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| Brussels / Tbilisi, July 2013 | Franklin De Vrieze |

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| **"*A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy"*** | *End-of-project evaluation of the UNDP parliamentary project in Georgia and recommendations* |



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DISCLAIMER

The report *“End-of-project evaluation of the UNDP parliamentary project in Georgia and recommendations”* has been drafted by Franklin De Vrieze. It was developed in the framework of the project “A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy”, funded by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Georgia, and co-funded and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Georgia. The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of these institutions.

**Acronyms**

**BFC** Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament

**CEF** Centre of Excellence in Finance (Slovenia)

**CO** Country Office (UNDP)

**CoE** Council of Europe

**CSO** Civil Society Organization

**GIZ** German International Cooperation Agency

**GoG** Government of Georgia

**HR(M)** Human Resource (Management)

**ICT** Information and Communication Technology

**IPU** Inter-Parliamentary Union

**LSG** Local Self-Government

**M&E** Monitoring and Evaluation

**MDGs** Millennium Development Goals

**MoF** Ministry of Finance

**MoJ** Ministry of Justice

**MoU** Memorandum of Understanding

**MP** Member of Parliament

**MRDI** Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure

**MTR** Mid-Term Review

**NALA** National Association of Local Authorities

**NDI** National Democratic Institute

**NGO** Non-Governmental Organization

**OHCHR** Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

**PA** Performance Audit

**PBB** Program Based Budget

**PBO** Parliamentary Budget Office

**PFM** Public Finance Management

**PMC** Personnel Management Centre

**PMCG** Policy and Management Consulting Group

**PR** Public Relations

**RRF** Results and Resources Framework

**SAO** State Audit Office (formerChamber of Control of Georgia)

**SPA** Senior Parliamentary Advisor

**ToR** Terms of Reference

**UNDP** United Nations Development Programme

**UNFPA** United Nations Population Fund

**UNICEF** United Nations Children Fund

**WFD** Westminster Foundation for Democracy

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***Franklin De Vrieze***

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**I. Executive Summary**

UNDP in Georgia began to support the institutional strengthening of the Parliament with a first four years project in 2004-2008. A second project, named "A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy" has been initiated in 2010 and is about to conclude.

It was designed around four components: budget processes, local governance reform, human resources management & lawmaking, and international partnerships.

In line with the UNDP policy on program management, an independent End-of-Project Evaluation was commissioned. UNDP Georgia contracted Franklin De Vrieze as international, independent evaluator for this assignment. The evaluation mission took place between 15 and 21 June 2013.

The objective of this evaluation was to assess the implementation of the project since its start in 2010 (results, achievements, constraints), to review the effectiveness of UNDP support to the project, to analyze the relevance of project activities, and to produce an overall report on findings and lessons learned.

The evaluation has been made against the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) in the Project Document, the annual work plans, the project progress reports, findings from the Mid Term Review (MTR) in 2011, and other documents made available by the UNDP and the Project Manager.

The independent evaluator conducted a wide range of interviews with interlocutors both within and outside the Parliament of Georgia, and engaged with other international partners of the Parliament. The evaluator visited both Tbilisi and Kutaisi, the current seat of the Parliament.

Based upon the analysis deriving from the assessment, the evaluator structured his evaluation report under three main headings: (i) project design, (ii) project implementation and (iii) project management. Under the section “Project design” the evaluator analyzed the extent to which the Project Document provided a solid and workable basis for successful project implementation. The section “Project implementation” evaluated the activities against the stated outputs and the RRF. As per the ToR of the assignment, the evaluation was based on five criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The section “Project management” reviewed how the implementation, management and evaluation mechanisms were structured and managed.

