the performance of the executive. However, it does not show the full picture. This project has contributions that go beyond the executive and the civil service, so its benefits should be further examined in the context of the interaction between the different branches of government and power relations in the state and society.

The framework shown in Figure 6 below provides a more comprehensive picture of how the PAR project in general, and its specific interventions, contribute not only to the capabilities of the executive and the delivery of services, but also to strengthening accountability in the broader public sector. As Figure 6 shows, accountability in the public sector takes various forms. At the highest level, we have the elected representatives (Parliament) holding the executive government accountable. This is called political accountability and is the channel through which citizens hold the government accountable through the representatives they vote for. The executive is also held accountable by independent institutions such as the judiciary, Auditor General, Ombudsman, etc., but also very importantly the media and civil society. This is called horizonal accountability. Also, within the executive the political leadership of the government holds the bureaucracy accountable and vice-versa the bureaucracy holds the political leadership accountable. This is called bureaucratic accountability. The more these two sections of the executive are, the better they are able to hold each other accountable. There is also another type of accountability which is very important and typically referred to as “social accountability”. This is when citizens hold public officials directly accountable. This happens typically at the grassroots level where there is a direct interaction between citizens and public officials. In this relationship, public officials provide citizens with services, and citizens engage with the governance process and demand accountability from the relevant officials.

Figure 6: Public Sector Accountability

**Bureaucratic**

**Accountability**

**Horizontal**

**Accountability**

**Parliament**

**Political Accountability**

**Political Leadership**

**Civil Service**

**Executive**

**Auditor General**

**Judiciary**

**Media & Civil Society**

**Citizens**

Services

**Social Accountability**

Accountability in the public sector is crucial because that is what makes the government and state perform. A lack of accountability generally generates abuses of power and corruption, with a detrimental effect on state performance and service delivery (the two key outcomes of the PAR project and the PAR agenda). Accountability is thus directly linked to a number of key desirable features of the public sector - performance, transparency, legitimacy, democracy, inclusiveness, and so on. So, a major task facing every country is strengthening accountability in the public sector.

In the case of Georgia, accountability is crucial because its governance system hails from a Soviet tradition with a very strong executive. This has been a real concern in Georgia since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the main motivation behind attempts by reformers to strengthen the system of parliamentary democracy that provides a better balance of powers between the executive, legislative, judiciary and other independent institutions. This is the crucial task facing reformers in Georgia and one of the main goals behind the PAR agenda. As can be seen from the figure above, this can be achieved by strengthening all types of accountabilities within the public sector.

How does the PAR project fit into this picture and how does it contribute to Georgia’s reform agenda? As can be seen from Figure 6, project activities directly contribute to the strengthening of *bureaucratic accountability and capability*. The PAR project strengthens bureaucratic accountability by strengthening the independence and capability of the bureaucracy (civil service), which improves its ability to hold the political leadership accountable. The bureaucracy holds the political leadership accountable by ensuring that they do not abuse power and engage in corruption but stay within the confines determined by the law. In this sense, the bureaucracy together with the other branches of government and independent institutions ensures that no one, in spite of their powers, is above the rule of law. Hence, the importance of the independence of the civil service – it is a prerequisite for the integrity of the bureaucracy, which in itself is a necessary condition for a functioning government.

The PAR project also strengthens the capability of the bureaucracy to carry out its primary tasks – provide services to citizens and regulate specific areas of the economy and society. The interaction of the bureaucracy with citizens through service delivery is very important because it constitutes the interface through which “*social accountability*” happens. Citizens are often better able to monitor the quality of services they receive and thus in a better position to hold public officials (the bureaucracy) accountable. Sometimes, when there is an opening available, citizens engage with the government beyond service delivery – this is when they participate in the policy making process through the so-called “participatory policy-making”. This is another form of social accountability because citizens ensure that policy reflects their interests and it not distorted by government officials to benefit special interests. In both cases, social accountability is crucial for the integrity and performance of the public sector. And this is another area where the PAR project provides direct contributions through its activities related to policy making and service delivery.

Albeit to a lesser extent, the PAR project also contributes to “*political accountability*” through its work with the Parliament. This area of work has been more limited, but the project team has intensified cooperation with another UNDP project that is exclusively working with the Parliament on strengthening its role and capabilities (as will be discussed further in this report). Further, the PAR project also contributes to the strengthening of “*horizontal accountability*”. Although the project’s cooperation with the judiciary has been limited, it has played a major role in engaging civil society and the media in the governance process, and the PAR agenda in particular. This has been achieved primarily through the “*grants*” and “*emerging needs*” components of the project. The strengthening of the role of civil society and the media in governance has also been achieved through other UNDP projects that target specifically these constituencies.

As can be seen from this description, the project has many facets and dimensions, interacts with many stakeholders and contributes to quite high and strategic goals. The objectives it seeks to accomplish might be too ambitious. One option could have been to focus the project on a smaller number of areas and create more depth there. However, the participation of many other donors in the PAR process has given the project the opportunity to create depth by combining efforts with other development partners. A good example of this is the joint efforts between the PAR project, USAID and GIZ in support of the performance appraisals conducted by line ministries in 2018. So, being ambitious in scope comes with a condition for the PAR project – it requires very strong coordination with other development partners participating in the PAR agenda. The issue of coordination with development partners will be discussed further in this report.

### Major Challenges and Adaptive Management

Given the highly strategic and political nature of the PAR project, it would be inconceivable to assume that it would proceed without any major challenges. The project’s ultimate goals are linked to changes in public administration that create winners, as well as losers, a change process which is bound to create opposition and resistance. Therefore, it is important to examine in the context of this evaluation the major challenges that the project has encountered and the way it has dealt with them. The following is a brief summary of what turned out to have been the most difficult constraints the project has faced.

* One of the project’s major disrupting factors has been political volatility around the PAR agenda. The primary cause of this have been elections,[[19]](#footnote-19) changes in political leadership of key institutions[[20]](#footnote-20) and government restructurings.[[21]](#footnote-21) The volatile political context, combined with an insufficiently consolidated vision of the PAR agenda by the country’s leadership, has weakened coordination, led to atomization of efforts within the public sector, and slowed down decision-making. Even though government technical staff dealing with PAR have largely remained unchanged and continued to exercise their functions with dedication, their access to top-level decision making has been disrupted due to these changes.
* The PAR process lacks a “whole-of-government” approach, with fragmentation between the various components and ministries. As has been mentioned in the project description section of this report, the government has modified the original PAR approach from a centralized and unified system towards a system with a higher degree of autonomy for ministries and agencies. While there are certain benefits to a decentralized approach, the lack of a unifying vision has led to fragmentation or even hesitation in the way some line ministries and agencies are implementing the reform agenda.
	+ At a broad level, this has reinforced the negative effects of the separation of the Policy Making and Civil Service Reform (CSR) processes, with the former led by AoG, whereas the latter by CSB. While having these two areas being led by different entities is natural, they are interconnected in various ways which makes their close coordination and synchronization crucial.[[22]](#footnote-22) These two processes, however, have moved at different speeds. Certain CSR aspects are now in a fully operational phase, whereas the policy making process is lagging behind.[[23]](#footnote-23)
	+ Another consequence of this fragmented approach is the stall, or even reversal, of certain reforms in areas such as civil servants’ professional development and education, human resource practices, service delivery, role of LEPLs, etc. For example, the situation with LEPLs has been of particular concern to reformers and watchdogs. While civil service reform has moved apace, efforts to regulate the activities of Legal Entities Under Public Law (LEPLs) have stalled.[[24]](#footnote-24) Since LEPL staff are not civil servants, this dichotomy has created pressures on central ministries to reassign staff to LEPLs in order to offset reductions resulting from the reform, which in a way goes against the reform’s intended purpose.
	+ There are also concerns among stakeholders that certain institutions which are key to the PAR process – such as PSDA and DEA, and both of which are LEPLs and subordinated to the Ministry of Justice – are not receiving the right amount of political support due to the lack of legislative clarity regarding the status of LEPLs. As both agencies work to design government-wide policy, their subordination to one particular ministry seems to have hampered coordination with others. This situation has led to slower than expected speed of reform in the “service delivery” component of the PAR agenda. One of the case studies presented in this report and drawn from the experience of this project (Case Study II in Annex VI) discusses in more depth the challenge related to the sub-ordination of PSDA under the Ministry of Justice.
* There are also challenges related to the practical coordination of various PAR-related activities. This was confirmed by OECD/SIGMA Baseline Measurement Report on Policy Planning and Coordination,[[25]](#footnote-25) which placed a particular emphasis on shortcomings in the institutional setup of coordinating institutions, as well as insufficiently institutionalized and weakly consultative policymaking process. A number of stakeholders believe that the coordinating role of the PAR Council has not been as strong as it was at the beginning of the PAR process. Also, the involvement of civil society has overall been limited, and this view was strongly expressed by civil society representatives that were met for this evaluation. There is clearly a need for reenergizing the role of the PAR Council, as well as overall coordination and participation in the reform process.[[26]](#footnote-26)
* Another major structural constraint of the PAR process has been the shortage in human resources dedicated to the PAR process by government entities. This challenge is directly linked to insufficient budgetary resources allocated for PAR.[[27]](#footnote-27) This is unlikely to be addressed in the current political climate of cuts and “small government”. There are also concerns about the insufficient degree to which decisions related to the implementation of PAR, and particularly CSR, are linked to research-based evidence.

In the face of such daunting challenges, the PAR project has been a vital source of reliable support to reform advocates. On top of that, it has also been quite flexible in responding to the emerging challenges and evolving priorities and needs of the PAR reform agenda. The project team, comprised of professional and enthusiastic professionals with intimate knowledge and experience in PAR’s specific areas, has been the main driving force behind the reliability and flexibility of support. But also, the support that UNDP and DFID have given to the project team has been crucial in ensuring such high level of flexibility. Both have operated under understanding that the project’s implementation modalities are subject to adaptation and that flexibility – as long as adaptation falls within broad parameters set for this project - represents one of the project’s key advantages. Examples of adaptive management will be outlined throughout this report, especially in the section on project implementation and achievements. The main areas where adaptation has been crucial are change management and dispute resolution, as well as the emerging needs and grants components which were designed to provide that degree of flexibility. A case study (Case Study I) drawn from the experience of this project through this evaluation and presented in Annex VI of this report illustrates in more detail how critical was the flexibility of the PAR project in triggering larger organizational reform within the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, starting from a simple intervention in support of performance appraisals for civil servants.

The project team has also carefully tracked, monitored and evaluated the situation and PAR-related activities. The project’s annual reports provide a good overview of the situation around PAR and project activities. The “Implementation Context Analysis” reports attached to the annual progress reports are insightful and perhaps one of the best sources of information about the PAR state of affairs in the country. The evaluation of the “*grants*” component of the project and this evaluation represent an effort by the project team to improve the understanding of the situation and take corrective measures as needed. The stock taking conference on the implementation of performance appraisal models in public agencies organized in February 2019 is also a good example of the reflection on the process. Such events could be organized more often. The project team has worked closely with the PAR Council, AoG, CSB, PSDA, DEA and lines minitries, as well as UNDP CO, British Embassy, EU delegation and other development partners.

Going forward, the project team should reflect more effectively in project planning documents changes in the political context and the PAR agenda and the approaches taken in response in terms of how project outputs and outcomes are defined. The project’s results and resources framework could be adjusted to reflect more faithfully the adaptations that the project team has taken in the last couple of years. This will provide clarity and transparency for stakeholders outside the project. The project should also continue to place considerable emphasis on close communication and coordination with the national partners. In addition, it could explore opportunities for expanding support to non-governmental actors, to expand their watchdog and expert capacity.

### Management arrangements

The Project Document provides a detailed description of the role and responsibilities of the Project Board, the quality assurance functions exercised by UNDP through the “Portfolio Manager”, the duties of the Project Manager and project staff and consultants. The organigram provided for the project implementation arrangements is shown in Figure 6 below.

Specifically, the project team was designed to consist of a Project Manager, a Capacity Development Specialist, Public Policy Coordinator, a Finance/Procurement Associate, a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist and a Communications Specialist. An international PAR Policy and Planning Advisor has been engaged as a part-time consultant to provide substantive guidance to the project team, national stakeholders, UNDP and international partners.

The following points related to management arrangements are important to highlight here:

* ***Project Manager***: This position is responsible for the overall coordination and management of the project while ensuring the quality and timeliness of deliverables. It includes the following responsibilities: Close collaboration with GoG counterparts, external advisors and trainers to effectively manage the PAR implementation process; Formulation of capacity development response in consultation and cooperation with the national counterparts; Serving as a resource person and advising on the challenges and solutions in relation to public administration reform; Managing the project component finances according to the approved budget; if necessary, proposing budget revisions; Supervising major procurement of supplies and equipment for the project and related tender documentation; Ensure control on project assets; Develop and maintain excellent relationships will all key partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries; Monitoring and evaluation of the project implementation process/results; Lead the process of identification of relevant expert/consultant/company to effectively undertake planned activities; Support experts/companies in carrying out their activities through supplying them with necessary documents/information to carry their job effectively and efficiently; Ensuring timely and evidence-based reporting; Ensuring effective information flow between the UNDP Project and the UNDP Office; Contribution to further resource mobilization activities; Oversee the work of project component coordinators.

Figure 7: Project’s Management Arrangements



* ***Capacity Development Specialist***: This position was created to provide capacity-building assistance in: 1) Developing and implementing a unified basic and continuous training program for civil servants and 2) Developing the models for senior civil servant and political managers; 3) Working with CSB on developing mediation and dispute settlement mechanisms. However, in the course of project implementation in addition to aforementioned responsibilities, a number of new areas and tasks have been identified. In particular, the Capacity Development Specialist also works on the enhancement of monitoring and evaluation process of policy units and creation of the Unified M&E E-System, supports the implementation of performance appraisals in the civil service, facilitates institutional capacity building of the CSB as well as plans and coordinates CSO grants.
* ***Public Policy Coordinator***: Public Policy Coordinator: This position was created to work with key national agencies responsible for service delivery, such as PSDA and DEA, to implement activities to improve predictability and accessibility of innovative services, develop replicable methodologies and quality control systems, while aiming to improve accessibility of these services to citizens. Although during the course of 2.5 years, a number of new functions have been added to the position, such as working with the AoG on improvement of policy planning and coordination, planning and coordinating emerging needs projects as well as CSO grants, contributing to reporting, monitoring and evaluation and public relations activities and some others.
* ***Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Specialist***: Ensures M&E systems are robust, provide timely and accurate information, and can serve as evidence for advocacy. Supported by CTA, this staff members provides guidance to staff, partners and beneficiaries in participatory monitoring techniques and processes, ensure monitoring data is being submitted and process data into M&E reports. This position also ensures that the processes is fully in compliance DFID and UNDP regulations.
* ***Communications Specialist***: Ensures the communications strategy is developed and supports project staff and target groups in their communication-related tasks. Ensures that the materials and statements produced by the project reinforce the goals and objectives developed in the communications strategy.
* ***Project Admin/Finance Associate***: Responsible for admin, finance, and procurement.
* ***PAR Policy and Planning Advisor (PPA)***: The international Advisor, an expert in field of public administration reform, is tasked with advising the PAR project under the guidance of the UNDP Governance Team Leader concerning the overall coherence and relevance of the assistance provided through the project by regular analysis of the project implementation context. The PPA oversees the methodological consistency of provided international expertise and – in communication with AoG officials - its alignment with the priorities and needs of the national counterparts. The PPA also provides guidance and support to the M&E Specialist in planning and implementing the project monitoring and evaluation mechanism, including through development of the detailed output and outcome indicators. S/he will also suggest strategic and operational adjustments as needed.

UNDP Georgia has provided operational support to the project implementation, including in recruitment, procurement and financing. UNDP Georgia has ensured the project implementation takes place in accordance with the UNDP rules and regulations as stipulated in its Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures.

Overall, the organizational structure of the project is sound and seems to have responded well to the challenges that the project has faced. The project team has received excellent support on administrative matters from the UNDP CO and DFID. As for political support and advocacy – which is crucial given the high-level and strategic nature of the activities of this project – some stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation noted that the project would benefit from more political support from both the donor and UNDP. UNDP management, in particular, can play a much more significant role in advocacy for certain PAR initiatives that the project is promoting (and which are outlined throughout this report).

## Project Implementation and Achievements

This section is focused on the four key dimensions of UNDP evaluations: i) ***relevance*** - the extent to which the project has been relevant to country priorities and needs; ii) ***effectiveness*** - whether the project has been on track in the achievement of desired and planned results; iii) ***efficiency*** - whether the process of achieving results has been efficient; and, iv) ***sustainability*** - the extent to which the benefits of the project are likely to be sustained.[[28]](#footnote-28)

### Relevance

The PAR project is one of the most strategic projects of UNDP in Georgia and the region. From the perspective of national priorities and needs, the assessment of this project’s relevance is pretty straightforward because during this evaluation’s interviews there was unambiguous consensus among stakeholders that the project is very important for the country. The project supports Georgia’s aspirations for accession to the EU and the implementation of the Association Agreement with the EU.[[29]](#footnote-29)

Also, the project’s approach and design, as has already been discussed, has been quite relevant to the country’s needs and conditions. The project’s three-pillar approach to policy planning and coordination, civil service reform and public service delivery, underpinned by stronger non-governmental participation, is highly relevant and so is the quite flexible approach that the project team, UNDP and DFID have taken in implementing this project. The project is also fully aligned with and supports OECD’s Principles of Public Administration (SIGMA).[[30]](#footnote-30) The project is also in line with UNDP’s Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016 – 2020 and supports key goals identified in it.[[31]](#footnote-31)

The relevance of this project can also be seen in the discussion on how it contributes to public sector accountability in the section on “*project approach, structure and logic*”, as well as the theory of change represented in Figure 6.

### Effectiveness

At the current point in the project’s lifetime, an assessment of its ultimate results is premature because the full effects of many activities will take time to play out. Nevertheless, based on what has been done so far, it is possible to provide an overview of the project’s more immediate contributions. This section provides a brief overview of the project’s main achievements for each of the ten activity areas identified in this report’s previous sections.

1. **Policy Making**

The strengthening of the policy making process is one of the key dimensions of PAR agenda and is highlighted in the PAR Roadmap. Further, feedback by OECD/SIGMA on shortfalls in the policy-making process has been crucial for focusing the attention of the government in developing clearer policymaking guidelines and training for relevant staff. This has set the stage for the project’s engagement with this area. The project has been supporting the formulation and use of the policy development handbook, as well as the deployment of the performance tracking, monitoring and evaluation tools by AoG. The project has sought not only to make these processes truly operational and integrated into line-ministry routines, but also to use the generated data and analysis for guiding cabinet-level decisions. The project will continue to be engaged in the training and coaching of AoG staff, offering advice and support to the Head of AoG and Prime Minister, and providing support to line ministries on the policy making process. Overall, the project is well-positioned in this area. It has become the main go-to partner for the AoG and other involved government partners. Based on interviews for this evaluation, AoG and line ministries value the support of UNDP more than that of any other organization.

The project’s activities in the area of policy making may be summarized along the following three directions: *i) Unified guidelines for the policy making process*; *ii) Training and Coaching of Public Officials*; and, *iii) Electronic System*.