The evaluator identified a number of achievements by the project during the years of its implementation:

* The Program Based Budgeting (PBB) methodology, as developed by the Ministry of Finance, took shape with the full input of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). Throughout the project period, the Project advised the PBO on its input in the discussions on the PBB methodology. The project launched a variety of capacity building activities both for the Members and Staff of the Parliament, which contributed to the adoption of the PBB methodology and the enhanced capacity of parliament to apply this methodology. It was noted that the project did succeed in bringing on board specialized technical expertise on program budgeting and budget cycle issues.
* A potential result of project efforts, though a result still in the waiting, is the expected upgrade of the role and functioning of the Parliament Budget Office, with a larger number of staff, a mandate to serve beyond the Budget and Finance Committee exclusively and also be of service to all MPs, including by reviewing financial impact statements of draft laws and conducting financial estimates for a private member bill. The forthcoming substantial reorientation and upgrade of the mandate and resources of the PBO by the new parliament leadership can -- in part -- be attributed to the high profile attention and support of the UNDP project to this Office.
* With the support of the project, the Committee on Local Governance during the previous mandate of parliament took a lead role to push forward the harmonization process of sectoral legislation with the Organic Law of Georgia on Local Self-Government and the Council of Europe recommendations. As a result, and during 2011, the Committee successfully advocated for the adoption of amendments to 27 sectoral laws. Amendments to several other laws have been prepared by the legal expert and later adopted by the Parliament during 2012 spring session. It is fair to say that the level of activity and results of this Committee has dropped considerably after the 2012 elections. Nevertheless, sustainability of project's results is being "guarded" through the recently launched UNDP Project “Fostering Regional and Local Governance in Georgia”, which has a parliamentary component targeting Committee’s capacity building and which works with the Parliamentary Project’s Local Governance Expert
* During the period of implementation, the Project provided considerable support to the Parliament in developing a modern HRM system, with as a result that all reform proposals are now on the table, waiting for clear decisions by parliament and commitment for their implementation. Comprehensive recommendations in the area of human resources cover topics such as performance appraisal, staff recruitments, etc. Results of an organizational survey, a special handbook on staff recruitment, intellectual tests, etc. have been provided to the Parliament’s HR Department.The project also contributed to a substantially better qualified and knowledgeable parliamentary staff due to the many trainings, technical advice and coaching provided.
* Following the 2012 elections, newly elected MPs were offered an induction program in the area of budgetary oversight and local governance. The project consulted and supported the newly-elected Parliament (Speaker and his Cabinet) with the organization of the first donor coordination event and ensured knowledge transfer in the areas crucial for Parliament’s management (HR recommendations, overview of donor activities in Parliament in 2008-2012, etc.)

The evaluator also found a number of gaps in project implementation. The absence of a well functioning Project Board deprived the project of an appropriate oversight tool for Senior Management to discuss and address issues around planning, implementation, human resources and management of the project. In case there existed a Project Board with the participation of elected Members and staff, it could have played a vital role in further enhancing the involvement of the Georgian MPs towards the project.

A number of recommendations included in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) report have not been taken forward, such as the proposals to develop an “2012 Roadmap for Parliamentary Follow-up to the Reports of Chamber of Control”, or to engage a part-time international Senior Parliamentary Advisor in order to provide additional technical knowledge and work directly with the parliament leadership (see annex 2 to this report). The main reason was that, due to expected parliamentary elections and Parliament’s move to Kutaisi, it was decided to downsize capacity development activities. In addition, there was very few political will under the previous parliament administration to establish an effective strong parliament oversight on budget matters or to conduct comprehensive reform in the area of human resources management; an issue which currently seems to be changing.

In summary, the evaluator is of the opinion that the project has played an important and strategic role in enhancing the functioning of Parliament of Georgia between 2010 and 2013, while recognizing that a limited number of issues could have been addressed differently. The evaluator hopes that this report will provide both broad and more focused guidance to the Parliament, the UNDP and the EU Delegation in the design and implementation of the successor project.

**II. Introduction to the Parliament of Georgia and the UNDP project *"A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy"***

The Supreme Council (“Parlamenti”) of Georgia first met in 1918 and was formally established in the country’s 1921 constitution. Shortly after the constitution was drawn up, it was rendered inoperative by Georgia’s annexation and incorporation into the Soviet Union. Georgia gained independence in 1991, and in 1995 Parliament drafted and adopted a new constitution, which calls for a unicameral legislature.

Following the “Rose Revolution” in 2004, sweeping constitutional amendments altered Parliament’s powers. The 2004 amendments introduced increased presidential powers and a government under a prime minister as a body of executive power separate from the presidency.