*Unified guidelines for the policy making process*

The key purpose of activities in this area has been to support AoG in developing a clear set of guidelines for how policy is formulated, monitored and evaluated in the government. The following are key contributions of the project:

* The project has supported the development of key PAR documents, including the PAR Action Plan 2019-2020. Currently, the project is supporting the development of the PAR Communications Strategy.
* Responding to the decentralized and fragmented system of policy making across government agencies, the project has supported the conduct of needs assessment on policy making practices and capabilities in 11 line-ministries.[[32]](#footnote-32)
* The project has also conducted an analysis of the Policy Documents’ Management System in the government.
* Another area of support is the mapping (inventorization) of existing policy documents across government agencies, as well as policy coordination mechanisms (the so-called “secretariats”).
* The project also supported the drafting of guidelines for Policy Making and Monitoring & Evaluation (completed in August 2018).[[33]](#footnote-33)

Drawing on the draft guidelines formulated with the support of the PAR project, AoG is now finalizing a document titled “*Typical Procedure for Drafting Policy Document*”[[34]](#footnote-34) which contains the guidelines for the policy-making and M&E process. The document will be accompanied by a detailed Handbook providing detailed guidance in the policy making process. The document is pending approval by the government. For the guidelines to be enacted, the document will need to be adopted through a government decree.

*Training and Coaching of Public Officials*

So far, 173 line-ministry staff have received basic training (as well as certificates) on policy analysis. For 2019, the PAR project had planned to train an additional 50 officials at the central level and 50 officials in the Ajara Autonomous Republic. A total of 9 training modules have been prepared and are now available to government staff. Further training and coaching will be organized after the approval of guidelines by the government. The project team is expecting quick approval of the guidelines, because this is holding off the delivery of coaching/training which has to be preceded by the approval of guidelines.

*Electronic System*

Despite the proliferation of public sector policies and strategies, the government has not established a systematic approach for monitoring their implementation. Also, there are no procedures or systems in place for the evaluation or impact assessment of these strategies or action plans. To address this challenge, AoG has conceived the development of an electronic system that will be used to store and analyze information on related indicators. The quality of the indicators of existing strategies and policies is assessed as quite weak by the AoG, so this system will help strengthen the quality of policy documents. The system is expected to provide the government with the necessary data that will be used to monitor and evaluate public policies and programmes.

The main activity supported by the PAR project in this area has been the conduct of a survey and the formulation of a Concept Paper for the development of the electronic system (Unified System for Developing, Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluating Policy). This is a preliminary step in the process of establishing the system. AoG seems to have developed some ideas about the electronic system, but the interviews for this evaluation seemed to suggest that more clarity is needed on the details, especially when it comes to roles and responsibilities and the process through which information will be collected, inputted, retrieved and reported.

*Looking Forward*

The following are some key issues identified in the course of the evaluation which require the attention of the project team:

* ***Citizen Engagement*** - Citizen engagement in the policy making process has not been a central part of the discussion so far and requires more attention. The PAR project can play a crucial role in elevating this matter in the PAR agenda. There have been already some discussions within the government and between the government and the PAR project and some other partners on this matter. AoG is reported to have added a sub-chapter on the topic of citizen engagement to the draft policy handbook. This, according to them, has been one of the reasons why its adoption has been postponed. However, there is a need for more clarity on how citizen engagement will be actually accomplished and the support that development partners may offer in the process (USAID has already started supporting this process).
* ***Sub-national Level*** – The sub-national level seems to have been largely left out of the policy making component. In theory, AoG guidelines apply to sub-national governments, but AoG does not have capacities and resources to focus on the sub-national level (enforce policy making guidelines at the sub-national level). Furthermore, capacity at the local level seems to be quite weak. Some donors are trying to support policy making at the local level, but this support is limited and not directed by the central government. The PAR project team is aware of this challenge and had made efforts to involve sub-national governments where feasible. However, the overall lack of clarity about the decentralization process and future powers of local governments hampers efforts to create a unified approach among development partners.
* ***Role of Parliament*** – In general, the Parliament plays a crucial role in the policy making process. After all, the Parliament is responsible for reviewing and approving all major policies. However, the Parliament has not been too closely involved in the PAR process, and, in particular, in the policy making component. The process is led and driven by the executive. It remains to be seen what role the Parliament will have in the policy making guidelines. The PAR project has recently made attempts in creating space for the Parliament’s engagement with the policy making process through the assistance of another UNDP project that supports directly the Parliament. This is a good start, but more efforts will be required by the project and development partners to ensure that there is consistency and coherence in the roles of the executive and the Parliament in the process.
* ***Public Financial Management*** – When it comes to policy, what eventually matters is the funding that is provided for its implementation. That is why it is essential to link the policy making process to the budgeting process, and more broadly to the PFM process which is undergoing reform in Georgia. This seems to not have been addressed adequately so far. Costing of policies has been included in the draft guidelines and training supported by the project, but costing is only one small part of the budgeting and PFM process. Georgia’s reforms in the area of public financial management are supported by a number of development partners, including the World Bank, IMF, GIZ, Netherlands, Sida, DFID, etc.[[35]](#footnote-35) There is a need for further support in linking the policy making process to the process around the preparation and management of the consolidated budget. There is also a need for stronger donor coordination in this area to ensure that development partners supporting the public financial management system (i.e. WB and IMF) are aware of developments in the PAR area and participating in the process.
* ***Integrated Electronic System*** – A system for tracking SDG indicators (developed by DEA with support from the UNDP Governance Reform Fund project) is already in its demo version. The question now is whether it is possible to integrate the planned policy-making electronic system with the existing SDG system, given that both are envisioned to focus on monitoring key development indicators. This will make a lot of sense given that the SDGs are supposed to underpin the national policy framework. Also, the focus of the PAR project should not only be on the building of the system, but also on the process through which it will be operated. The process for its operation may turn out to be even more complicated than building the system. This involves the definition of roles and responsibilities for the main actors that will have access to the system and the system’s operating procedures. Also, the open interface for the public is another dimension of the project that is crucial and requires more attention. What level of access will various audiences have to the system? How will this access be ensured in a transparent way? How will the system facilitate participatory governance and will aid in strengthening social accountability in the country? These are crucial questions that need to be addressed in a systematic fashion and the PAR project can play a crucial supporting role in the process.
* ***Sustainability of Training*** – The issue of the sustainability of training applies to all training activities by the project. But in this particular component of the project there has been (and will be) a significant amount of training. The key question is – *How can this training be made sustainable, so that it is continued to be delivered by government institutions long after the PAR project has ended?* To some extent this is related to staff incentives and rotation (therefore HR practices), but beyond that there is room for strengthening the training capabilities of local institutions so that they are not perpetually reliant on external training. AoG has already given this issue some thought. During the provision of training, it identified potential trainers from government organizations who could subsequently deliver the training. But to put this training on a more sustainable footing, AoG needs to provide existing training providers (government training centers or universities) with the training modules that were prepared under this component. In particular, the role of universities in the delivery if training needs to be more carefully analyzed, this will require further discussions and decisions which the PAR project can facilitate. Also, AoG is now discussing with CSB the option of placing the policy training in the list of obligatory trainings for public servants defined in the Law on Civil Service. Public officials for which this training will be obligatory - those that work on policy issues - will need to be defined. This will make policy making training more sustainable.
1. **Change Management**

The focus of activities in this component has been on supporting CSB in communicating about the Civil Service Reform using the Human Resources Managers Forum created by the CSB, training civil servants and focusing on HR departments and managers as key "agents for change" within the civil service. Given PAR’s shift to a more de-centralized system than originally foreseen, the project has shifted its approach to working with individual line ministries and agencies – primarily those interested in upgrading their HR management practices – to create change management approach at the ministerial level. The HR Forum has become the change management instrument through which substantive discussions have taken place on emerging problems and needs related to the implementation of the new Law on Civil Service and its by-laws, while CSB has provided either immediate and hands on assistance, or – if the issue was of a generalized nature - developed guidebooks and instructions for human resource staff.

The project has provided direct support in the following areas:

* Establishment of the change management team (CMT) and organization of change management trainings for the CMT.
* Development of a National Change Management Plan and individual CMTs for nine ministries.
* Development of a Communication Strategy and Action Plan, accompanying the National CMT.
* Training of civil servants, NGOs and media on change management and the novelties of the Law on Civil Service and relevant by-laws.

At the practical level, the National Change Management Plan did not receive official approval from the government, which has limited its usefulness. Based on interviews with stakeholders, although initially a good idea, the usefulness of this component seems to have been somehow constrained by the fact that when activities under this component started, the civil service law was already in place. Some interviewees indicated that this reduced its usefulness and that support in this area would have been more effective if provided earlier. However, the project team was capable to shift the focus of activities to assist the government in the implementation of the law.

It should also be noted that the process around this exercise would have benefited from a sharper vision from the CSB. Interviewees indicated that there was some degree of improvisation in the process and that the change management process would have required stronger ownership. They also pointed out that while there was an initial push for Deputy Ministers to lead this process, eventually it was the Human Resource departments that owned it. If Deputy Ministers had taken a stronger role in this process, the exercise would have probably been more effective.

It is also not fully clear what was the change that resulted from this process. Some of the plans that were developed through the project became irrelevant shortly after they were completed as a result of the reshuffling of the ministries that coincided with their completion. Further, although line ministries are reported to have followed through most of the actions identified in the management plans,[[36]](#footnote-36) change seems to have been primarily driven by legal requirements for the civil service reform developed by the CSB. In response to this, the PAR project supported CSB in the development of unified guidelines to enable organizations to implement changes in a uniform fashion. The PAR project, however, could have helped relevant partners articulate ultimate benefits more effectively on the basis of sound evidence. Overall, the general perception of interviewees was that whatever benefits have resulted from this exercise seem to have been short-term, especially in light of government reshuffling and lack of high-level leadership.

There are also questions about the sustainability of this exercise. As a result of changes of leadership within the government, the vision guiding change management has changed. While initially intended as a continuous process, it is now largely perceived as a one-off activity. This is the main reason why the PAR project chose to proceed with support for individual ministries, while working with CSB on reactivating the communication component of the CSR which was a key component of the Change Management Plan. A key issue is whether it is possible to institutionalize further this type of exercise. Some attempts to institutionalize this practice were made through the support of HR Forum, which serves as a platform for the discussion of key challenges, novelties and achievements in the civil service reform. But still, this platform needs to be institutionalized further if it is to play a major role in the civil service reform agenda.

The project has also facilitated discussions around the idea of establishing the permanent position of the “Senior Civil Servant” in the civil service as a potential solution to many of the challenges in the civil service. This issue has been under discussion for many years in the country, but with little progress achieved. This idea does not seem to have sufficient political support at the moment. Given this situation, the PAR project is now working on producing relevant evidence around the usefulness of this function.

1. **Civil Service Training**

With the adoption of the by-law “*On Assessment of Professional Capacities, Professional Development Standards and Rules for Professional Development of the Career Civil Servants*”, the package of by-laws associated with the Civil Service Law came fully into force. According to the decree, the accreditation of basic training programs is conducted by the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (EQE), operating as a Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL) under the Ministry of Education and Science. This represents a significant modification to the government’s original idea to create a unified training delivery system and to position CSB as the heart of a centralized/semi-centralized professional development system. CSB’s role will be limited to monitoring the implementation of the decree (by analyzing data from public agencies), development of training needs assessment tools, creation of a program for administrating processes (with data on programs/beneficiaries) and participation in the accreditation of basic programs led by EQE.

In response to these changes in circumstances, the project team had to make significant adjustments to activities in this area. The following are the main achievements thus far:

* The project has assisted CSB in finalizing the draft Decree on Professional Development of Civil Servants and development of associated standards.
* It has also supported EQE on the adoption of the package of policy documents to set up the Training Accreditation Council (TAC), Experts’ Corps and the organizational unit within EQE and the preparation work to pilot the training program accreditation process and hold the first meeting of the TAC.
* The project has supported CSB in the development of a training needs assessment system by developing a Handbook on Professional Needs Assessment, relevant forms and a list of useful resources.
* The project has also supported meetings of the so-called "Learning Forum", where private and public training providers usually meet. CSB chairs the meetings.

As a result of the project’s support, the foundations of the training infrastructure for the civil service have been put in place. CSB’s *Decree on Professional Development of Civil Servants* is now in place and the Training Accreditation Council has been established. Also, the Handbook on Professional Needs Assessment have been developed.

The project has prepared and is now in the process of delivering training to four target groups: i) TAC members; ii) Experts’ Corps; iii) EQE representatives involved in training accreditation processes; and, iv) private and public training providers. It is also planning to help CSB raise awareness among public and private training providers by developing two handbooks on the accreditation process. And, more importantly, it will support CSB in developing the online platform for the delivery of civil service training.

Going forward, one of the most important tasks facing CSB in this area is the conceptualization of the business model for the online training platform (Unified Training System for Civil Servants) and the PAR project is well positioned to support this. Some of the key issues that need to be clarified in the process are:

* What platform will be used?
* Who will provide the content?
* Who will manage the platform?

In the process, CSB should decide whether for the delivery of the training it wants to use existing platforms or a brand new one. Existing platforms identified during this evaluation include:

* Online platform created by DEA based on open-source MOODLE. DEA is already using this platform for the delivery of two training modules it has created. DEA is open to having the CSB use this platform for the delivery of online training.
* Online platform created by CSB with the support of GIZ for the delivery of GIZ-supported training modules on ethics in the public service.

The ultimate decision is for CSB to make, but it will be important that the PAR project and other partners provide the right advice in making sure that the “wheel does not get reinvented in the process” and resources are used efficiently. If any of the existing systems is assessed to be good enough for the purpose, then it would be more rational to use it, rather than create a new one.

1. **Performance Appraisals**

The PAR project has provided crucial support to the introduction of performance appraisals in selected ministries.[[37]](#footnote-37) It should be noted that this has been done in close cooperation with other development partners, especially USAID and GIZ. The project has provided support in the following areas:

* Conducted an analysis of the needs of selected ministries on the appraisals process.
* Developed appraisals models (methodology), including draft standard templates.
* Trained line managers and representatives of human resource units of selected ministries on how to conduct performance appraisal.
* Provided coaching and methodological support in the development of related forms and other documents. The following are key examples:
	+ A handbook of performance appraisal system in civil service;
	+ A guide on self-evaluation techniques;
	+ A perception study conducted among civil servants;
	+ A video tutorial on goals and major stages of the performance appraisal process.
* Supported CSB in conducting an awareness raising campaign on performance appraisals among civil servants.

Case Study I, presented in Annex VI of this report, illustrates how support by the PAR project for the conduct of performance appraisals in the Ministry of Economy and Finance of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara triggered larger organizational reform within the Ministry.

At the moment, however, it is perhaps too early to talk about the real effects of appraisals in terms of institutional and behavioural change in the public sector, as the effective use of performance appraisals requires a cultural shift that takes time to settle. In the first rounds that have taken place so far, managers were reported to have been wary of using low scores, with many giving scores of 4 or 3 (highest scores) to their supervisees. Time and repeated iterations are needed before the appraisals really become an instrument of accountability and have a real impact on the behaviour of public officials.

CSB and the line ministries face a number of challenges and tasks in this area, which the PAR project is well positioned to help with in cooperation with the other development partners.

* It was reported that in some cases managers and employees did not know how to complete the appraisal forms, despite the training provided. Also, professional development (training) needs were not always effectively linked to the appraisal. Overall, relevant stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation thought that ministries are not able yet to conduct this exercise on their own and that support is required for a least one more year (2019). Public officials will need further support to be able to participate in the process more effectively. Also, further awareness raising on performance appraisals among civil servants will be required and the PAR project is expected to continue to provide support in this area.
* One idea that was expressed in the meetings for this evaluation was that appraisals could be linked to salary levels, so that public officials have an incentive to perform better. This evaluation does not make a recommendation on whether appraisals should be linked to salary levels, as there are clearly advantages and disadvantages to that. What it does recommend though is that the project could contribute by taking a close look at this issue in Georgia’s context by assessing the advantages and disadvantages in a systematic way.
* Another important matter is how the training that has been provided to government agencies needs to be further institutionalized. The ideal solution would be for CSB to provide this training to government agencies, but CSB does not have that capacity yet. At the moment, training support has to come from development partners. CSB has plans to include this component in the basic mandatory training program for line managers and the project is well positioned to support this idea. Another important issue is to link performance appraisals more closely to the training needs of individual public officials and government agencies.
* Despite the use of unrealistic scores by managers noted above, the data that has been generated in the first rounds of the performance appraisals exercise represents a trove of vital information about the public sector which needs to be aggregated and analyzed more effectively. CSB has a vision and some ideas for the overall processing of the information generated through the appraisals, but it does not have the analytical tool that would enable it to do so. Again, the PAR project is well positioned to support CSB convert its vision into a practical work plan and establish a sound system. As a first step, it will be important to understand what data is available and in what form, and subsequently how this data can be analyzed and utilized most effectively.
* In the medium to long run, one needs to also look at the broader results that emanate from the appraisals process to understand their ultimate effect – behavioural and institutional changes they have generated in the public sector. A cost-benefit analysis of this tool will be necessary at some point in time to establish their usefulness for the Georgian context and identify options for improvement. The PAR project could support CSB in exploring this matter and planning for it.
1. **Alternative Dispute Resolution**

The ongoing civil service reform is inevitably bound to create tensions in relations between managers and employees. This is particularly the case with regards to performance appraisals. Considering this eventuality, reform advocates have made repeated attempts to introduce forms of dispute resolution in the civil service, but progress has been limited because of weak political commitment. Prospects for progress in this area seem limited for the time being. The prevailing mood in the government seems to proceed on this matter cautiously by further studying possibilities and other countries’ experience.

Given the constraints posed by the lack of readiness by CSB and line ministries to undertake major steps in this direction, the PAR project has adapted its approach to focus on prevention of conflicts in the civil service before they escalate into actual disputes. In this process, the project has engaged CSB in proactively researching current practices, models, challenges and gaps in the resolution of workplace disputes in the public agencies.

The project has supported the conduct of a study that looks into international practices in public service Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and provides recommendations on enhancing ADR system in Georgia.[[38]](#footnote-38) The project has also conducted an in-depth analysis of existing ADR practices in nine government agencies, funded through the research grants competition. The possibility of the creation of a mediation team and the establishment of a consulting service for civil servants has been explored with CSB and discussions are ongoing. To support this conversation, the project has assisted with the design, preparation and delivery of trainings on “difficult conversations” with an associated training of trainer programme for CSB trainers. It has also supported the creation of a so called "risk register" which enables HR departments to track and preempt potential disputes.

Going forward, the project should continue its support for CSB in the establishment of a mediation team and consulting service for civil servants. Also, the “difficult conversations” trainings seem to be well appreciated and should be extended to new departments and ministries.

1. **Emerging Needs**

The “emerging needs” component is the project’s most flexible part that has enabled the team to respond to emerging needs closely aligned with project objectives. This has proven useful because through these initiatives the project has been able to quickly fill gaps that could not have been identified at the beginning of the project when major interventions were designed. Combined with the project capability to quickly adapt to changing circumstances (adaptive management – described in the previous sections), this component has enabled the project to deliver quick results in key priority areas.

Through this component, the project has supported initiatives in priority areas related to PAR, such as service delivery, civil service reform and policy planning and coordination. Five initiatives have been supported so far (Box 4 below provides a summary of each initiative). Two initiatives have contributed to the improvement of e-governance, by enhancing the quality, usage and security of electronic services offered to the citizens and commercial entities via different channels, including the “my.gov.ge” e-government portal. Another initiative has supported CSB to enhance the level of awareness of civil servants about civil service reform and increase their readiness to embrace changes associated with it. A fourth initiative has supported policy planning of the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara through improved organizational structure and HR practices. A fifth initiative has supported the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture to improve pest management services by applying behavioural insights. This initiative has complemented activities carried out by Innovations and Reforms Centre (IRC), under the project’s grant component described in the following section.

Box 4: List of Emerging Needs Initiatives Supported by the Project

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| The following five initiatives have been supported under this component:1. ***Increasing the Accessibility of the Remote (Electronic) Services at the Registry of Commercial and Non-Commercial Legal Entities within the National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR).***
	1. Digitalized 20 services for commercial and non-commercial services
	2. Established a new electronic service – Electronic Board Meeting, helping entities with non-resident board members to manage their affairs more efficiently.
2. ***Support to the Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) towards the enhancement of Information Security and Trust Service Provision Capacities.***
	* The project strengthened the security of the internal systems of the PSDA by ensuring compliance with the Law “On Information Security” and the applicable international standards (ISO/ETSI). The project was launched in the beginning of December 2017 and all activities were finalized by October 2018. The project identified information security drawbacks in PSDA critical business processes and offered 74 corrective recommendations. The PSDA has gained a full picture of existing information security risks, sorted by severity level, along with risk treatment plans. This will help improve efficiency by allocating limited human and financial resources to mitigating the most critical risks first. The Information Security Steering Committee has developed 2-year plan for the implementation of the elaborated recommendations.
3. ***Capacity Building in Civil Service and Anti-Corruption Area***.
	* The project provided support to the CSB for the activities targeting:
4. civil servants on central and local levels;
5. NGOs, media and administration of Courts,
6. young researchers and students.
	* In addition, the CSB elaborated five detailed guidelines for civil servants on: reorganization, disciplinary proceedings, gifts, institutional arrangements and the conflict of interest in public organizations. In November 2018, the CSB announced an open call for receiving new ideas and insights on the further development of civil service from students and civil servants. The winners were awarded at the “Civil Servant’s Day” on December 19, 2018, with the project’s support. In addition, the project team continues to support the CSB in organizing staff meetings and discussions with civil servants from all line ministries. Topics for discussion are being fine-tuned based on online surveys.
7. ***Supporting the Ministry of Finance and Economy of Ajara to Improve Organizational Structure, Policy Planning and HR Practices***.
	* The project has supported the Ministry of Finance and Economy of Ajara Autonomous Republic (MoFEA) in evaluating and re-defining its mandate through an internal, collaborative process. By providing targeted and custom-made assistance to MoFEA, the project intends to affect change in the quality of services that the Government of the Autonomous Republic provides to its residents, as well as contribute to the creation of a professional civil service countrywide.
	* Functional and Stakeholder Analyses has been conducted, and recommendations developed/co-designed on updating organisational structure, functional and job descriptions of the MoFEA, and the reallocation/reassignment of staff. Coaching and advice on structuring the development of the three-year Strategy of the MoFEA has been delivered and specific high-level action plan has been elaborated. The relevant staff has been trained to both participate in policy planning process and to allow for translation of the Ministry-wide strategy into department-level plans, complete with indicators of success and modalities of their evaluation. The project will end in February 2019.
8. ***Support the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia in improving its pest management service through applying a behavioural science approach***.
	* The project has complemented activities carried out by Innovations and Reforms Centre (IRC) as part of the CSO Grants program.

New Initiatives1. PSDA – Supporting PSDA In Further Development of Electronic Services Through Introduction of e-Apostille
2. Consultation and Coaching Support to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport of Ajara Autonomous Republic
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It is important to note that these initiatives have complemented activities in other project components. For example, the digitalization of services under the first initiative has contributed to the e-service component of the project. The initiative with CSB has contributed to increasing awareness about the civil service reform and has reactivated the project’s change management approach by focusing on CSB’s guiding role through active communication and training. The initiative supporting the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture to improve pest management services has complemented activities carried out by the project under the grant component (described in the following section). The expected assistance to PSDA in implementing the electronic apostille will contribute to the service delivery component through further development of e-services, adhering to “digital by default” principle of service delivery.

Going forward, the project should continue to use these initiatives to respond to emerging needs and create entry points for more substantial engagement through other components. One idea for the project to explore it to use these initiatives to also test high-risk innovative solutions to PAR-related challenges, rather than replicating or reinforcing activities undertaken through the other components. The use of Behavioral Insights in designing or re-designing more user-centered services by the Ministry of Environment and Agriculture is one example of this innovative approach that is recommended. The project could also explore the possibility of using these initiatives for more engagement with local governments. The initiative with the Ajara government is an example of this, but cooperation could be extended to lower levels of government.

1. **Grant Initiatives**

One of the project components is dedicated to encouraging and supporting initiatives from civil society that contribute to the implementation of PAR. Under this component, the project has provided grants for initiatives which are either purely of a research nature or involve civil society actors. Three cycles of research and civic initiatives had been launched by the time of this evaluation. Box 5 below shows the types of initiatives that have been supported during these three cycles.

Box 5: Grant Initiatives Supported by the Project

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| Three cycles of public policy research and CSO grant competitions have been launched:* First Cycle supported two CSO projects and two research papers. The papers were:
	+ “Training and Development of Civil Servants in the Georgian Public Sector”: The paper outlines the vision of training providers and beneficiaries (civil servants) on establishment of professional development model in the public sector (centralized, decentralized or semi-centralized) based on the requirements of the Georgian Law on Civil Service. The paper was shared with the CSB and should further inform the process of creating professional development model for public servants.
	+ “Challenges of the Georgian Bureaucratic System in the Context of Public Administration Reform”: The paper studies the state of the Georgian state bureaucracy and its administrative expenses in 2011-2016 aiming to go beyond simplifications regarding the “size of bureaucracy” and define shortfalls and challenges.
* Second Cycle supported the following initiatives:
	+ “Social Agents as Street Level Policy Makers: Research and Recommendations” by the Centre for Study of Social Practices (CSSP) aims to develop a policy document studying everyday work strategies of social agents working in Targeted Social Assistance Program and developing recommendations for the Social Service Agency about possible ways of efficiency improvements. The innovative project takes the principal-agent framework for analysing the evidence and practices of service provision. It aims at studying the gap in the quality social services provision as opposed to other public services which was made apparent during the baseline study.
	+ “Management and Effective Resolution of Workplace Disputes within the Public Agencies of Georgia” by New Vision University (NVU), which aims to examine current practices, models, challenges and gaps in the resolution of workplace disputes in the public agencies of Georgia. The outputs of this study are intended to provide evidence-based support to the discussion on alternative dispute resolution under output indicator 2.4.
	+ In addition, a CSO grant has been awarded to the Innovations and Reforms Centre (IRC) to continue its work on “Introduction of Quality Public Service Delivery Practices in the Local Government Context”. The project builds on the promising results of the previous initiative and aims at enhancement of the predictability, quality and consistency of services of the Tbilisi Architecture Service (TAS) operating under the Tbilisi Municipality, which is tasked with providing building and renovation permits. The service is in high demand, but has been overwhelmed by the number of requests and often criticized by both citizens and civil society for the lack of transparency and predictability in decision-making. The project thus directly contributes to the Output 3 by enhancing public service delivery in the area of high public interest and high impact. Working at the local government level was also considered important, since many initiatives at this stage of PAR focus on central government.
* Third Cycle supported four civic initiatives and four research proposals:
	+ “Supporting the Establishment of a Professional Development System in Georgia”, Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI): backing up and expanding upon the effort of the project consultants in basic training, this project improves the project’s awareness and capacity to propose change in civil servants’ professional development.
	+ “Implementing Public Service Design and Delivery Standards in the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture of Georgia”, Innovations and Reforms Center (IRC): this initiative supports the Ministry’s National Food Agency in improving its pest (specifically, Stink Bug) management service through applying behavioural approach. World leader in applying behavioural science to improve public policy and services, Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), is currently co-working with the IRC to effectively reach the project goals.
	+ “Building the bridge between communities and local governments”, Iare Pekhit (Walk): aims to improve citizen participation on the municipal level, to facilitate tangible improvements in the city’s living environment. Intends to capitalize on the momentum generated by the election of the new city government and council in Tbilisi.
	+ “Public-Civil Cooperation for Improved Service Delivery”, Gori Information Centre: addresses the gap in inclusive consultation and public service design in Gori municipality.
	+ Research Grants awarded:
		- “The Potential of Block-chain Technologies in Responding to the Challenges in Public Services and Public Administration in Georgia”, by Innovations and Reforms Centre (IRC) offers a critical assessment of the utility and effectiveness of the block-chain technology – promoted by the government - in service delivery.
		- “Provision of Public Services and Effectiveness of Ethnic Minority Engagement in Georgia”, by BTKK Policy Research Centre examined policy documents and practices to assess the extent to which the public service delivery is tailored to the needs of ethnic minorities, and to what extent the practices can be improved to augment their engagement in public policy process.
		- “Improving State Services Supporting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities in Georgia”, by Disability Research Centre (DRC) of the Tbilisi State University explored the effectiveness of the current policies for employment of the persons with disabilities, and developed recommendations for further improving the targeted services, based on UK experience.
		- In addition, the implementation of the initiatives selected under the second cycle of public policy research and CSO grants competition (“Introduction of Quality Public Service Delivery Practices in the Local Government Context” by IRC), is still ongoing. The project builds on the promising results of the previous initiative and aims at enhancement of the predictability, quality and consistency of services of the Tbilisi Architecture Service (TAS) operating under the Tbilisi Municipality, which is tasked with providing building and renovation permits.
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At the end of 2018, the PAR project conducted an independent evaluation of the grant initiatives supported by the project. At the time of that evaluation, 16 initiatives had been supported through “*Civic Initiatives and Research*” grants, out of which eight had been completed and were thus covered in the evaluation report (5 research and 3 civic initiatives). The following are the titles of the eight completed initiatives:

* Research Initiatives
	1. Research report on the Provision of Public Services and Effectiveness of Ethnic Minorities (Azerbaijani) Engagement in Georgia by the *BTKK Policy Research Group*;
	2. Research report on the Training and Development of Civil Servants in Georgian Public Sector by the *Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)*;
	3. Research report on the Challenges of Georgian Bureaucratic Systems in the context of Public Administration Reform by the *Institute for Development for Freedom of Information (IDFI)*;
	4. Research report on the Management and Effective Resolution of Workplaces Disputes within the Public Agencies of Georgia by *New Vision University (NVU)*;
	5. Research report on the study Between the State and the Poor-Social Agents’ Views on Targeted Social Assistance Program by the *Center for Study for Social Practices (CSSP)*.
* Civic Initiatives
	1. Civic Initiative grant on Civil Society Support to Public Administration Reforms (PAR) in Georgia by the *Civil Development Agency (CiDA)*;
	2. Civic Initiative grant on Increasing the Effectiveness of Local Governance Using Innovative Mechanisms to Inform the Local Public by the *Young Scientist Club (YSC) Ozurgeti*;
	3. Civic Initiative grant on Day Care Standards for People with Disabilities by the *Union- Child, Family and Society (CFS)*.

Using evidence collected from interviews with meetings with beneficiaries, the evaluation found that the research and civic initiatives had helped both to expand the field of knowledge on the impact of the ongoing PAR reform, and to expand the scope of PAR efforts both geographically (engaging several municipal authorities) and thematically.

* The study on the *Provision of Public Services and Effectiveness of Ethnic Minorities* provided the Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) and Public Service Hall (PSH) with specific and realistic recommendations on how to improve the delivery of services for minorities.[[39]](#footnote-39)
* GIPA’s study on the *Training and Development of Civil Servants in Georgian Public Sector* proposed a semi-centralized training delivery model as the most relevant and acceptable for the enhancement of personnel qualification in the public service.[[40]](#footnote-40)
* The study of *Challenges of Georgian Bureaucratic Systems in the context of PAR* focused on the government’s recruitment and remuneration policies and provided recommendations for more efficient, rational and transparent management of resources. Its findings gained large media coverage, with journalists asking government questions about expenditures, which strengthens overall accountability in the public sector. The “grants” evaluation report noted that some of the recommendations presented in the study, such as restrictions on bonuses and salary supplements, were reflected in policy changes.[[41]](#footnote-41)
* The study on *Management and Effective Resolution of Workplace Disputes within Public Agencies* presented recommendations to overcome or mitigate challenges related to workplace disputes in public agencies. Following up on the study’s recommendations, CSB is considering organizing a ToT for managers and HR personnel aimed at improving skills and techniques for managing difficult conversations in the workplace and creating a risk register that would allow HR departments to identify and register potential workplace conflicts and risks and take relevant precautions.
* The study “*Between the State and Poor-Social Agents’ Views on Targeted Social Assistance Program*” provided recommendations on how to improve the role of social agents in the targeted social transfer programme through measures such as the restoration of the discretion of social agents, consideration of regional peculiarities, conduct of information campaigns to increase the awareness of the role of social agents, increasing monthly wages, solving transportation problems and conducting research and evaluation of social assistance programmes on a regular basis. The “grants” evaluation report noted that although the study presented interesting findings based on the perspectives of social agents, the recommendation section lacked expertise in the field and practical value for the governmental agencies.
* The “*Civil Society Support to PAR*” initiative provided training for members of the Regional Civil Society Network (R-CSN) to improve their knowledge of and involvement with PAR implementation and monitoring (primarily the Civil Service Reform). The initiative also supported the organization of public discussions aimed at increasing the general public’s level of awareness about PAR implementation and monitoring.
* The initiative “*Increase the Effectiveness of Local Governance Using Innovative Mechanisms to Inform the Local Public*” improved the transparency and accountability of local governments in Lanchkhuti and Chokhatauri municipalities through the utilization of modern technologies and innovative approaches. The initiative introduced two innovative platforms: i) an SMS system for municipalities to send sms texts to local subscribers about forthcoming municipal assembly meetings; and, ii) broadcasting local assembly meetings live through Facebook live-streams.
* The initiative “*Day Care Standards for People with Disabilities*” supported a comprehensive needs assessment of standards and reimbursement rates for daycare services. The review led to the revision of standards to include tailoring of day care services to age and category of persons with disabilities and increased the financial support for daycare centers.

To see how these initiatives are connected with and contribute to the main directions of the PAR project, Table 3 below shows a mapping of each of the eight initiatives to the PAR thematic areas covered by the PAR project. The table shows that overall each initiative has complemented and enriched key areas covered by the larger project. In general, the research initiatives have contributed to very specific topics, whereas the civic initiatives have had wider scope and focused on civil society (Regional Civil Society Network), local governments (Lanchkhuti and Chokhatauri) or sectors (day care).

Table 3: Mapping of Initiatives by Thematic Area

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Initiative** | **Thematic Area** |
| 1. Research report on the Provision of Public Services and Effectiveness of Ethnic Minorities (Azerbaijani) Engagement in Georgia by the *BTKK Policy Research Group*;
 | **Service Delivery** |
| 1. Research report on the Training and Development of Civil Servants in Georgian Public Sector by the *Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)*;
 | **Civil Service Training** |
| 1. Research report on the Challenges of Georgian Bureaucratic Systems in the context of Public Administration Reform by the *Institute for Development for Freedom of Information (IDFI)*;
 | **Change Management** |
| 1. Research report on the Management and Effective Resolution of Workplaces Disputes within the Public Agencies of Georgia by *New Vision University (NVU)*;
 | **Dispute Resolution** |
| 1. Research report on the study Between the State and the Poor - Social Agents’ Views on Targeted Social Assistance Program by the *Center for Study for Social Practices (CSSP)*.
 | **Service Delivery, Change Management** |
| 1. Civic Initiative grant on Civil Society Support to Public Administration Reforms (PAR) in Georgia by the *Civil Development Agency (CiDA)*;
 | **Broader PAR Agenda (with focus on civil society engagement with Civil Service Reform)** |
| 1. Civic Initiative grant on Increasing the Effectiveness of Local Governance Using Innovative Mechanisms to Inform the Local Public by the *Young Scientist Club (YSC) Ozurgeti*;
 | **Broader PAR Agenda (with focus on local governance)** |
| 1. Civic Initiative grant on Day Care Standards for People with Disabilities by the *Union- Child, Family and Society (CFS)*.
 | **Service Delivery** |

Going forward, the project could consider the following measures in this area:

* The research commissioned by the project through this component has generated many recommendations. However, it is not clear in all cases to what extent these recommendations have been taken into account and have been implemented. The project should develop a system for tracking the implementation of the recommendations derived from these studies.
* The evaluation report of the “grant initiatives” noted that some beneficiaries expressed the need for more practical studies.[[42]](#footnote-42) In response to this, the project should strengthen the criteria for the practicality of the commissioned studies.
* Also, to strengthen the quality of commissioned studies, the project should consider establishing a system of peer reviewing of the research it is funding.
* Although specific research papers are turned into publications available through various sources including the websites of UNDP and the grantee, the totality of the research conducted under this component could be compiled at the end of the project into a publication that captures systematically all the knowledge and evidence that has been generated.
1. **Service Delivery**

The PAR project is one of the main supporters of the service delivery component of the PAR agenda. Its goal has been to further institutionalize the significant achievements and innovations Georgia has made in service provision and ensure that they are sustainable and replicable across government agencies that provide services to citizens. The project has assisted the Ministry of Justice, and its two subordinated agencies PSDA and DEA, in laying out strong foundations for the creation of unified standards for public service delivery.

One of the challenges in this area is that the definition of “*services*” among stakeholders is not clear. Based on interviews for this evaluation, it seems that the predominant understanding of *service* in this context is that of any transaction between a government agency and citizens that involves the provision of documentation (i.e. birth certificate, passport, property record, etc.). The project team, though, correctly takes a broader view of the definition and sees services not only restricted to government-to-citizens, but also government-to-government and government-to-business.

The project has supported the development of the Public Service Delivery Baseline Assessment report which provides an in-depth overview of the public service delivery practices in Georgia based on design, delivery, pricing and quality assurance dimensions, and highlights best practices and existing gaps. The project also helped with the elaboration of a “Case Study Report on Public Service Delivery Monitoring and New Service Development Processes in Service Delivery Agencies in Georgia” which focuses on public service quality monitoring practices and business processes related to creating new services as practiced in the Georgian public service.

The project has also supported the Public Service Hall (PSH)[[43]](#footnote-43) to implement the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – Total Quality Management tool which provides a fairly simple, free, and easy-to-use framework suitable for the self-assessment of public sector organizations and improvement of performance.[[44]](#footnote-44) The project has also supported the development of a CAF concept, outlining a vision on how to transfer the knowledge and skills generated through this project to other public agencies.

One of the most crucial contributions of the project has been the preparation of the “Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery” (PSDD). Developed in line with the SIGMA standards, this document offers a set of common guiding principles and standards on the design, delivery, pricing and quality assurance of public services. PSDD has not been adopted by the government yet. Stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation expected the adoption to happen in the summer of 2019. A number of legislative amendments will be required before the implementation of PSDD starts. The PAR project will support the study of existing legislation to reveal any gaps for implementation of PSDD and will suggest necessary amendments.

There are multiple areas in relation to PSDD where the PAR project is uniquely positioned to provide support. The following are some key ones that emerged in conversations with interviewees for this evaluation:

* The PSDD document foresees compliance mechanisms – i.e. punishments for deviations from the policy. Once it is approved, a special unit will need to be created with responsibilities to monitor its enforcement. This function cannot be carried out by PSDA. The unit has to be placed somewhere else in the government. This is not clear in the policy document and needs to be defined further.[[45]](#footnote-45)
* A number of legislative amendments will be required before the implementation of PSDD starts. The PAR project has agreed with PSDA the conduct of a study of existing legislation, which will reveal any gaps for implementation of PSDD and suggest necessary amendments. The approval of the Ministry of Justice for this activity is still pending.
* The costing and pricing of public services is one of the main directions of the PSDD. The overall objective is to produce guidance for public agencies to link the price of services more accurately to the actual costs associated with activities required for their delivery, thereby offering customers a fair pricing scheme. The PAR project is planning to provide support in developing methodologies on this, accompanied with the necessary training.
* PSDA also expects support in the piloting of training for staff on the policy. A crucial area that will require support is service design. For example, the policy guidelines require that services are designed with the involvement of the user, using “*design thinking*” methodologies and so on. This will require the elaboration of toolkits and procedures for government agencies, followed by training on how to use these toolkits and procedures.