By the Georgian constitution, the parliament is assigned a critical role as a supreme law-making authority, setting the country’s principal policy directions, oversight of the executive, and representation of the population (Constitution of Georgia, Article 48). The parliament is also responsible for voting and overseeing the execution of the national budget (Article 93). The Georgian governance system is based on the separation and balance of powers between the leading state institutions.

The present legislature is a 150-seat, single-chamber body elected every four years. Half of the Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected from 73 single-seat electoral districts, while the remaining half is selected proportionally according to a nationwide vote by party. The general principles of Parliament's work are set out in the Georgian Constitution, while the more specific rules are given in the Parliamentary Regulations.

Parliament has 15 standing committees and the Bureau, a body responsible for coordinating the legislature's activities. Parliament is also responsible for running the National Library. Parliament employs 1,027 employees (603 permanent staff members and 424 on the basis of short and long term contracts, from which 60 work in fractions, 254 in Committees, 19 in Bureau and 91 in the departments of the Office).

A group of at least six MPs can form a faction: a Parliamentary group that enjoys a number of powers and privileges. In practice, factions are usually formed along party lines. A faction or factions that comprise more than half of the total number of MPs can form the Parliamentary Majority, while a faction or factions that comprise more than half of MPs outside the Parliamentary Majority can form the Parliamentary Minority. The Majority and the Minority also enjoy certain privileges. There are a total of 10 factions in the Georgian Parliament today.

According to the Constitution, Parliament's allocations in the state budget for any given year cannot be smaller than the previous year's sum, unless the Parliament itself consents to their reduction. It is up to Parliament to decide on the distribution of the funds allocated to the Parliament in the state budget. Parliament is also in control of drafting its own budget.

Reviewing the Parliament’s influence over the government, the Georgian Constitution provides that the Parliament can remove the Prime Minister with a vote of no confidence, and can vote no confidence in the government as a whole. Georgian MPs are prohibited from serving simultaneously in ministerial positions. The Georgian Parliament can question officials from the executive and can establish committees to investigate the executive. The Georgian Parliament has formal oversight powers over the so-called agencies of coercion: military, police and intelligence services.

Parliament has the power to influence and scrutinize the national budget through all of its stages. The draft budget is to be discussed within the Parliamentary committees and factions, as well as the majority and the minority. The opinion of each of these groups is sent, via the Committee on Finance and Budget, to the Speaker, who forwards the comments to the government. After a second round of comments, the government presents a final draft which is to be put to the vote at a plenary session. Once the budget is approved, the government is to submit quarterly implementation reports to the Parliament, while the committees conduct quarterly reviews in their respective fields and are authorized to request relevant information from executive bodies.

Instruments to strengthen the Parliamentary oversight role are the State Audit Office (former Chamber of Control)[[1]](#footnote-1), the Public’s Defender (Ombudsperson) and other independent institutions reporting to Parliament. The appointment of the heads of these independent agencies is an important instrument for Parliament to ensure accountability of the agencies and safeguard their independency from the executive. A review of current practices indicates that the appointment procedures are uneven and not consistent. In addition, Parliament could provide more thorough follow-up to the work of the independent and regulatory agencies, which are instruments to enhance the oversight role of Parliament over the executive.

Parliamentary outreach and public information has been well developed in recent years. Media and the civil society enjoy unrestricted access to Parliament and can freely obtain the information about how it operates. Plenary sessions and committee sessions are broadcast by the second channel of the Public Broadcaster. Journalists, NGO representatives and private citizens are able to attend plenary and committee sessions. Parliament has a special department dealing with citizen requests for public information, as well as a system for tracking every single request received by the legislature. As a result, Parliament normally responds to queries in due time. Parliament has strengthened its outreach in an innovative way through social media.

While above overview confirms that the Georgian Parliament's powers are largely secure from a legal point of view and it has many instruments at its disposal to exercise its powers, it’s real authority and influence in the previous parliamentary composition was very modest, due to the then ruling party's overwhelming control over 80 percent of the seats in Parliament and the Parliament's voluntary submission to the government's will.