PSDA is also contemplating the creation of a “public service index” which will be made available to the citizens through the internet. This is expected to incentivize better quality service through the introduction of competition on the basis of an index. The idea of the concept is included in the Policy Document, but it is not clear how it will work. This requires some conceptual work at this stage, which is supported by USAID's GGI project. Also, training will be essential in this area, but the question of sustainability is crucial. PSDA envisages making the training available through the Ministry of Justice’s training center. Another idea is to make the training modules available to other training agencies. The area of training under this component is complex and not clearly defined yet, so it would benefit from a careful assessment by the PAR project before deciding on how to support it.

The PAR project could also advocate with the government in a sensitive way for a re-examination of the mandate of PSDA. Case Study 2 presented in Annex VI of this report highlights some of the challenges that PSDA faces in its cording role in the area of service delivery, in light of its subordination to the Ministry of Justice. Based on discussions with stakeholders, it appears that there is a need for a discussion of this issue.

1. **E-government**

In the area of e-government, the PAR project has worked closely with the Data Exchange Agency (DEA) to facilitate the production of knowledge products and toolkits related to electronic governance and cyber security. With project support, DEA has customized the MOODLE platform for the delivery of training courses and has uploaded it into the DEA server. Two training modules have been developed and have been placed in the platform for use by public sector personnel – one on Basic Cyber Security and another on E-Government. More than 70 civil servants (both DEA current employees and designated representatives from relevant public entities) have been trained on design and development of e-services and information systems packages and cyber security.

The project has supported DEA to develop a concept document and relevant training material on usage of technical solutions that ensure access to an Open Data Portal, the transparency and accountability tool. Also, support has been provided on the development of a document entitled “E-Georgia – Decades of Successful Transition”, showcasing Georgia’s successes in this area. The project has also supported the preparation of the e-Governance Competence Centre’s webpage. Services of Competency Centre have been shared with United Nations University (UNU) eGov Unit in Policy Driven Electronic Governance, which will further distribute information to interested parties.

The project’s work in this area has experienced some delays caused by the protracted procurement procedures for various activities undertaken by DEA (e.g. organization of trainings and workshops, procurement of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software licenses) and difficulties in the recruitment of qualified IT professionals.

Going forward, a key issue that requires attention in this area is the matter of the training platform. The platform is related to a number of areas of the project’s work – both on e-governance and civil service reform. The fundamental questions facing the stakeholders are - Who will use the platform and who will provide its content? Would CSB be interested in using this platform for its own training? Can there be on integrated electronic platform for government training? In other words, can there be a one-stop-shop for training which different agencies could use to place their material? Who could be the owner of such a platform? And, who would operate it? Ultimately, whoever will have the authority to operate the platform will need to assign relevant staff for its maintenance and operation. These are questions that will require a great deal of deliberation and thinking, and the PAR project is well positioned to facilitate the process in the coming months.

1. **E-services**

The project’s main contribution in this area has been to support DEA in converting government services into an electronic format which can be delivered via the unified government portal of electronic services (*my.gov.ge*), which serves as the central government portal. The conversion of services into a digital format ensures easy accessibility and an opportunity for more effective feedback from citizens. As a result of the placement of more digital government services, the e-service portal has seen rapidly increasing rates of users. According to project data, its annual usage rate increased from less than 5,000 in 2012, to more than 120,000 in 2018. Most frequently used services are related to correspondence with state organizations, private property and customs formalities.

With project support, DEA has integrated into the “my.gov.ge” online platform the following 66 services: 21 services of the National Agency of Public Registry, 23 services of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, 14 services of the Land Transport Agency, 2 services of the “Produce in Georgia” project, 5 services of the State Property Agency, and 1 service of the Business Ombudsman institution have been integrated and launched on renewed unified portal of electronic services (*my.gov.ge*). The target of 50 services digitally available on the my.gov.ge has been exceeded by 16 services. DEA has also developed a package of legislative amendments, imposing a legal obligation on public agencies to make their services also available in electronic format. The adoption of these amendments is expected in the spring of 2019.

DEA is also working to ensure the incorporation of user feedback mechanisms into my.gov.ge. The document with relevant feedback mechanism functionality is ready and a user feedback mechanism is now being integrated into my.gov.ge, for citizens to be able to communicate with relevant agencies on services they have received. DEA has worked to increase public awareness on online platforms, by establishing information corners countrywide, at 13 Public Service Halls located in the large cities and by training the personnel of 50 Community Centers operating throughout Georgia, so that the latter can consult citizens how to use services offered through the online platforms.

The major challenge in this area has been the lack of qualified IT professionals in the labour market and heightened competition from the private sector which impedes timely recruitment of IT personnel and which leads to delayed implementation of project activities. DEA’s obligation to comply with Georgian national procurement legislation results in protracted procedures and thus hampers timely accomplishment of tasks by government partners. To remedy this situation the project initiated a no-cost extension of the agreement with the DEA by prolonging the implementation period by three months to ensure the completion of activities and achievement of results without compromising the quality.

### Efficiency

This section provides an assessment of the project’s efficiency by focusing on a number of parameters closely associated with efficient project management. These parameters are categorized into the following categories: i) budget execution rates; ii) cost structure; iii) synergies with other UNDP projects; and, iv) synergies with the activities of other development partners.

Budget Execution Rates

Budget execution rates are an indicator of project efficiencies because inefficient projects usually have delays in expenditure which results in higher amounts of spending occurring at accelerated rates closer to project end dates. This typically leads to hurried decisions and hastened implementation which is rarely efficient.

As shown in Table 4, by the end of 2018 about 55% of the project budget had been spent. This rate of expenditure in three years out of a five-year budget seems adequate. The budgeted amount for 2019 is about USD 1.5 m, which is roughly the same as the amount that was spent in 2018. The project team estimates that by the end of 2019 the project will have spent 80% of all funds.

Table 4: Project Financial Summary



Table 5 below shows the project’s execution rates by year based on planned expenditures in the project document. The following are some key observations on the project’s budget execution that may be derived from the table.

* Execution was weak in the first year (65%), but in the subsequent two years execution rates have hovered at about 90%, which is an indication of good execution. The average execution rate at the end of 2018 was 87%.
* Outputs 1 and 2 had slow execution rates in 2016. Execution recovered for Output 1 in 2017 and for Output 2 in 2018. Overall execution for the three years has been above 100% for outputs 1 and 2, and about 75% for Output 3.
* The table also shows the evolution of spending, with Output 2 seeing a substantial increase in the amount of funds spent in years 2 and 3 of implementation. This output has been by far the largest in terms of spending.
* Spending on project management and M&E has made up about 20% of total spending during the three-year period. It should be noted that project staff have played a substantive role in the project, in addition to administrative tasks.

Table 5: Project Budget Execution by Year



Cost Structure

Another indicator of project efficiencies is the composition of expenditures. In particular, administrative costs are an important factor to examine because unusually high administrative costs are a sign of inefficient management. Table 6 (below) shows the proportion of expenditure by category for each year. As mentioned above, administrative costs have made up 17% of total expenditure, but it should be noted that project staff have played substantive technical roles in the project, given their experience and skills in the subject areas. Table 6 also shows that the amount of money spent on grants constitutes about 34% of total project expenditure.

Table 6: Project Cost Structure by Year



Synergies with other UNDP Projects

Another dimension of efficiency is the extent to which the PAR project has been synergetic with other interventions in support of the PAR agenda. These are two types of interventions – relevant activities of other UNDP projects and PAR-related activities of other development partners. The chart on “Public Sector Accountability” shown in section 3.1.2. of this report and reproduced below in Figure 8 is useful for assessing how the PAR project fits the broader context of technical assistance by development partners, including UNDP, for the PAR agenda. The chart helps us map out the other interventions that have taken place in this area.

As far as UNDP activities are concerned, the Country Office has built a comprehensive and well-rounded governance programme, with interventions that cover key aspects of the public sector – capacity of the Parliament, executive, local governments and civil society, access to justice, gender equality, human rights, etc. The UNDP projects most relevant to the PAR project are the Governance Reform Fund (GRF) project, the Parliamentary Strengthening project, the Media Monitoring project, the project supporting local governance (Decentralization and Good Governance) and the project improving regional development (Fostering Local and Regional Development). The UN joint programmes on Access to Justice and Gender Equality also have some relevance to the PAR project. Also, UNDP’s ENPARD project is relevant to PAR as it works with the same ministries both centrally (Ministry of Environment Protection and Rural Development) and locally (ministries in Ajara Autonomous Republic).

Figure 8: Public Sector Accountability

**Bureaucratic**

**Accountability**

**Horizontal**

**Accountability**

**Parliament**

**Political Accountability**

**Political Leadership**

**Civil Service**

**Executive**

**Auditor General**

**Judiciary**

**Civil Society & Media**

**Citizens**

Services

**Social Accountability**

Through its support to Parliament project, UNDP has contributed to the strengthening of “political accountability” by enhancing the capabilities of the Parliament in its main function of holding the executive government accountable. UNDP has assisted the Parliament in its efforts to implement institutional reforms, promote legislative openness, effectively represent the needs and views of the citizens, streamline law-making processes and enhance governmental control.[[46]](#footnote-46) UNDP has also supported independent institutions such as the judiciary, media and civil society to hold the government accountable.[[47]](#footnote-47) While work with the judiciary has been limited to the engagement with the Legal Aid Service, support for the media and civil society has been more substantive. UNDP’s engagement with the media has taken place primarily in the context of media monitoring during elections.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Through its decentralization project, UNDP has supported decentralization and good governance at the local level by enhancing the capacities of local governments and empowering citizens from all social and economic backgrounds – women, men, youth, ethnic minorities and vulnerable people. The project on regional and local development has assisted with systemic reforms of local and regional institutions, citizen engagement in decision-making and creation of an enabling environment for local economic growth.[[49]](#footnote-49)

Overall, UNDP interventions have had many facets and dimensions, have interacted with many stakeholders and have contributed to strategic goals. In their entirety, these interventions have provided an important contribution to the strengthening of the system of checks and balances in the country’s governance system and the government’s capabilities to exercise its functions.

The PAR project fits well into this mosaic. Through its engagement with the executive level of government, it has contributed to the strengthening of the independence of the bureaucracy (civil service), its capability to deliver quality services to citizens and its ability to hold the political leadership accountable (within the confines of the law). It has also directly contributed to improvements in the delivery of services to citizens and strengthening of citizen engagement with the governance process, making citizens more capable of holding the government accountable. Another contribution has been the support for civil society, strengthening its ability to hold government institutions accountable. All these project interventions have dovetailed with the other UNDP activities aimed at strengthening the system of checks and balances in the country’s governance system.

The PAR project team has made efforts to cooperate with the other UNDP projects, especially the GRF project, the Parliamentary project and the project supporting local governance. Links with the GRF are the closest because PAR was born out of the GRF project. The PAR project was initiated under the Sida-funded Governance Reform Fund (GRF) project. After one year, it emerged as a separate project funded by the UK. During that period, GRF and PAR had only one joint board meeting together, after which PAR continued on its own path. The main reason for the separation which occurred in May 2017 was the fact that PAR was too big to manage under the GRF. There are some clear distinctions, though, between PAR and GRF. GRF is more focused on building the institutional capacities of various government organizations. It is a quite flexible project that does not have a strict direction. It covers all areas of public administration and governance, including areas such as environmental governance. Its work is primarily driven by the demand from various government organizations. PAR has a more specific focus, targeting the implementation of key aspects of the PAR Roadmap. The “emerging needs” component of PAR is more similar to GRF, in that it has the flexibility to accommodate demands coming from various government and civil society organizations. PAR builds on the ongoing GRF initiatives by expanding GRF’s scope with targeted interventions related to the PAR agenda based on jointly identified needs.

Some good examples of cooperation between the PAR and GRF projects are the sharing of three staff members, including the M&E expert, joint coordination meetings and joint or synergetic activities. As another example, the project on local governance has supported the conduct of performance appraisals in some municipalities, relying on the methodology developed initially by USAID. Also, the PAR project team has strengthened cooperation with the Parliamentary project and is now seeking to involve the Parliament more closely in the PAR process.

While the degree of cooperation between these projects has been improving, the question is whether there is room for stronger synergies between them. Given that the PAR project has by design limited exposure to the Parliament and the sub-national level, the potential for further synergies and collaboration seems significant. As has been pointed out in this report, the Parliament and local governments have a crucial role to play in PAR. In this context, there is room for further integration of these projects. There are different models for achieving this integration, and it will also be largely contingent on the preferences of the respective donors. But in principle, closer integration is possible even within the existing constraints.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Synergies with the activities of other development partners

PAR is an area where many organizations are providing support. Development partners seem to have faced two choices when deciding how to engage with the PAR process. One option would have been deep engagement in specific areas, where each partner becomes specialized and creates depth. Alternatively, partners could broadly cover similar areas, but carefully divide labour so that there are no duplications. The latter is what has happened in Georgia. Most development partners (EU, USAID, UNDP/UK, and GIZ) cover largely similar areas, but the effort seems to be well-coordinated, so no major overlaps were identified (with few exceptions discussed in this report).

Donor coordination in the PAR area seems to be more effective than in most other areas of development assistance in the country. From the government side, donor coordination is led by two structures – the PAR Council which provides high-level coordination through quarterly meetings and AoG’s Donor Coordination unit which provides coordination on more specific technical issues. There are challenges with donor coordination, however. PAR Council meetings tend to be formalistic and focused on sharing of information. Working Groups, which are designed to focus on thematic issues, are not working effectively. The Donor Coordination unit has an important role for the organization of deeper thematic meetings, but this is not happening as necessary because the unit is largely understaffed. To remedy the situation described above, donors organize their own informal meetings. They are both regular (once every quarter) and ad-hoc when major events take place – for example, when an EU team is in town and makes a presentation to interested parties, or when a UNDP mission in on town and has to share some findings.

Interviews for this evaluation identified good practices of coordination and collaboration on the ground. For example, the provision of the training on performance appraisals by UNDP/DFID, GIZ and USAID was well coordinated, with these organizations using the same methodology and effectively reading from the same page. In another example, the methodological support that the PAR project has provided to AoG has built on previous foundations laid in this area by USAID and EU. Also, the PAR project has coordinated well with USAID on the division of labour when it comes to support for the CSB on training for the civil service (this is under discussion – the two partners are in the process of identifying specific areas of involvement).

Going forward, it will be essential for the PAR project to maintain coordination with development partners. The PAR project team needs to ensure that there will be close coordination especially with the newly started EU project in this area. The EU is a significant player and anchors the PAR agenda to the association process, so the potential for synergies between its new project and the PAR project is considerable.

The PAR project could also contribute to donor coordination more proactively, especially by undertaking joint activities with other development partners more often. The whole PAR area would benefit from a systematic review of what has been achieved, what is happening and in which direction the different pieces of work are going. The review could also map out all the various donor interventions in support of the PAR agenda, including interventions in related areas such as public financial management. This is something that would greatly contribute to donor coordination. The project team has been discussing this idea, but such a review should ideally be supported jointly by all involved donors.

### Sustainability

The sustainability of project outcomes may be assessed more adequately at the end of the project, when all activities have been completed. However, from what has been achieved so far, there are many positive factors that contribute to sustainability. The most important of these are the strong national ownership and leadership demonstrated by national institutions, the support that the UNDP CO and DFID have provided to the project, and the close coordination of project activities with national counterparts – starting from planning, specification of technical requirements, development or installation of components, all the way to system maintenance and staff training.

The project team has made the PAR process more inclusive by intensively engaging civil society initiatives in the reform implementation. The project has sought to mitigate the risks of insufficient political commitment to PAR, shortage in knowledge and capacity related to public administration, and weaknesses in policy consultation, by further expanding partnerships with civil society organizations – advocacy groups, think tanks and educational institutions. Civil society inputs have been incorporated in PAR, providing research, designing policy and offering practical solutions in the context of civil service reform and service delivery.

While a number of measures such as the ones above provide positive contributions, there are also a number of risks and challenges that threaten the sustainability of project outcomes. The most important of these risk factors and challenges have already been discussed in the “project implementation” section. To strengthen the likelihood of sustainability, the project team and stakeholders need to pay greater attention to these factors in the remainder of this project’s lifetime.

### Cross-cutting Issues

Gender Equality

Women play an important role in the PAR project. A significant part of the project team consists of women, all highly capable and professional individuals, highly versed on the topics of the PAR agenda. However, the review of project-related documents conducted in the course of this evaluation shows that the design, conduct and reporting of project activities will benefit from a stronger focus on gender equality. There have certainly been contributions towards gender mainstreaming in the design and implementation of certain interventions, but overall the gender perspective could have been more prominent and results shown in a more gender-disaggregated fashion. The component on the civil service in particular has a lot of potential for integrating gender concerns.

The evaluation of the grant component found that gender related indicators and criteria had been more or less reflected in the majority of the research initiatives, but gender had not been a primary focus of the initiatives. Gender has been considered mainly while designing research methodology and reflected as criteria for selecting and recruiting participants for the studies to explore different perspectives, experiences and attitudes by gender. However, some reports did not provide information and analysis from gender perspective. Gender-specific aspects have been considered to some extent during the implementation phase of the civic initiative projects. Mostly, gender was considered to ensure the attendance and participation of both, female and male beneficiaries in various project activities.

This is an area that has been lately receiving greater attention by the project team, but which will require sustained input. Given the political nature of this project, roles and power within decision making need to be assessed from the gender perspective. Also, project related data (including on things such as beneficiaries, participants, etc.) could be collected and reported more systematically on gender-disaggregated basis.

Sustainable Development Goals

With regards to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the PAR project directly contributes to the targets related to SDG 16 under Georgia’s national SDG framework (which was developed with direct support by the UN Country Team and UNDP through Governance Reform Fund (GRF) project). The specific indicators to which the PAR project directly contributes are the following:

* 16.5.1: Number of persons who paid a bribe to a public official by 2030
* 16.5.2.a. Anti-corruption activities implemented
* 16.6.1.a Voice and Accountability Index 2022: higher than baseline index
* 16.6.1.b Government Effectiveness Index 2022: higher than baseline index
* 16.3.1.c Regulatory Quality Index 2022: higher than baseline index
* 16.6.1.d Rule of Law Index 2022: higher than baseline index
* 16.6.1.e Control of Corruption Index 2022: higher than baseline index
* 16.6.1.f Level of professionalism, independence and credibility of the civil service enhanced
* 16.6.2 By 2020, Customer Satisfaction Index is formulated and public service delivery is measured via such index;
* By 2030, service delivery index is improved by 15 % (compared to 2020)
* 16.6.2.1. Access to electronic public services ensured
* 16.7.1 Number of Civil Servants (age, sex, persons with disabilities, local self- governments, judiciary)
* 16.7.1.c Proportion of women in decision-making positions
* 16.7.2: Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group
* 16.7.2.a Youth have opportunities and relevant skills to participate in decision-making process

As can be seen from the above list, project contributions to the achievement of SDGs are very specific, tangible and significant. Additionally, through its support to AoG on the establishment of the “*unified electronic system*” for public sector policies and programmes (described in the earlier sections of this report), UNDP will be indirectly contributing to the SDG process because the SDGs are inseparable from the Monitoring and Evaluation framework of national policies and programmes. This contribution will benefit progress towards SDGs, not just SDG 16.

However, there is room for strengthening work in relation to SDGs. As mentioned earlier, the project has an opportunity to contribute more directly to the SDG process by exploring opportunities for integrating the SDG monitoring system that AoG is seeking to establish with the “*unified electronic system*”. Further, the SDGs could receive more explicit recognition in project documentation and activities. Given the important role they play in the UNDP programme and the government’s commitment to implement them, the project could seek to embed the results of its work and the broader PAR agenda into Georgia’s SDG framework.

# LESSONS LEARNED

As has already been mentioned several times, this entire project has been a learning experience, but certain specific lessons identified from interviews with project stakeholders can be highlighted more prominently.

***Lesson 1:***

One major lesson that can be drawn from the experience of this project is the importance of flexibility in a project of such a strategic nature. Given the modification of the government’s original vision of PAR from a centralized and unified system towards a considerably higher degree of autonomy for the line ministries/agencies, the project’s adjustment of its response was crucial for the relevance of its interventions. Since the coordinating institutions (AoG and CSB) have relinquished some elements of their centralizing role, the project has reached out directly to the line ministries to effect change in implementation of the new law and regulations on civil service, while building the projects awareness of the different approaches, and ensuring synchronization of the ongoing changes (for example in human resources management). This flexibility in the project’s response was made possible thanks also to the flexibility shown by the donor (DFID).

***Lesson 2:***

It is important to recognize that PAR is a long-term process that requires patience and perseverance. Policy change is one result, but a lot of work has to take place at the level of mentality which takes much longer. So, ultimate results will take time to play out through a process of iteration. Given the complexity of the effort and the multitude of development partners involved, the whole enterprise also requires very good coordination among development partners and between development partners and national institutions.

***Lesson 3:***

As profiled in the evaluation report of the “Research Grant Initiatives”,[[51]](#footnote-51) the Case of Lanchkhuti and Chokhatauri Municipalities is an outstanding example of how international funding and local efforts combined with innovation and modern technologies can make a difference in public administration praxis on local government level. Key characteristics of this case include the establishment and institutionalization of two major innovative platforms such as 1) the Introduction of SMS system enabling to send sms text messages to local subscribers about the upcoming Municipal Assembly meetings and 2) the broadcasting of Assembly meetings live through Facebook live-stream.

# CONCLUSIONS

Albeit quite ambitious, the PAR project is a well-managed project that is valued by all relevant partners. The project is run by a team which is competent, professional, committed and well versed with the issues covered by the project. They have established excellent relations with the government and development partners. The project team has worked in close collaboration with national stakeholders and has regularly engaged other international partners to discuss ongoing efforts and plan future interventions.

Also, the organizational structure of the project is sound and seems to respond well to the challenges that the project has faced. The project team is receiving adequate support on management matters from the UNDP CO. It should also be noted that the donor (DFID) has been very committed to and engaged with the project and has shown a good degree of flexibility which has allowed the project to adapt to the rapidly changing context around PAR in Georgia.

In the area of policy making, the project has assisted the AoG in assessing the policy making practices in line ministries and developing key guidelines for the policymaking process. This has led to training of core personnel dedicated to this task both within AoG and in line ministries and agencies. These efforts have laid the foundations for the development of performance tracking and monitoring tools and procedures. Going forward, the project should ensure that support in this area is driven by the goal of creating an effective policy making process, grounded in analysis and evidence and well-harmonized across government agencies.

In the area of civil service reform, the project has supported the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) in implementing the new, decentralized system of civil service training. With project support, the CSB has improved the civil servants’ understanding of the reform process and their support for change and improved communication on CSR with NGO, media and youth representatives. CSB was also supported in the provision of guidance and advice for the implementation of the staff appraisal procedures in the line ministries. The Human Resources Forum, established by the CSB with project support, has become a vehicle for channeling the procedural changes that are foreseen by the new regulatory framework into the daily practice of line ministries and agencies. The project has also created an opening for the development of an Alternative Dispute Resolution system in the civil service and has contributed to more active engagement of civil society through research and policy advice. In this area, the project should remain focused on the goal of establishing a support system that strengthens the competence and independence of the civil service, while at the same time creating the right incentives for a collaborative and collegial relationship between the political leadership and civil servants in state bodies.

In the area of service delivery, the project has supported the elaboration of the Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery (PSDD) which, when adopted, will provide a uniform basis for service delivery across all government departments. With the document’s adoption pending, key agencies have started to gradually align their practices to its provisions. The Competency Centre on e-Governance was established to provide a knowledge database both nationally and internationally to those agencies interested in using cutting edge experience in adapting government services. In the meantime, citizen engagement in e-governance platforms, and their ability to provide feedback for their further improvement has been strengthened. The project’s focus in this area should remain on improving the quality of public services and strengthening the engagement of citizens in the delivery process.

Overall, the project has provided important contributions to Georgia’s PAR process. While the establishment of an effective, efficient and transparent public administration system, underpinned by an independent, modern and competent civil service, remains work in progress, the activities of the PAR project have provided reformers with crucial tools which are necessary for maintaining the pace of reform and achieving gradual results towards established goals. The pace of the PAR reform in the coming months and years will depend on many factors, most importantly the commitment of the political leadership and a favourable external situation, but the PAR project is well-positioned to provide impetus to the process and the necessary tools to reformers. It will also be essential that the international assistance to the process, which includes the PAR project, is well-coordinated, synchronized and pointing in the same direction.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation makes the following set of recommendations which are derived from the analysis presented in the previous sections of this report.

|  |
| --- |
| **Recommendation 1****Policy Making** |
| In the area of policy making, the project should focus on strengthening the system for the monitoring and evaluation of policies and the engagement of citizens, Parliament and local governments in the policy making process. The project should also promote stronger links between the policy making and public financial management processes and improved coordination among development partners in this area.* ***Policy M&E System*** – The project should support AoG and line ministries to define in clear terms the parameters of the policy-making M&E system. This is complex work that will require a systematic assessment of what is feasible and what are the best options for Georgia. The following are some key aspects that the project should focus on:
	+ The establishment of the electronic M&E system will be an important step of the process, but the critical problem of the implementation of these policies and strategies will remain. The question is how to strengthen implementation through M&E and other actions to be identified? This needs to be further thought through and incorporated in the project approach.
	+ The project should assist AoG to consider options for integrating the electronic policy M&E system with the electronic SDG system developed by DEA. It seems cumbersome to have two parallel systems playing similar functions in the country.
	+ Also, the focus of the PAR project should not only be on the building of the electronic policy M&E system, but also on the process on the basis of which it will be operated. Defining roles, responsibilities and operating procedures should be a crucial part of the process.
	+ Also, the system’s open interface for the public is another crucial dimension that should be the focus of the project.
* ***Citizen Engagement*** – The issue of citizen engagement in the policy making process is being discussed, but requires clarity on how it will be actually accomplished. Here the project could play a greater role, if not directly, through coordination, advice and advocacy. There are many options for how to proceed with this, but a first step could perhaps be a quick review of current practices and options for engagement, cognizant of the role of development partners such as USAID and others in this area.
* ***Parliament*** – UNDP and the project team should reassess the project’s role in supporting the involvement of the Parliament in the policy making process and see how AoG could be supported in giving Parliament more attention in the process. The steps that have been made towards involvement of the Parliament with the support of UNDP’s parliamentary project are encouraging, but a more direct engagement of the project with the Parliament will strengthen the process.
* ***Sub-national Level*** – The project should also assess the application of policy guidelines to the sub-national level. This evaluation does not provide a clear recommendation on whether to engage with the sub-national level in this area, but it does recommend that the position of the sub-national level in the context of policy making is taken into account and assessed appropriately before making a well-founded decision in one direction or the other.
* ***Public Financial Management*** – No links between these activities and the Public Financial Management system seem to have been identified yet. Given that financing is key to the implementation of policies, it is crucial that the project support AoG in exploring options for linking the policy making process to the country’s public financial management system. The project could also play a more important role in donor coordination in this area by enabling development partners such as the World Bank and IMF to become more involved with the PAR process.
 |
| **Recommendation 2****Change Management** |
| * The project should articulate in clear terms the benefits of the change management process, especially cultural changes, and whether there is any usefulness in pursuing any activities related to this component in the future. If a decision is made to do anything in this area, it should be designed in a well thought out process and should be linked to other reform processes in the public sector, such as the PFM reform. Further, the change management approach should be further institutionalized through the Human Resource forum.
* On the issue of the “Senior Civil Servant”, what seems feasible for the project at this point is to work with the CSB and government on exploring different options and help them figure out what makes more sense for Georgia’s context. Any steps taken in this direction should be gradual and being cognizant of the political and cultural context. The important thing at this stage will be to encourage a discussion of the different options.
 |
| **Recommendation 3****Civil Service Training** |
| * The project should encourage and support CSB needs to think through the business model for the online training platform (Unified Training System for Civil Servants). This is more than just the technical aspects of the system and includes the process, roles and responsibilities through which the system will be operated.
* The project should advocate for a decision by CSB on whether existing platforms will be used for the delivery of the training, or a new platform will have to be created from scratch. The ultimate decision is for CSB to make, but it will be important that the project (alongside other partners) provides the right advice in making sure that the “wheel does not get reinvented in the process” and resources are used efficiently. If any of the existing systems is assessed to be good enough for the purpose, then then project should advocate for its use, rather than the creation of a new one.
 |
| **Recommendation 4****Performance Appraisals** |
| * It seems that line ministries are still not able to conduct appraisals on their own. Support seems necessary for at least one more year, so the project should plan for that accordingly.
* One idea that has been discussed in the context of PAR is that in the future appraisals should be linked salary levels, so that employees have an incentive to perform better. This evaluation does not make a recommendation on whether appraisals should be linked to salary levels, as there are clearly advantages and disadvantages to that. What it does recommend though is that the project take a close look at this issue by assessing the advantages and disadvantages in a more systematic way. The results of the assessment should be shared and discussed with all relevant stakeholders.
* Further awareness raising on performance appraisals among civil servants is required and the project should continue to provide support in this area.
* There is also a need to institutionalize training on performance appraisals and make it more sustainable. At the moment, training support has to come from development partners. The ideal solution is for CSB to provide this training to government agencies, but CSB does not have that capacity yet. The project should work with the CSB on identifying options for building that capacity.
* The project should also support CSB and line ministries to link performance appraisals more closely to the training needs of individual public officials and government agencies.
* The project should further support CSB in developing an analytical tool for the aggregation and analysis of the data generated by the performance appraisals. As a first step, it will be important to understand what data is available and in what form, and subsequently how this data can be analyzed and utilized most effectively. In the medium to long run, CSB should have the ability to analyze the broader results that emanate from the appraisals process and understand their ultimate effect – behavioural and institutional changes they have generated in the public sector. A cost-benefit analysis of performance appraisals will be necessary at some point in time to establish their usefulness for the Georgian context and identify options for improvement.
 |
| **Recommendation 5****Alternative Dispute Resolution** |
| In the area of “dispute resolution”, the project should maintain its cautious approach and monitor opportunities for more substantive support based on evolution of the political situation. In the meantime, the project should consider focusing on the following activities:* Continue support for CSB in the establishment of a mediation team and consulting service for civil servants.
* Refine the “difficult conversations” training and extend it to new departments and ministries.
 |
| **Recommendation 6****Emerging Needs** |
| * The project is advised to further explore the use of “emerging needs” initiatives to also test high-risk innovative solutions to PAR-related challenges, rather than replicating or reinforcing activities undertaken through the other components. This is an opportunity for exploring the feasibility of solutions which might or might not work. Risk-taking is an essential part of innovation.
* The project could also explore the possibility of using the “emerging needs” initiatives for closer engagement with local governments and communities. The initiative with the Ajara government is an example of this, but cooperation could be extended to lower levels of government and even to the community level. This does not have to be done necessarily directly through the project, but ways of creating impact at these levels could be explored through the interventions of other ongoing initiatives by UNDP or other development partners.
 |
| **Recommendation 7****Grant Initiatives** |
| The project could consider the following measures related to grant initiatives:* Track more effectively the implementation of the recommendations derived from the studies conducted through the research grants.
* Strengthen criteria for the practicality of the commissioned studies.
* Establish a system of peer review for the commissioned studies to strengthen the quality of research.
* Compile at the end of the project all the studies conducted under this component into a publication.
 |
| **Recommendation 8****Service Delivery** |
| In the area of service delivery, the project may consider the following measures:* Support PSDA with the development of PSDD compliance mechanisms and guidelines for service design.
* Support authorities with the establishment of the special unit for monitoring the enforcement of PSDD.
* Support PSDA on developing and piloting training for government departments on the implementation of PSDD.
* Obtain clarity from the Ministry of Justice on the conduct of the assessment of existing PSDD-related legislation to reveal any gaps for its implementation and identify necessary amendments required for the PSDD.
* Support the development of guidance and training for public agencies on the pricing of services.
* Support PSDA in reviewing all available options for the platform that can be used for the delivery of training in this domain, with a view to selecting the most effective and sustainable solution.

The project team could also advocate for a re-examination of the mandate of PSDA, in light of the challenges related to its sub-ordination under the Ministry of Justice. |
| **Recommendation 9****E-Government** |
| * In this area, the project should advocate for clarity among government counterparts with regards to the electronic platforms used by the different branches of government (in particular, CSB and DEA). The project is supporting a number of electronic platforms in a range of areas (policy making, civil service training, etc.). Given that there seem to be a number of ideas or pilots of such platforms in circulation, it will be important that the project advocate for the use of existing platforms where feasible.
* With regards to the electronic platform for the delivery of training, the project should explore whether it is possible to have one integrated electronic platform for government training - a sort of one-stop-shop for training which different agencies could use to place their material. The project is well positioned to facilitate a discussion about this among the relevant government agencies.
* The project should also support the government in clearly defining roles, responsibilities and operating procedures for the e-training platform, once a decision is made on how to proceed with it.
 |
| **Recommendation 10****E-Services** |
| In the area of e-services, the project should continue to facilitate DEA’s interactions with other government agencies, especially at the local level, with the view to easing the other agencies’ compliance with the requirements for integration of their services into the unified online portal. |
| **Recommendation 11****Adjustment of Project Planning Documents** |
| * The project team should reflect more effectively in project planning documents changes in the political context and the PAR agenda and the approaches taken in response in terms of how project outputs and outcomes are defined.
* The project’s results and resources framework could be adjusted to reflect more faithfully the adaptations that the project team has taken in the last couple of years. This will provide clarity and transparency for stakeholders outside the project.
 |
| **Recommendation 12****Absorption and Sustainability of Training**  |
| * Given the significant amount of training involved in this project (policy making, civil service, performance evaluation, service delivery standards, etc.), the project team should track more effectively the extent to which this training is being absorbed by recipients. A more systematic tool could be conceived for this purpose, allowing the team to easily track the quality of training over time.
* Also, the project should strengthen the sustainability of training by ensuring that the respective government institutions are capable to continue its delivery after the project has ended.
 |
| **Recommendation 13****Communication and Coordination with National Partners** |
| * The project should continue to place considerable emphasis on strengthening communication and coordination with national partners and citizens. This includes not only the project’s communications to external partners and audiences, but also support for the authorities’ communications on aspects of the PAR agenda that are related to project activities.
 |
| **Recommendation 14****Support for Civil Society** |
| * The project should explore opportunities for expanding support to non-governmental actors not only in the area of research, but also strengthening their watchdog capacity. Given the space that exists in Georgia for civil society, NGOs could be used in a sensible way for the monitoring the implementation of certain components of the PAR agenda by the respective government institutions.
 |
| **Recommendation 15****Political Support and Advocacy** |
| * UNDP leadership should advocate more vigorously at the political level for PAR initiatives that the project is promoting (and which are outlined throughout this report). UNDP political support for reforms should complement, and be closely coordinated, with technical support from the PAR project (and other relevant UNDP projects).
 |
| **Recommendation 16****Gender** |
| * The project team should further integrate gender equality into project activities and articulate the gender perspective more clearly in project documents. Overall, the project’s initiatives and results should be assessed with the gender perspective in mind.
* Also, given the political nature of this project, roles and power within decision making in the public administration should be assessed from the gender perspective. A gender-sensitive political economy analysis is always useful in initiatives that support public sector reforms. Also, project related data (including on things such as beneficiaries, participants, etc.) should be collected and reported on a gender-disaggregated basis.
 |

# ANNEX I: EVALUATION’S TERMS OF REFERENCE

**1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:**

In 2016 UNDP Georgia rolled out the multi-year project “Supporting Public Administration Reform in Georgia”, funded by the UK Government.  The project addresses a complementary, but distinct, set of specific, predetermined needs in three crucial areas of the ongoing Public Administration Reform (PAR) - Policy Development and Cooperation; Civil Service and Human Resource Management, and Service Delivery, as stipulated by the PAR Reform Roadmap 2020. The initiative intends to sustain, support, and build key institutions and processes required for advancing Public Administration Reform by offering consultancy, capacity building, technical assistance, etc.

The goal of this project is to enhance the capability of the Government of Georgia to implement its national development agenda through a more effective, professionally trained, unified, and independent public administration that delivers public services with greater accountability and responsiveness to citizens’ needs. The following outputs contribute to achieve the stated goal:

**Output 1 Policy Development and Coordination:** Administration of the Government of Georgia (AoG) being ready to effectively manage (plan and implement) and guide (monitor and evaluate) PAR process

**Output 2 Civil Service and Human Resource Management:** Professional civil service established by strategically managed process, civil servants uniformly trained, and mechanisms established to protect them from arbitrary decisions.

**Output 3 Service delivery:** Quality services delivered based on innovative, consistent, and replicable methodology, as well as the analysis of usage data patterns and consumer feedback

More specifically:

**Output 1: Policy Development and Coordination**

Output 1 aims to develop the policy making process in the country, and enhance policy planning and coordination, by strengthening the capacity of the policy units of line Ministries and closely cooperating with the AoG so that the latter can effectively manage and guide the PAR process. Policy planning and Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms will be strengthened through the development and operation of a tool for government-wide, holistic tracking and monitoring of whole-of-government level programs.

**Output 2: Civil Service and HR Management**

Output 2 aims to support the development of an increasingly professional, uniformly trained civil service that is protected from arbitrary decisions. This will be achieved by: using interactive trainings to increase knowledge and awareness among civil servants about ongoing civil service reform and its implications; the implementation of a Change Management Plan developed based on a Change Management Readiness Assessment; the operationalization of a Unified Civil Servants Training System; the introduction of a staff performance appraisal system based on effective international models; the development of tools for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and engagement of civil society organizations to provide evidence and practical solutions to enhance policy planning, civil service reform and public service delivery.

**Output 3: Service Delivery**

Output 3 aims at: developing Common Standards and Principles of Public Service Delivery through commissioning a baseline study of the current service delivery practices, which will help identify and select the best-suited service delivery and quality assurance model that can be used for improving and streamlining service delivery in public service provider organizations in Georgia; establishing a Competence Centre on e-governance to serve as a key marketing, training and advisory institution to promote Georgian e-government best practices and e-government solutions in the country and abroad; integrating citizen feedback into the development of online services. Under the GoG e-governance strategy it is planned to further develop My.gov.ge as the meta-platform for offering all electronic services through the use of an electronic ID card. The activities will include expanding communication efforts that will help better integrate customer feedback and improve customer support by offering telephone/online help-lines, advancing quality of e-services, and progressively ensuring that all government services are also available online.