The October 2012 parliamentary elections marked a new remarkable development in Georgia - the first peaceful transfer of power to the opposition. Moreover, for the first time in the two-decade history of independent Georgia the previous ruling party has not disappeared from the political scene as it had happened before (in 1992 and 2003), but has entered the Parliament with a sizable share of seats and has sufficient capacities to create political balance in the House. As for the Staff, the top management changed, but this did not affect much the general staff (including, mid-level management) and there were only isolated cases of staff change. This happened practically for the first time owing to the political will of the new Government for institutional sustainability and the professional skills of the parliamentary staff.

Another significant development has been the move of the Parliament to Kutaisi, which has limited its reach of Executive, civil society and media. However, the newly initiated Constitutional amendments envisage the bringing of the Parliament back to Tbilisi.

The Georgian Parliament is a member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and Euronest Parliamentary Assembly. It has established links with the European Parliament as well as with the Baltic and Nordic parliaments. The Parliament’s leadership seeks to build on these and forge new partnerships with other European parliaments during its forthcoming mandate.

The relationship between the ruling Georgian Dream coalition and Prime Minister Bidhzina Ivanishvili , on the one hand, and President Mikheil Saakashvili and the United National Movement (UNM), on the other hand, is acrimonious and often very tense. The European Policy Center in Brussels estimates that the Georgian Dream Coalition partners -- Ivanishvili’s own Georgian Dream Party, the Republican Party headed by Parliamentary Chairman David Usupashvili, and Defence Minister Irakli Alasania’s Free Democrats – are unlikely to be together for the next election; while it expects that two or three groups emerge from the UNM once President Saakashvili’s term as president ends in October.[[2]](#footnote-2) The clashes between ruling parties and opposition parties go beyond expected discussions and tend to negatively affect the international image of Georgia. The resolution unanimously adopted by the Georgian Parliament on 8 March 2013 re-affirming the country’s European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations has not managed to keep the foreign policy issues out of these clashes; and indicated the need for an operational consensus on European issues.

The European Union has been a good friend of Georgia over the years, providing financial assistance, political support and mentoring. Georgia is now on track to sign an Association Agreement with the EU at the Vilnius Eastern Partnership summit in November 2013. This will open new possibilities for co-operation in the economic sphere, and financial support and mentoring should increase after that.

UNDP has been partnering with the Georgian Parliament since 2004 with a multifaceted development programme running from 2004 to 2008 that focused on four main areas; supporting a more efficient and transparent law-making process, strengthening Parliament’s human resources, building a modern IT infrastructure, and developing enhanced capacities for public communications and dialogue. The former project, Strengthening Effectiveness and Transparency of the Parliament of Georgia, provided a solid framework upon which to launch a new programme.

Based on past experience and independent project evaluation, UNDP launched a new project this time oriented towards substantive (rather than operational) support. The Project “A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy” (January 2010-June 2013) involves all directions of Parliament’s constitutional responsibility: policy- and law-making, representation and executive oversight.

Reluctance from the Parliament’s previous leadership to push forward certain reform directions created a number of challenges, as the revised Project Document (2013) outlined. Lack of political will to effectively exercise budgetary control hindered the strengthening process of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) and its transformation into a major analytical/research tool for the MPs. Besides, the Parliament’s previous administration was sensitive to developing modern human resource management (HRM) system and resistant to implementing substantial changes in the organization. Communication between the parliament and the society remains fragile, uneven and incomplete.

However, since 2010, Parliament's professional capacities have enhanced in several directions: understanding of program budgeting principles increased, professional English language skills improved, law-making capacities raised. With UNDP support, the Parliament pushed forward the harmonization process of sectoral legislation with the Organic Law of Georgia on Local Self-Governance and Council of Europe (CoE) recommendations.

**III. The End-of-Project Evaluation Mission in 2013**

**3.1. Evaluation objectives**

As requested in the ToR, the evaluator has assessed the achievements, results, outputs and constraints of the project implementation during the project’s 3.5 years of implementation. The assessment was made against the logical framework or Results and Resources Framework (RRF) in the Project Document, annual work plans and the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review (MTR) in 2011.