The PAR project was launched in 2016 and will be implemented through December 2020. Additional information on the project can be accessed at <http://www.ge.undp.org/content/georgia/en/home/projects/supporting-public-administration-reform-in-georgia.html>

In the case of a positive assessment, the incumbent will be contracted to conduct final evaluation of the project, to be carried out at the end of the project, December 2020.

**2.** **Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives**

The overall purpose of the consultancy is to inform decision-making on the future implementation of the project through a methodologically sound, credible, impartial and independent assessment of the achievements and shortcomings of the project to date.

The specific objectives of this mid-term evaluation (or review) are:

* To review progress towards the project’s objectives and expected outcomes,
* To identify strengths and weaknesses in design and implementation,
* To identify risks and countermeasures,
* To assess the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and delivering its intended outputs,
* To assess the effectiveness, efficiency and added value of the project in terms of achieved outputs and results and its contribution to Country Program Document (CPD) outcome,
* To identify lessons learned and good practices.
* To provide recommendations on modifications to increase the likelihood of success (if necessary).

In parallel to this consultancy assignment, Mid-term review will be conducted with the goal to collect, analyse, and provide information on the current status of Public Administration Reform in the areas of policy development and cooperation, civil service and human resource management, and service delivery. The consultant will be required to incorporate preliminary findings of this review into its final consultancy deliverables.

The scope of work for consultancy will include, but may not be limited to:

* Complete a desk review of all project-related documents including the project document, budgetary documents, reports, and internal evaluations.
* Elaborate an evaluation matrix with evaluation criteria, the related evaluation questions (and, where needed, sub-questions), the data sources required to answer the questions, the data collection and data analysis methods.
* Conduct meetings/interviews with current team members, along with the counterparts at Government of Georgia, donors and key partners, and the UNDP Country Office.
* Facilitate a workshop with PAR project team and key partners on project progress, planned activities, and the likelihood of achieving an impact.
* To collect quantitative data, including retrieving public information from government agencies (if needed), necessary for the evaluation.
* Document and analyse collected information in order to develop at least one case study per output (at least 3 case studies in total).
* Analyse data in accordance with the evaluation objectives per component, and in a broader context: against the Project's Objectives but also in a general development sense.
* Identify risks and counter‐measures, describe key factors that will require attention in order to improve the prospects of the sustainability of project outputs.
* Identify a list of ’lessons learned’ and make recommendations for corrections.
* Recommend measures likely to lead to improvements, adjustments to the implementation approach, and alternatives as required in the context of an implementation framework.
* Assess whether the project has an appropriate strategy for knowledge transfer and describe the results of this strategy to date.
* Analyse the project’s contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
* Incorporate the findings of Evaluation of Civic Innovation and Research Grants, conducted separately within the PAR project.
* Incorporate preliminary findings of PAR Mid-term review, conducted externally by the research company.
* Prepare a Draft Evaluation Report providing descriptive overviews, laying out the facts, analysing UNDP’s contribution based on evaluation criteria and SDGs, outlining risks and lessons learned, and providing conclusions and recommendations.
* Finalize an Evaluation Report based on solicited feedback from UNDP team and key stakeholders.
* Present the documents at a national consultation and dissemination workshop.

**3. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions**

The incumbent will be tasked to conduct the evaluation as per UNDP Evaluation Policy[[52]](#footnote-52), focusing on seven areas of evaluation (evaluation criteria): relevance, appropriateness, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and gender.

**Relevance & Appropriateness:**

* To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities, the CPD outputs, CPD outcomes, UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?
* To what extent does the project contribute to the Theory of Change for the relevant CPD outcome?
* To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project’s design?
* To what extent were perspectives of those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, taken into account during the project design processes?
* To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?

**Effectiveness:**

* To what extent were the project outputs achieved?
* What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended CPD outputs and CPD outcomes?
* To what extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
* In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
* In which areas does the project have the least achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can they or could they be overcome?
* What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project’s objectives?
* Are the projects objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame?
* To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation?
* To what extent is project management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of the project objectives?
* To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing partner priorities?
* To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

**Efficiency:**

* Is the relationship between input of resources and results achieved appropriate and justifiable? What is the cost-benefit ratio?
* To what extent have individual resources been used economically?
* Are there any alternatives for achieving the same results with less inputs/funds?
* To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the Project Document efficient in generating the expected results?
* To what extent has UNDP’s project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?
* To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
* To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
* To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
* To what extent do the monitoring and evaluation systems utilized by UNDP ensure effective and efficient project management?

**Sustainability:**

* Examine the political, organizational, human resource, and financial sustainability of the sub-project/consultancy. What threats to sustainability exist, and how has the risk of these threats been mitigated/anticipated?
* Are the positive effects or impacts sustainable? How is the sustainability or permanence of the intervention and its effects to be assessed?
* Are there any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?
* To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
* Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project’s contributions to CPD outputs and CPD outcomes?
* Do the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
* What is the risk that the level of stakeholder’s ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?
* To what extent do mechanisms, procedures, and policies exist to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development by primary stakeholders?
* To what extent do stakeholders support the project’s long-term objectives?

**Impact:**

* To what extent did the project contribute to the CPD outcomes and outputs, the SDGs, UNDP Strategic Plan and national development priorities?
* What is the forecasted impact of the project?
* Did the interventions contribute to reaching higher levels of project outputs and outcome? What is the impact or effect of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target group or those effected?

**Gender:**

* To what extent has gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

**4. Methodology**

The consultant will work together with the project team in the preparation of a methodology to answer the key research questions outlined above, as well as any other pertinent questions that may arise to adequately assess the mid-term picture. The incumbent must take into account UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines and relevant programmatic documents, which will be supplied to the consultant at the beginning of the assignment. The final methodology should be approved by UNDP.

The study will utilize two major forms of research: background and primary.

1. Background research:
	1. Document Review of all relevant project documentation: Project Document, Logical Framework, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Theory of Change, Annual/Semi-Annual/Quarterly Reports and other relevant knowledge products.
2. Primary research – aimed at forming new knowledge by collecting information through:
	1. Key informant interviews (KIIs), semi-structured interviews, stakeholder consultations and other participatory methods;
	2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with different Government and non‐government institutions, donors and external stakeholders;
	3. Individual case studies through in‐depth discussions with various levels of stakeholders and engaged institutions;

**5. Deliverables**

* Inception report including the evaluation matrix, evaluation methodology, and evaluation plan
* At least three case studies (At least one case study per output)
* A draft of an Evaluation report with the following key chapters, but not limited to:
1. Executive Summary (Brief description of the project, Context and purpose of the evaluation, Main conclusion, recommendation, and lessons learnt, etc).
2. Introduction (Purpose of the evaluation, Key issues addressed, Methodology of the evaluation, Structure of the evaluation, etc).
3. The project and its development context (Project start and its duration, Problems that the project fixed to address, the immediate and development objectives of the project, Main stakeholders, Results expected, etc)
4. Evaluation findings (Assessment per evaluation criteria, analysis through gender lenses, achievement to SDGs, sustainability, etc)
5. Recommendations and Lessons Learned (Best and worst practices in addressing issues relating to relevance, performance, and success)
* Final Evaluation report and presentation for the dissemination workshop

# ANNEX II: KEY QUESTIONS DRIVING THE ANALYSIS OF DATA

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Dimension** | **Key Questions** |
| Relevance | Were the project’s activities relevant for themain beneficiaries?Has the project tackled key challenges and problems?Were cross-cutting issues, principles and quality criteria duly considered/mainstreamed in the project implementation and how well is this reflected in the project reports? How could they have been better integrated?How did the project link and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals?* To what extent was the project relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoU?
* To what extent was the project implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?
 |
| Effectiveness | To what level has the project reached the project purpose and the expectedresults as stated in the project document (logical framework matrix)?What challenges have been faced? What has been done to address the potential challenges/problems? What has been done to mitigate risks? |
| Sustainability | How is the project ensuring sustainability of its results and impacts (i.e. strengthened capacities, continuity of use of knowledge, improved practices, etc.)? Did the project have a concrete and realistic exit strategy to ensuresustainability?Were there any jeopardizing aspects that have not been considered or abated by the project actions? In case of sustainability risks, were sufficient mitigation measures proposed?Has ownership of the actions and impact been transferred to the corresponding stakeholders? Do the stakeholders / beneficiaries have thecapacity to take over the ownership of the actions and results of the project and maintain and further develop the results? |
| Impact | Is there evidence of long lasting desired changes, in which aspects?Has the project appropriately reached its target groups? How did the project contributed to (more) sustainable management of natural resources?Is there evidence that institutional systems/mechanisms are in place which:1) Supports further capacity development at the national and local level; and2) Promotes sustainable and inclusive development |
| Efficiency | Have the resources been used efficiently? How well have the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results interms of quantity, quality and timeliness? (in comparison to the plan)Were the management and administrative arrangements sufficient to ensure efficient implementation of the project? |
| Stakeholders andPartnershipStrategy | How has the project implemented the commitments to promote local ownership, alignment, harmonization, management for development results and mutual accountability? |
| Theory of ChangeorResults/Outcome Map | Is the Theory of Change or project logic feasible and was it realistic? Were assumptions, factors and risks sufficiently taken into consideration? |

# ANNEX III: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

For each interview obtain the following information of all the people who were part of the meeting

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Interviewee | Title, Department | Institution |
|  |  |  |
| Date of Interview | Time | Location |
|  |  |  |
| Other Persons present/title  | Team members present |  |
|  |  |  |

***Below is the list of indicative questions which we need to answer for the evaluation. Depending on who we interview, we need to choose among the questions below the suitable ones to ask (particularly given that we have normally just around 1 hour for each interview). For example, with implementation partners of specific projects, we may want to focus on part A and some additional questions in other parts as appropriate. For donors and other development partners we may want to focus on part B.***

1. **effectiveness:**
	1. To what extent has the project **achieved its expected objectives**? Were all the planned project outputs and outcomes achieved? What were the **key results achieved** (Please describe, in particular, what **“changes”** have been brought about by the project)?
	2. Were there any key results not achieved and why? Were there any positive or negative unintended results?
	3. What was the quality of the deliverables, e.g. policy papers, analyses, SD Strategy, pilot projects, trainings, etc.?
	4. Do you think that all the strategies and plans that were supported will be implemented? Do you think that for projects like this there should be more focus on implementation?
	5. What were the major **factors contributing** to the achievements of this project? What were the **impeding factors**?
	6. **Partnerships**: Who were the partners in implementing the project? In your view, how effective has UNDP been in using its partnerships (e.g., UN and other development partners; private-sector; CBOs; CSOs)?
	7. To what extent were government counterparts engaged and interested in the project activities? What roles did they play? Can you mention specific government actors and specific roles they played?
	8. UNDP’s role in **policy guidance**: Has UNDP provided upstream policy advisory services in this project? To what extent was this project able to affect policy change? If yes, can you mentioned some specific examples? What is the implication of such policy change to the country?
	9. In what ways can UNDP strengthen its policy advisory role (what worked and what didn’t work; why)?
2. **relevance:**
	1. To what extent do you think the project objectives were in **alignment with country needs and national priorities, policies or strategies**? How about in terms of the **local needs**?
	2. How was the work conducted under this project connected to the broader reform agenda that is under way now in Kuwait? Was it integrated with the existing reform architecture led by the Presidential Administration? Please provide specific examples.
	3. Was the work of this project sufficiently focused on the sub-national (local) level? Do you see these types of projects being more useful at the national or sub-national levels?
	4. To what extent were the **approaches taken by the UNDP** appropriate in terms of the project **design and ‘focus**,’ and the balance between **upstream and downstream** efforts?
	5. How coherent was the project in terms of how it fit with the policies, programmes and projects undertaken **by other development partners** (such as the WB, EU, and other bilateral agencies)?
3. **efficiency:**
	1. **Managerial and operational efficiency**:
	2. Has the project been implemented **within expected dates, costs estimates**? Explain **‘factors’** influencing the level of efficiency.
	3. Has the project management taken prompt actions to solve implementation and other operational issues? What was **project management structure** (incl. reporting structure; **oversight** responsibility)?
	4. How adequate were the Project Management arrangements put in place at the start of the project? Did the project display effective adaptive management?
	5. What were the implications of the project’s organizational structure for the its results and delivery?
	6. **Progammatic efficiency:**
4. Were the financial resources and approaches envisaged appropriate to achieving planned objectives? Was there a ‘good’ mix of upstream and downstream efforts to maximize the results?
5. Were the resources focused on a set of activities that were expected to produce significant results (**prioritization**)? Has the project achieved ‘value for money’?
6. Has the project followed any known ‘best practices’?
7. Were there any efforts to ensure ‘synergies’ with other projects within UNDP (and those of other partners)? Explain results, and contributing factors.
	1. What could have been done to improve the overall efficiency of the project?
8. **sustainability:**
	1. To what extent are **project benefits likely to be sustained** after the completion of the project? What are the supporting/ impeding factors?
	2. What are the risks that are likely to affect the persistence of project outcomes?
	3. What plans were put in place to ensure the continuity of the efforts (e.g., funding, technical capacity)? Has there been an **exit strategy** that describes these plans?
	4. Do you think that the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow?
	5. Would you want to see this project extended in its current form or some other form?
	6. Do you think a project like this would be useful in promoting the achievement of SDGs in Kuwait?

**b. assessment of the project’s strategic positioning**

* 1. To what extent has the project been **responsive** to meeting the needs of the country?
1. How responsive was the project to changes in development priorities (handling the transition following the Maydan event)?
2. To what extent has the project been able to adapt its ongoing programme to take into account the conflict realities and sensitivities (in Donbas)?
3. To what extent has UNDP been able to adjust its implementation approach specifically to respond to the challenges created by the crisis? To coordinate and create links between EE and sustainable development?
	1. To what extent has the project been able to **integrate the concept of sustainable development** in the policymaking process in Kuwait (design, allocation of resources and implementation)? Examples?
	2. To what extent has the project been able to broker **South-South cooperation** (i.e., adopt lessons and best practices available in other countries, and share its own with others, for mutual learning). Examples?
	3. What **was the comparative advantage of** UNDP in the area of sustainable development, when compared to other actors in the same area?
* To what extent has UNDP been able to provide **technical guidance**, and knowledge?
* What are UNDP’s **comparative strengths**, vis-à-vis other development partners, if any?
* To what extent do UNDP have the skills and expertise needed to support this area in Kuwait?
	1. To what extent has the project been able to establish **partnerships and networks** with relevant partners and build strategic alliances in supporting key national priorities in the sustainable development area?
	2. What do you think would be the **role of UNDP in helping Kuwait planning for, implementing strategies to achieve and/or monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals?**

**C. Other issues**

Are there any issues that you would like to raise about the project’s performance that have not been covered in this interview?

# ANNEX IV: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED FOR THIS EVALUATION

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Respondent****(name, surname)** | **Organization** | **Position** |
| 1 |  PAR project team | United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Georgia | N/a  |
| 2 | Kakha Khimshiashvili  | Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (SIDA)  | Head of the Development and Cooperation Program |
| 3 | Nika Gagnidze | Data Exchange Agency (DEA) | Chair |
| 4 | Nata Goderdzishvili | Data Exchange Agency (DEA) | Head of Legal Division |
| 5 | Giorgi Simongulashvili | Growth Expand Compete (GEC)  | Lead Consultant  |
| 6 | Levan Samadashvili | USAID Good Governance Initiative (GGI) / Tetra Tech ARD | Chief of Party |
| 7 | Lina Panteleeva | United States Agency for International Development (USAID) | Project Management Specialist |
| 8 | Gigi Bregadze | UNDP | Democratic Governance Team Leader |
| 9 | Mynkhtuya (Tuya) Altangerel | UNDP | Deputy Resident Representative  |
| 10 | Tamuna Simongulashvili  | Consultant | PAR Local Expert |
| 11 | Marina Kuchukhidze | Consultant  | PAR Local Expert |
| 12 | Nino Okhanashvili | Consultant | PAR Local Expert |
| 13 | Ia Tsulaia | Consultant  | PAR Local Expert |
| 14 | Tamar Gureshidze  | GIZ"Public Financial Management in the South Caucasus" | PFM Advisor |
| 15 | Sopho Belkania  | Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia | Head of Human Resources Management and International Relations Department |
| 16 | Natia Arbolishvili  | Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia | Head of Labor Efficiency Monitoring Division |
| 17 | Suzi Stern  | British Embassy Tbilisi  | First Political Secretary  |
| 18 | Tamara Trapaidze | British Embassy Tbilisi  | Good Governance Fund Project Officer |
| 19 | Giorgi Kldiashvili  | Institute for Development of Freedom of Information | Director (Civil service reform / freedom of information) |
| 20 | Nino Tsukhishvili | Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA) | Parliamentary Secretary |
| 21 | Eka Kardava  | Civil Service Bureau (CSB) | Director |
| 22 | Maia Dvalishvili and  | Civil Service Bureau (CSB) | Deputy Director |
| 23 | Irina Aghapishvili | Civil Service Bureau (CSB) | Head of Analytical Department |
| 24 | Nino Sarishvili | Administration of the Government of Georgia | Head of Policy Planning and Coordination Department   |
| 25 | Ana Kvernadze | Administration of the Government of Georgia | Head of the Policy Planning Division |
| 26 | Sesili Verdzadze | Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) | Head of Innovations Management and Research Unit |
| 27 | Elene Romelashvili | Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) | International Relations and Donor Coordination Division |
| 28 | Nodar Karchava | Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture | Head of the Secondary Structural Unit of Human Resources Management of the Administrative Department |
| 29 | Eka Gvenetadze | Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture | Head of Human Resources Management Division |
| 30 | Sophie HUET GUERRICHE  | EU Delegation | Programme Officer – Public Administration Reform, SIGMA, Anticorruption |

# ANNEX V: PROJECT’S RESULTS FRAMEWORK

| **Intended Outcome as stated in the UN Partnership for Sustainable Development (UNPSD) / Country Programme Document (2016-2020) Results and Resource Framework:** **Outcome:** (#1) By 2020, expectations of citizens of Georgia for voice, rule of law, public sector reforms, and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance at all levels**.** |
| --- |
| **Outcome indicators as stated in the UN Partnership for Sustainable Development (UNPSD) / Country Programme Document (2016-2020) Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets:**1. Worldwide Governance Indicators. *Baseline (2013):* Voice and Accountability[[53]](#footnote-53) index 54.5%; Rule of law index 53.6%; Government Effectiveness Index 69.4%. *Targets (2020):* Voice and Accountability index >60%; Rule of law index >58%; Government Effectiveness Index >72%2. Level of public confidence and satisfaction with legislature, judiciary, democratic system and public service delivery. *Baseline:* to be established (2015). *Target:* to be set based on 2015 baseline3. S[eats held by women in parliament and local councils.](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS) *Baseline*: Parliament 11% (2012); Local councils 11.8% (2014). *Target*: Parliament 15% (2016) 20% (2020); Local Councils 15% (2017) |
| **Outcome from the UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017):** **Strategic plan** **outcome:** (#2) Citizens’ expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance. |
| **Project outcome:** Enhanced capability of the Government of Georgia to implement its national development agenda through a more effective, professionally trained, unified and independent Public Administration that delivers public services with greater accountability and responsiveness to citizens’ needs.**Outcome indicators: Indicator 1** - The level of professionalism, independence and credibility of the civil service enhanced; **Indicator 2** - Merit-based recruitment and career advancement, improved protection from arbitrary decisions increase job satisfaction and retention rate in civil service. |
| **Project title and Atlas Project Number:** Support to Public Administration reform, **00089758** |
| **EXPECTED OUTPUTS**  | **OUTPUT INDICATORS** | **DATA SOURCE** | **BASELINE** | **TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)** | **DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS** |
| **Value** | **Year** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| **Output 1***Policy develop-ment and cooperation: AoG ready to effectively manage (plan and implement) and guide (monitor and evaluate) PAR process* **Output 2***Civil service and Human Resource Manage-ment:* *Professional civil service established by strategically managed process, civil servants uniformly trained and mechanism established to protect from arbitrary decisions.* | **1.1.** Frequency of AoG leadership (HAoG /DHAoG, HoCSB) communicating directly on PAR vision objectives to the line ministries and the public. Number of PAR coordination meetings held and the proportion of the Action Plan tasks related to the three pillars of the project accomplished.  | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | Key decision makers report need for strategically managed, better coordinated PAR process.  | 2016 | Detailed expectations of support under “executive dialogue” peer advice format agreed with AoG.  | Peer advice provided in executive dialogue format.In partnership with the Head of AoG, Civil Service Bureau and other key stakeholders, management routines are analyzed, key processes mapped and avenues identified to improve strategic guidance of PAR.  | PAR Action Plan updated and used by AoG for tracking progress.PAR Communication Strategy adopted.PAR Coordination meetings regularly held. Working groups operational.AoG policymaking guidelines are updated with project coaching.Line ministry staff responsible for policy process development are trained to guide policymaking process.Knowledge products (training modules, guidelines, process descriptions) developed within the ministries to ensure sustainability of Policy-making function. | AoG adequately staffed and trained to effectively manage PAR process.Relevant AoG, line ministries and Ajara Autonomous Republic staff are trained for managing policymaking cycle.PAR Coordination meetings regularly held. Working groups monitor progress and consistently offer policy adaptations.PAR Communication Strategy adopted (moved from 2018, to accompany the 2019 PAR Action Plan). | Key PAR stakeholders report improved policy processes, better strategic guidance and visibility of PAR.  | Methods: Quantitative survey, focus groups, key informant interviews, review of documentation (correspond-ence, internal reports, internal instructions, regulatory framework).Risks: identifying appropriate method to measure the indicator. |
| **1.2.** Number of agencies using new policy planning and M&E practices. AoG showing qualitative improvement in assessing agencies’ performance against SDG, OGP and AA objectives.  | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; monitoring reports for SDG, OGP and AA; methodolo-gical coherence of the process for assessing performance against SDG, OGP, AA objectives. | Draft policy planning and M&E guidelines exist. However, AoG lacks viable mechanisms to improve policy coordination and implementa-tion practices. On the other hand, line ministries lack institutional capacity for policy development and coordination. | 2016 | Policy Planning and M&E related documents are approved. | Pilot ministries selected. Policy Planning and basic evaluation mechanisms (performance tracking, reporting, monitoring and results evaluation) clearly identified within selected ministries in line with the approved guidelines.TOR for integrated monitoring and analytical tool finalized. | Concept of Performance Tracking and Monitoring System of the Annual Government Working Plan (AGWP) is finalized.Performance Tracking and Monitoring System linked with SDGs and AA policy documents. | Performance Tracking and Monitoring System is finalized.Policymaking guidelines and other knowledge products are put into practice in AoG and the line ministries.Adopted policy development documents/handbook are put into operation in the AoG and the line ministries. | Performance Tracking and Monitoring System guidelines are developed.Performance Tracking and Monitoring System operates as a holistic mechanism under AoG End users of the Performance Tracking and Monitoring System are able to use it in accordance with the guidelines.Ministry commitments are integrated into the System and monitored by AoG.AoG draws on generated data while reporting to the government and the public as well as to facilitate annual priority-setting and planning processes. | Methods: Desk research, interviews.Risks: turnover of trained staff. |
| **2.1.**Share of civil servants understanding and supporting change associated with Civil Service Reform. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | While 75% of the surveyed civil servants have heard about the ongoing PAR, 46% of these note media as a source, 30% “word of mouth” and only 25% through managers. Higher ranks are better informed. Focus groups show that the information about the reform and its objective is not specific. The reported sky-high rates of support (92% support PAR) need thus to be looked at critically. Focus group analysts report that the attitude towards reform is “supportive without clear understanding of its substance”. | 2016 | Representa-tive sample of civil servants involved in Change Management Readiness Assessment by 2017. | Change Readiness Assessment as well as the Change Management Plans drafted. External and internal communication strategy drafted.  | CSB capacity to implement the Change Management Plan improved. Change Management Team capable of implementing Change Management Plan and communicates about CSR objectives within line ministries/agencies.Implementation of the external and internal communication strategy starts. By end-2018: at least 35% of surveyed civil servants understanding and supporting PAR. | CSB systematically collects gender disaggregated data on implementation of the key aspects of the Law on Civil Service and provides guidance based on its analysis.CSB applies gender-sensitive communication using the wide range of tools both internally and externally to support the implementation of Civil Service Reform.PAR mid-term review shows progress in changing organizational culture in specific areas, including with gender lenses.  | Awareness rate about the reform increases consistently; support towards the reform reaches levels compatible with “aware and supportive”, while civil servants are ready to take practical steps towards furthering the reform. | Methods: Quantitative survey, focus groupsRisks: turnover of civil servants. |
|  | **2.2.** Proportion of civil servants undergoing unified induction and in-service trainings. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | Training centers in various ministries as well as academic and private providers offer uncoordinated programs for civil servants. Discussions are underway to develop common approach for improved civil servant training quality.Only 49% of the surveyed civil servants think civil service is staffed by professionals. Managers are significantly more skeptical about the level of civil service professio-nalism than clerical workers. | 2016 | The process of designing the Unified Civil Servants Training System launched. | Methodology and training program for the Unified Training System for civil servants finalized. | Induction process formalized in key ministries/ agencies and in-service training system introduced in selected government entities. | Mandatory induction training programs developed. Accreditation of professional development programs formalized (decrees and respective by-laws adopted, guidelines developed). All respective actors (private and public training providers) engaged in professional development process trained.Accreditation of Civil Servants professional development programs started, with equal inclusion of all vulnerable groups (particularly PwDs).   | At least 50% of Civil Servants benefited from the established training system by 2020. | Methods: Quantitative survey, key informant interviews, desk review, monitoring data collection.Risks: low capacity of training providers to deliver quality training. |
| **2.3.** Share of government entities using the staff appraisal system in practice. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | Staff appraisal by-law drafted. |  | By-laws reviewed; best international practices identified. | Pilot government entities selected and preparatory work for establishing appraisal framework completed (review of job descriptions, tasking practices; expectations, etc.); entity-specific appraisal modalities elaborated. | Pilot appraisals conducted based on the new guidelines, appraisal reports analyzed and relevant adjustments made. | Ongoing expert support and capacity building activities provided for the implement-tation of the appraisal systems in the selected public agencies.‘Lessons learned’ exercise conducted with gender focus and adjustments made as needed. | Results of implement-ation of the implemented appraisal models studied, recommend-ations offered to CSB. | Project documents review. |
| **2.4.** The number of cases reviewed/ settled through new alternative dispute resolution mechanism established by CSB. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; statistical data by CSB. | CSB legislatively tasked to address disputes. No alternative mediation and arbitration system exists to provide redress when new Law on Civil Service and its by-laws are implemented (e.g. performance evaluation system). Several legal cases have been addressed to courts regarding dismissals. In a baseline survey of civil servants, roughly half of the surveyed say the hiring, firing and advanced decisions are taken fairly. Opinions were more critical in focus groups. | 2016 |  |  | Mediation and dispute settlement models locally and in various countries and international organizations studied and feasible models recommended.Appropriate solutions selected, based on the previous study. Proposals elaborated for adjusting the organizational and regulatory framework appropriately. Capacity-building activities within CSB are initiated.  | Appropriate dispute settlement solutions selected, based on the previous study. Awareness-raising activities conducted in government entities. Ongoing analysis regarding the disputes settlement practice in public service.Civil servants’ level of understanding on the benefits of mediation is increased Pilot mediation mechanism is initiated in at least one government entity  | Ongoing analysis regarding the rate of usage of mediationn services and the types of disputes.CSB capacity to operate a mediation mechanism is strengthened. General organizational and regulatory framework is drafted. Model of such a system has been tested in selected agencies. Conclusions and recommend-ations exist on applicability of the model to the whole civil service.Awareness-building activities are implemented in civil service, including integration of the mediation segment in the Unified Training System.  | Methods: Stakeholder analysis – focus groups, key informant interviews, desk review.Risks: identifying appropriate method to measure the indicator. |
| **2.5.** Number of projects supported by PAR offering targeted support to emerging needs.  | Statistical data; impact evaluation of the projects; interviews. | Public Administration Reform newly launched; Law on Civil Service enters into force in 2017 (information to be added on the basis of ACT results).  | 2016 | Gathering feedback from relevant PAR stakeholders to initially identify possible support areas in 2017. | Based on the consultations, beneficiaries identified and targeted support provided. | Based on the consultations, beneficiaries identified and targeted support provided. | Based on the consultations, beneficiaries identified and targeted support provided. | Based on the consultations, beneficiaries identified and targeted support provided. | Methods: Stakeholder analysis – focus groups, key informant interviews, desk reviewRisks: identifying appropriate method to measure the indicator. |
| **Output 3***Service delivery: Quality services delivered based on innovative, consistent and replicable method-logy, as well as analysis of usage data patterns and consumer feedback* | **2.6.** Number of innovative civil society initiatives incorporated in PAR process: providing research, designing policy and offering practical solutions in service delivery.  | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; project monitoring data; interviews. | Only few academic and civil society organizations have sufficient knowledge to meaningfully contribute to PAR reform. 94% of the surveyed citizens say they never provided feedback on services. | 2016 | Topics first round of research grants announced.  | Topics identified and the second round of research grants announced/ awarded.Research reports published and recommendat-ions discussed in Innovation Lab format. | Topics identified and the third round of research grants announced/ awarded, building on the lessons learned during the first two cycles. | Topics identified and next round of research grants awarded, building on the lessons learned during the first three cycles.Research reports and CSO project results available and discussed with a wider group of stakeholders. | At least four civil society institutions have developed expert capacity in particular areas of PAR and meaningfully cooperate with the GoG. | Methods: Stakeholder analysis – focus groups, key informant interviews, desk review.Risks: Capacity of civil society to provide high level input. |
| **3.1.** a) Proportion of public services delivered based on unified Service Delivery Standards.b) Change in the level of citizen satisfaction with offered public services. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing project monitoring data. | No unified quality assurance system exists. Various agencies design and deliver services without shared and predictable principles.88% of the surveyed citizens report being “satisfied” or “very satisfied” by services they received. Although the figure is high, the level of satisfaction varies by agency, with clearly marked “islands of excellence” and “outliers”.  | 2016 | Elaboration of the draft Public Service Delivery Concept. | Existing service delivery practices in Georgia and international best practices researched, baseline established by mid-2017. Policy document on Common Principles of Service Design and Delivery drafted.  | Service Design and Delivery policy approved.Implementation methodology for common service principles and standards elaborated and the implementation started in selected public entities.Quality Assurance System for service delivery developed and its implementation started. | Implementation of new standards underway in key service delivery agencies.Special program developed and initiated to train public servants in accordance with the new service design and delivery principles Legal framework related to design and delivery of public services analyzed and relevant recommendations developed to ensure compatibility with the new principles.  | All major services adhere to unified public service design and delivery principles Quality Assurance Systems are developed and functional by 2020.Overall level of citizen satisfaction with public services decreases as the awareness and expectations grow, then increases again.Gap in satisfaction by the quality of services decreases across the agencies, as well as between the central and local governments (2020). | Methods: Quantitative survey, desk review, key Informant Interviews, focus groups.Risks: identifying appropriate method to measure the indicator. |
| **3.2.** Extent to whichknowledge- and expertise-management in e-governance are improved.   | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | Award winning e-governance systems exist, but technical and methodological documentation is often lacking, endangering sustainability, replicability and continuous improvement of e-governance services.  | 2016 |  | Competency Centre on E-governance established. The Centre develops methodological packages and technical documentation. Staff trained to transfer knowledge.  | Country-level services comply with revised technical standards. Competency Centre services shared through international platforms (e.g. UNDP South-South program). Centre website operational. At least two consultancy projects launched. | Competency Centre services shared through international platforms (e.g. UNDP South-South program).At least one consultancy projects launched.  | Competency Centre fully operational by 2020, maintains and updates country-level services, and transfers expertise abroad. | Methods: quantitative survey, key informant interviews, desk review, focus groups.Risks: no risks identified. |
|  | **3.3.** Usage rate of unified e-governance platform (my.gov.ge). Proportion of public services offered through my.gov.ge. | Baseline, mid-term and final evaluation; ongoing monitoring data. | E-governance platforms underused by citizens; 65% of citizens surveyed through the baseline study have electronic ID designed to provide access to services, but 90% reports not using them for this purpose. Only 6% used websites to get information from the government websites. | 2016 | New digital services developed and integrated in my.gov.ge. | Communication with public and private service providers to expand services increases recognition and usage of my.gov.ge. | Legal obligation created to offer any new services also on electronic platforms.Usage rate of my.gov.ge grows by at least 30%.At least 50 new services offeredthrough my.gov.ge.  | At least 50%-increase in citizen usage of my.gov.ge.My.gov.ge user feedback solicited and site usability upgraded accordingly.At least 60 new services offeredthrough my.gov.ge. | At least 70% of public services offered through my.gov.ge by 2020. Public satisfaction with my.gov.ge platform grows substantially. Routine usage levels of the electronic governance platform stabilized. | Methods: quantitative survey, key Informant interviews.Risks: identifying appropriate method to measure the indicator. |

# ANNEX VI: CASE STUDIES

1. **Civil Servants’ Performance Appraisal System – Importance of taking flexible and tailored approach for engendering change**
2. **The role of Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) in the field of public service delivery – Need for clarity of mandate**

**Case Study I**

**Civil Servants’ Performance Appraisal System – Importance of taking flexible and tailored approach for engendering change**

* As the partnership evolves, one needs to keep a keen eye on the evolving understanding of the problem, as well as of the implementation context. Any of these, as well as their combination might need to a wholesale re-evaluation of the existing needs or of the path to be taken to achieve the requisite change. In such cases, the development partner’s flexibility and ability to adapt to the emerging understanding of needs is crucial.
* The cooperation of the PAR project with the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, aimed at the introduction of the performance appraisal system, helped identify a key weakness which formed an obstacle to change - introducing a proper/desirable performance appraisal system. Addressing weakness, once identified with the help of the PAR project, helped catalyze change beyond the originally intended focus.
* The general takeaway here is that the implementation of a particular initiative never happens in an isolation from the overall change it intends to bring about – which means that it touches upon internal, organisational and external, contextual developments and weaknesses. Finding the correct point of application of the joint efforts could become a catalyst for larger initiatives and wider change.
1. **Description of the problem/challenge**

**The civil servants’ performance appraisal system under the Georgian legislation**

Georgia Law on Public Service, passed in 2015, made the performance appraisal of civil servants mandatory. In particular, according to the law, a public institution shall evaluate civil servants of all hierarchical ranks at least once a year. Civil servants shall be evaluated in accordance with the procedure approved by the Georgian Government’s decree on the “Procedure and Conditions for the Evaluation of Professional Public servants”.[[54]](#footnote-54) The evaluation aims to promote civil servants’ career development, improve their professional skills, offer incentives and identify professional development needs, as well as foster the organizational development of public institutions.

The decree on the “Procedure and Conditions for the Evaluation of Professional Public servants” includes a general note on the criteria based against which a civil servant is evaluated. In particular, “a civil servant is evaluated in accordance with the functions, competences, skills, rules of conduct and/or assessment of the results of goals and objectives (components) carried out by him/her (assessment subject)”. In other words, it is up to the head of a public institution to decide whether civil servants will be evaluated according to competences, functions, or objectives implemented by them. Evaluation is done through the assessment of documentary materials and an interview with the civil servant. A decision on evaluation methods has to be made by the head of the public institution, with due account for the following:

1. specifics of the institution and/or a structural unit thereof;
2. specific nature of the civil servants ranks and/or position;
3. specifics of the organizational development level and organizational structure of the public institution.

A public institution mayto select an individual evaluation method at the beginning of each year, inform the Civil Service Bureau and share with it the relevant documents. The evaluation method can not be changed during the evaluation period. The CSB, at the current stage of reform, facilitates the promotion of the evaluation system in public service and renders methodological assistance. Namely, the CSB:

1. facilitates determination of the evaluation policy in public service and provides methodological assistance to public institutions;
2. issues recommendations, where appropriate, for further improving the evaluation system;
3. is entitled, if necessary, to study the ongoing process of introduction and implementation of the evaluation system in public institution;
4. is entitled to fully or selectively request oral and/or written information related to the evaluation process;
5. is entitled to conduct a study for the analysis and further improvement of the evaluation process in public institutions;
6. is entitled, upon receipt a report from a public institution, to analyze and generalize the evaluation process in public institution and the outcome thereof; to develop recommendations for further improving the aforesaid process, as required;

**CSB’s Human Resource Management Department has developed an “*recommended appraisal system*” (procedure),** which can be introduced in public institutions. This document focuses on the competency-based evaluation method and aims at rendering methodological assistance to public institutions. This recommendation defines competency as the set of knowledge, experience and skills that are manifested in an individual’s specific behavior and are reflected in the outcome of his/her activity. It is important that each employee be evaluated according to the competencies that have an influence on the outcome and efficiency of his/her performance. Therefore, the competencies given in a job description should be used for evaluation. Competencies used in the evaluation process can be divided into professional and managerial competencies. Based on the evaluation principles, organizations can individually identify a specific number of competences, against which their employees will be evaluated. As per CSB’s recommendation, it is advisable that the number of competences should not exceed 10 and be not less than 5. To make the competency-based evaluation process easier and more impartial, it is recommended to develop a competency descriptor according to the levels and/or evaluation scores. Behavioral competency descriptor offers a uniform interpretation of the competency content, showing the differences, i.e. how one and the same competency is manifested by different ranks and/or evaluation scores. All the aforesaid contributes to standardizing the leadership’s views and evaluations within the organization.

The implementation of this method involves certain challenges, namely:

* managers and employees have to be well-aware of the way individual competencies contribute to advancing organizational objectives;
* competency evaluation has to based on the quality and the outcome of the work performed;
* competencies should be clearly defined so as to ensure an impartial evaluation on part of the managers.

Initial thoughts were that it is easier to introduce competency-based evaluation than performance management and job functions evaluation methods. However, this led another challenge in practice: competencies were not linked with the results achieved by the employee.

Unlike the competency-based employee evaluation method, performance and functions evaluation methods focus on how employees perform their functions and to what extent they achieve their goals and objectives. However, introduction of these methods necessarily requires that organizations have their strategic goals set and work-plan-based operational practices developed.

**Introduction of the staff performance appraisal system in the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara and the role of the PAR project in this process**

Like many other public institutions, the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara applied the Civil Service Bureau’s recommended, competency-based method of appraisal.

At the initial stage (in spring 2018), once the ministry started getting an insight into the competency-based appraisal method, both staff and management felt that this method could not provide the results they needed. At the same time, another problem was that the competencies for appraisal were selected in a rather superficial manner; employees could not precisely link those competences to the work they performed, especially as their duties were not clearly defined and/or their job descriptions and their actual functions did not match their formal job title or description (which is a common challenge in the Georgian public service in general).

Starting from 2018, the PAR project assigned (hired) an expert to assist the Ministry in implementing the appraisal mechanism, who conducted a number of workshops for the ministry staff, focusing on various appraisal systems, their peculiarities, interviewing procedures, etc. These activities have improved the Ministry staff’s awareness of the appraisal system and further consolidated the view that the selected appraisal method needed to be adjusted. However, as the initially selected method could not be changed in 2018, the Ministry decided to conduct appraisals starting from 2019 not only by competencies, but also according to the attainment of objectives (performance).

However, during the aforesaid process, it also became clear the given the Ministry’s capabilities at that time, it would be hardly possible to evaluate employees according to attainment of their functional objectives, since the Ministry was lacking a written strategy which would define its goals and priorities, and set the objectives also at the departmental level, neither were employees’ functions precisely defined.

1. **How the problem/challenge was solved?**

The discussion with PAR team and project expert clearly showed that to be able to better perform to its objectives – that is, to implement a requisite change, rather than a technical adjustment to performance appraisal - the Ministry urgently needed to conduct a functional analysis, to define goals/priorities at the ministry and departmental level, and to develop an organizational development strategy. For these purposes, the Ministry requested additional assistance of the PAR project, to complement an ongoing effort with implementation of the performance appraisal system.

The PAR project team and its hired expert have been engaged in discussions that led to the adjustment of approach, and showed flexibility and readiness in responding to the Ministry’s request for assistance. A new activity was initiated as a part of “emerging needs” facility.The Ministry’s functional analysis was conducted, and a three-year organizational strategy and a relevant action plan were developed. This work made it possible for the Ministry to adopt a new performance appraisal method, which envisages civil servants’ appraisal based on both on fulfillment of their objectives and competencies (70/30, respectively). This method will be used for employee appraisal in 2019. In addition, officials and civil servants involved in elaborating the strategy and action plan have built explicit and common understanding of their Ministry’s objectives, that will help them plan their activities and also implement the new appraisal system.

1. **Generalizations/lessons drawn from this experience**
2. While implementing the Public Administration Reform, public institutions often require complex change, which is to be supported by multidimensional assistance in the field of organizational development, rather than narrowly focused interventions. Seen differently, implementing one, smaller aspect of reform often casts light on larger deficiencies that need to be addressed first, to clear way for that smaller segment reform.
3. The implementation of the new Law of Civil Service is putting into operational practice new human resources management requirements, that relate to ranking, performance planning and evaluation systems. To be effective, these adjustments would need to link up with the wider, strategic planning processes within the public organization. In this way, performance of individual civil servants will be tied to evaluating the degree of success of the departments and whole agencies/ministries in meeting their stated policy and/or strategic objectives.
4. Consequently, such reform support projects as the PAR project often face situations when for the successful implementation of the project, a target / beneficiary institution, (as was the case of the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara) requires broader, more comprehensive assistance than planned and expected at the initial phase of the project.
5. It is thus is important to take into account the following observations:
* When planning assistance to a partner / beneficiary organization, it is necessary to assess the extent of readiness for this change: is the institution willing and capable to successfully implement a particular initiative?
* Launching smaller initiatives should not necessarily be delayed if there is a perception of more general weaknesses. Sometimes, the overarching problems cannot be properly articulated by the leadership, managers and staff before an attempt made at narrower changes allows them to track the symptoms and diagnose the nature of a wider problem.
* It is advisable that the reform support projects like the PAR project engage in collaborative partnership with the beneficiaries, listen to their evolving needs and are both flexible and adaptable – addressing those shortfalls that are preventing the achievement of the overall objective of PAR..

**Case Study II**

**The role of Public Service Development Agency (PSDA) in the field of public service delivery - Need for clarity of mandate**

* PSDA is a well-established public institution under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), with qualified and motivated employees, capable of producing and delivering high-quality services.
* Apart from producing individual services, PSDA is tasked to coordinate and support other public institutions in developing public services. However, its mandate in this field is not clearly defined and its powers are considerably limited.
* Consequently, PSDA’s actual capacity to influence other public institutions in the area of Public Service Design is rather limited and there is a risk that practical implementation of a unified approach to Public Service Design and Delivery may be delayed.

There is a need to revise and clarify the PSDA mandate when it comes to assuring the development of public services in other state agencies and to re-consider, whether it is appropriate to retain the PSDA as an agency under MoJ, or to change the level of subordination of either the PSDA as a whole, or its coordinating function.

1. **Description of the problem/challenge**

Over the last decade, the Government of Georgia has implemented comprehensive reforms to improve public service delivery in various agencies. The state’s overall capacity to deliver customer-oriented and timely services has increased substantially. Despite overall progress in advancing and improving public service delivery, there is no unified approach to public service design and delivery and there is a large gap in public service delivery practices across agencies at the local and national level.

Under Georgia’s Public Administration Reform Roadmap,the aim of the reform in the **Public Service Delivery** field is to improve the service delivery system so that it becomes citizen-oriented and well-managed and ensures access to high-quality services for all citizens. The Public Administration Reform Roadmap 2020 (PAR Roadmap 2020) adopted by the Government in 2015 has identified the aforesaid gap in public service design and delivery and emphasized that the public services design process is not well-structured. Namely, the Roadmap underlined the problem as follows:

* lack of a uniform high-quality service delivery policy, which shall ensure development of the governmental services with due account for consumers’ needs
* lack of a uniform legislative framework in the service delivery and e-service field
* lack of formal quality assurance systems

Specific objective of the reform in the service delivery field has been defined as follows: **to develop a uniform policy for provision of high-quality services that will ensure that the governmental services meet the consumers’ needs.**

The duty to coordinate and support public institutions in developing public services has been ‘delegated’ to the PSDA, which is a separate public agency (LEPL) under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. However, its mandate and powers in this field are not clearly defined. For instance it is unclear, coordination of which public services falls under the Agency mandate. Apart from the mentioned coordinating function in public services field the PSDA is directly responsible for provision of dozens of services, including:

* registration of civil status acts and related services;
* issuance of identification and travel documents;
* issuance of residence permits to foreigners;
* determination of stateless status;
* document apostille and legalization;
* maintenance of a uniform population register.

PSDA, which is nowadays regarded as one of the major actors in this field, is characterized by good inner competence, and also, high motivation and dedication of the mid-level management. Nevertheless, PSDA, which apart from developing the Public Service Design and Delivery policy has been also pursuing two other major strategic goals,[[55]](#footnote-55) practically finds it hard to coordinate development of the Public Service Design and Delivery policy throughout the country, facing certain bureaucratic challenges when interacting with other ministries.

More specifically, the PSDA does not have any efficient mechanism to either enforce or supervise policies in other public institutions, and consequently the process of development and implementation of relevant policy is delayed.

Work towards the development of a policy document on unified standards of public service design and delivery commenced in 2017 with PAR project support, continued in 2018 and it was expected that the document would be approved by the PAR Council or by the Government in 2018 and that its implementation in selected public entities would begin the same year. However, this deadline has been missed and the new dedline set for 2019, though the document, a draft version of which was presented in February 2018, has not been approved as of May 2019 and its adoption as per the PAR Action Plan 2019-2020 is now scheduled by the end of third quarter of 2019[[56]](#footnote-56).

1. **How the problem/challenge was solved? What measures were taken to overcome the aforesaid challenge?**

**PAR project efforts –** In 2017 and 2018,the PAR project’s Service Delivery component mostly focused on developing a uniform approach in public service design and delivery, as well as on elaboration of a Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery. In 2017 the project supported the first comprehensive assessment of the state of service delivery in Georgia and initiated the drafting of a policy document on common guiding principles and standards for public service delivery. These measures targeted the established discrepancies in the quality of service delivery between various service provider agencies, but also between the national and local levels. The international and local experts hired by the project have developed the *Georgian Public Service Delivery Baseline Assessment Report* which provides an in-depth overview of the public service delivery practices in Georgia and highlights best practices and existing gaps. This was the first document of its kind developed in Georgia. Its comprehensive character sets the stage for the government to holistically approach public service delivery within the context of PAR.

The Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery (PSDD), offering a set of common guiding principles and standards on the design, delivery, pricing and quality assurance of public services in Georgia was finalized in February 2018. The international and local experts hired by the project presented the policy document to the PAR Council on February 16, 2018. The document creates the basis for the subsequent gradual adaptation and harmonization of the service quality standards across the service provider agencies.

Although the process of elaboration of the Policy Document on Public Service Design and Delivery, as well as the process of communication with public institutions and its consideration/agreement process, required hands-on facilitation from experts and representatives of the PSDA and the PAR project, coupled with the intensive participation and coordination from the AoG, to add increased legitimacy to the process, its approval by the PAR Council and the Government has been delayed and all earlier deadlines have been missed.

Once the policy document is approved, the implementation process could face similar challenges. There is a risk that practical implementation of a single approach to Public Service Design and Delivery may be delayed due to PSDA’s unclear mandate, despite the agency’s expertise and external support it has received.

1. **Generalizations/Lessons drawn from this experience**
* The mandate and powers of PSDA as the body coordinating Public Service Design and Delivery sphere are not explicit enough.
* Even if there was a clearly defined mandate, it should be taken into account that the agency has two more strategic objectives of crucial importance - a) to keep a uniform population register, and, b) to directly provide dozens of public services, including: identification documents, registration of civil status acts, issuance of residency permits to foreigners, establishment of stateless person’s status, etc. Provision of such complex services in a high-quality manner is a top priority for the agency’s management. Under such circumstances, it is difficult for the agency’s leadership to prioritize the development of the Public Service Design and Delivery. Consequently, the management’s dedication to this area varies according to changes in managers' personalities and other external circumstances.
* The Agency is under the jurisdiction of one of the ministries (Ministry of Justice), and giving it a coordinating function over other ministries (and their agencies) seems misplaced from the hierarchical point of view. Therefore, Public Service Design and Delivery related issues promoted by the Agency are not duly reflected in other ministries’ priorities.
* A clearly defined agency mandate, coupled with the political leadership’s systematic support, for example at the ministry level, could have played a positive role in this area. However, given the numerous areas under the responsibility of the Minister of Justice and the Minister’s wide-ranging political agenda, this issue is unlikely to get elevated among the ministry leadership’s priorities in the near future.

It is, therefore, necessary to discuss the issue of PSDA’s mandate for coordination of public service provision. One of the possible solutions could be to separate the Public Service Design and Delivery coordination function from PSDA and to place it at the cabinet level, for example, by transferring it to the Government’s Administration, which has formal authority to coordinate cross-cutting policies. This implies that the core competency for service design and delivery can be separated from PSDA’s daily operations in other fields. Should that not be possible (in terms of staff shortage and technological constraints) the PSDA as a whole can be hierarchically elevated to become the cabinet-level agency.

1. Certain sections of this report contain observations that pertain to the period during which this report was written, which extends up to July 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. A modern civil service failed to consolidate in Georgia after it achieved independence in the early 1990s. Under severe economic and political strain, the civil service had been undermotivated and undertrained. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The PAR roadmap aims to set up a comprehensive conceptual framework and tools for its implementation until 2020, is targeted towards a transparent, predictable, responsible, and efficient public administration, which would meet the society’s demands and correspond to European standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Visa Liberalization Action Plan with the EU can be accessed here: <http://migration.commission.ge/files/vlap-eng.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. So far in the project’s lifetime, four Heads of AoG and two deputies responsible for PAR have changed. Also, the policy planning and coordination function has been re-organized twice. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. PAR reform has been implemented under the watch of three Prime Ministers so far. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Major changes were planned, such as the introduction of the unified training school for civil servants and a decision to create a predominantly “closed” civil service, where career growth happens mostly within the system. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Law on Civil Service and other regulatory pieces gave a significant flexibility to line ministries to customize systems (e.g. in human resources management) to their particular circumstances. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The EU Delegation has been engaged by providing budgetary support and technical assistance, as well as a recent multi-year technical assistance. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. USAID in this area is represented by the Good Governance Initiative (GGI). GGI offers technical and expert assistance to improve the administrative and financial management of public institutions at all levels; increase the openness of government; strengthen policy development and lawmaking processes; and strengthen institutional oversight of government. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The Policy Planning and Coordination (PPC) department currently consists of four units: i) Policy Planning Unit (PPU); ii) Donor Coordination Unit (DCU); iii) Reforms and Innovations Unit (RIU), which is mainly responsible for e-governance coordination at the national level; and, iv) Public Administration Unit (PAU) responsible for the overall PAR coordination together with PPU which is more focusing on the Policy Planning pillar of the wider PAR. The fourth unit was established quite recently (April 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. PPU also serves as Secretariat to the Sustainable Development Council and is responsible for the Sustainable Development Goals. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. While line ministries are responsible for sectoral coordination, DCU is responsible for general coordination. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. One of AoG’s functions is to ensure the compliance of draft strategic documents and action plans with policy making guidelines. After AoG’s check for compliance, respective agencies are expected to revise the submitted draft document before initiating implementation. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. USAID has supported the Ministry of Health in strengthening the policy making process. This support has taken place prior to the approval of policy guidelines by AoG, which USAID does not expect to be very different from the principles they have promoted in the Ministry of Health. In effect, the methodological support that the PAR project has provided to AoG has built on previous foundations laid in this area by USAID and EU. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The PAR project too will provide support for this type of training starting from September 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The initial methodology was developed with GIZ support four/five years ago. All other agencies (UNDP, USAID) are now relying on that original source for further development of the methodology. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. An example of this is the presidential election of October-November 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Examples of this are the shift of the Chief of Administration to a ministerial position in April 2018, resignation of Prime Minister in June 2018, and resignation of the Head of Ajara Autonomous Republic Government in July 2018. So far in the project’s lifetime, four Heads of AoG and two deputies responsible for PAR have changed. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. For example, while the line ministries were in the process of putting in place the crucial elements of civil service reform, including the revision of the staff levels and grades, as well as preparations for performance appraisals, a decision to reduce the number of Ministries from 14 to 11 was taken in June 2018. This followed an earlier reform to reduce the number of ministries from 18 to 14 that started in November 2017 and was still not completed. Also, the policy planning and coordination functions at AoG has been re-organized twice since the project started. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. For example, training on policy making should be seen as an integral part of training for the civil service, and therefore both should be delivered using the same approach. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. With the adoption of the by-law “On Assessment of Professional Capacities, Professional Development Standards and Rules for Professional Development of the Career Civil Servants”, the package of by-laws associated with the Civil Service Law is fully in force. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. LEPLs are also difficult to regulate, since the types of agencies that fall under this legal category differ widely in their type and function - a village theatre company and a large service-providing agency share the same legal status. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. [www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Baseline-Measurement-Report-2018-Georgia.pdf](http://www.sigmaweb.org/publications/Baseline-Measurement-Report-2018-Georgia.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The last PAR Council meeting took place in March 2019. The one before it was in October 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The government has assigned additional staff to the AoG’s PPU, serving as a Secretariat for the PAR Council and also the PAR expert level Working Groups. However, the number may not be sufficient enough to effectively manage and coordinate the reform agenda. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. This section will present only a tentative analysis of sustainability, as a complete assessment of sustainability will be possible only at the end of the project. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. As the PAR Roadmap document noted, the preamble of the Association Agreement (pg. 261/5) states: “…WILLING to contribute to the political, socio-economic and institutional development of Georgia through wide-ranging cooperation in a broad spectrum of areas of common interest, such as the development of civil society, good governance, including in the field of taxation, trade integration and enhanced economic cooperation, institution building, public administration and civil service reform and fight against corruption, the reduction of poverty and cooperation in the field of freedom, security and justice necessary to effectively implement this Agreement and noting the EU's readiness to support relevant reforms in Georgia;…”. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Principles of Public Administration, A Framework for ENP countries, OECD. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. In particular, CPD’s Outcome 1 which states that “by 2020, expectations of citizens of Georgia for voice, rule of law, public sector reforms, and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance at all levels”. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Initially, needs assessments were conducted in 14 ministries, but after the restructuring of the government 11 assessments were completed. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. More precisely, the development of the following two key documents - Glossary of Terms and Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook – and a number of other studies. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Initially called Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The Georgia “Public Sector Financial Management Reform Support” assessment provides a goo overview of reforms in the area of public financial management. The report can be accessed here: http://ieg.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/Data/reports/ppar\_georgiapublicsector.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. This is documented in the review of the implementation of the Change Management Plans by individual ministries. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. The PAR project has supported introduction of performance appraisals in the following institutions: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Culture (merged with Ministry of Science and Education), Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons, Refugees and Accommodation (merged with Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs), Ministry of Finance and Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Ministry Education of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara. Support was also provided to other bodies such as the Administration of the President and High Council of Justice. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The effort is divided into four stages: a) analysis of best international practices in public service ADR; b) elaboration of recommendations on enhancing ADR system in Georgia; c) development of the relevant guiding documents; d) training of trainers. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. The City of Marneuli and villages of Sadakhlo, Lormughanlo and Kabali where Azerbaijani minorities live were selected for this research. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The “grants initiatives” evaluation report noted however that this study was of a more academic nature, rather than applied research. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. No specific evidence was noted in the “grants” evaluation report on this. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Two studies that were noted to require a more practical approach were “*Training and Development of Civil Servants in Georgian Public Sector*” and “*Between the State and Poor-Social Agents’ Views on Targeted Social Assistance Program*”. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. The Public Service Hall (PSH) is a LEPL operating under the Ministry of Justice. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The implementation of CAF is recommended by the PSDD policy document in all service provider agencies, to help state institutions plan and improve organizations in their entirety, including the strengthening of service processes and customer orientation. CAF is also a highly recommended quality management instrument for public services as per the SIGMA framework for the Principles of Public Administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Will the establishment of the unit ensure the implementation of the policy? Is this sufficient? [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. UNDP’s support for the Georgian Parliament has been ongoing since 2004. Previous support focused on budget processes, local governance reform, human resources management & lawmaking, and international partnerships. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. This type of accountability is referred to as “horizonal accountability”. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. In the current programme cycle this support has been provided through the “Media Monitoring of the 2018 Presidential Elections” project. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. This work has taken place in the framework of the “*Fostering Local & Regional Development*” project. The first phase of this initiative, 2012 – 2017, focused on the assistance to the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia in the key reform areas. The second phase, 2018 – 2021, is supporting and promoting the ongoing reform, focusing on decentralization, local economic development, civic engagement and the increased capacities of the national and local institutions to deliver quality services at the local level. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. As an example of this, GIZ has ongoing projects on public finance, legal approximation and local governance and has decided to integrate all of them into one single governance programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Evaluation of Civic Initiative and Research Grants in the framework of “Supporting Public Administration Reform

(PAR) in Georgia” project, UNDP Georgia, January 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/policy/2016/Evaluation_policy_EN_2016.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Also refers to measurement progress in outcome 2. By 2020 all living in Georgia - including minorities, people with disabilities, vulnerable women, migrants, internally displaced persons and persons in need of international protection – have trust in and improved access to the justice system, which is child-friendly, enforces national strategies and operates in accordance with United Nations human rights standards. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. The procedure was approved by the Georgian Government on 28 April, 2017 (Decree #220), and it took effect on 1 January, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. The PSDA tasks, apart from policy coordination in the service field, are divided into 2 major groups / tasks: - 1) to keep a uniform population register and to provide relevant services to public institutions; 2) to provide dozens of services individually / directly to citizens. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. While the implementation of the PSDD policy document has not officially begun, several members of the Service Delivery Working Group, such as LEPL Public Service Hall (PSH), operating under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia and being the largest service provider agency in the country, have started to align their activities to its main principles. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)