In reviewing the implementation of the project, the evaluator looked at the organization of the planned activities as well as their impact on the functioning of the Parliament of Georgia, the service delivery of the staff to the MPs, and the effectiveness of the input of external stakeholders. The evaluator reviewed, for instance, the piloting of the methodology of program budgeting and to what extent this has the potential to generate more accountability on public finances in Georgia.

Based upon the findings of the MTE, and in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group’s (UNEG) Standards, the evaluator also reviewed “*what evaluation follow-up mechanisms exist that ensure that evaluation recommendations are properly utilized and implemented in a timely fashion and that evaluation findings are linked to future activities.”*[[3]](#footnote-3) Therefore, a more detailed analysis on the follow-up to the recommendations of the 2011 MTR has been conducted (see table in annex 2).

**3.2. Structure of the evaluation report**

The evaluator has structured his review, and the final evaluation report, under three main headings: project design, project implementation and project management.

Under the section ‘Project design’, the Project Document and the implementation framework as established at the start of the project were reviewed. The evaluator analyzed to what extent the Project Document has provided a solid and workable basis for successful project implementation.

The section ‘Project implementation’ evaluated the activities against the stated objectives in the four program components: budget processes, local governance reform, human resources management & lawmaking, and international partnerships.

The section ‘Project management’ reviewed how the management, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have performed.

At the end of the report, there is a conceptual chapter discussing the lessons learned from this project; followed by recommendations for future parliamentary project planning in Georgia.

**3.3. Criteria for the end-of-project evaluation**

The evaluator conducted the evaluation in an objective, impartial, open and participatory manner, based on empirically verified evidence that is valid and reliable.[[4]](#footnote-4) The evaluation of the implementation of the project outputs is based on four criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact/sustainability:

* Relevance: Evaluating to what extent the Project addressed the existing and changing needs of the Parliament and how well the Project displayed a coherent set of activities.
* Efficiency: Evaluating to what extent the Project inputs delivered the desired outputs in an efficient way, with minimum waste of time, human and material resources.
* Effectiveness: Evaluating how much the program outputs influenced the institutional capacity of Parliament to become a more democratic, functional and inclusive institution.
* Impact/Sustainability: Evaluating to what extent the results of the Project will last, in the short run (impact) and long run (sustainability), with focus on national ownership over the process.

The project’s results have been rated for each of these aspects. For each of them, an indicative mark between ‘low’ and ‘very high’ was given, based upon the evaluation conducted for each of the four program components, and with a narrative justification.

A mark ‘low’ means that the set of activities under that output did not meet the requirements in terms of one of the criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact / sustainability). A mark ‘medium’ means that the set of activities under that output only partially met the requirements in terms of the stated criteria. A mark ‘high’ means that the set of activities under that output fully met the requirements in terms of the criteria reviewed. A mark ‘very high’ means that the set of activities under that output exceeded the requirements for the stated criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact /sustainability).[[5]](#footnote-5) The evaluation resulted in an ‘evaluation chart’ for each of the four main program components.

**3.4. Methodology for the end-of-project evaluation**

In order to conduct the end-of-project evaluation, the evaluator applied a multi-dimensional methodology.

* Through desk-review, the evaluator obtained in-depth knowledge and understanding of the documented contents and activities of the project. There were three types of documents reviewed: project annual progress reports; knowledge products such as research documents and PMCG needs assessment of parliament; and activity reports. The desk review also considered the relevant legal framework (Constitution of Georgia, Rules of Procedure of Parliament), the programming documents on the UN Georgia, and external assessments on Parliament (Transparency International). Conceptual back-ground documents during the desk review included relevant policy documents on parliamentary development such as the “UNDP Strategy Note on Parliamentary Development” (2009)[[6]](#footnote-6), the “EC Reference Document on Engaging with Parliaments Worldwide” (2010)[[7]](#footnote-7), the “IPU Parliamentary Self-Assessment Toolkit” (2008)[[8]](#footnote-8) and Standards for Democratic Parliaments (2010)[[9]](#footnote-9).
* The evaluator conducted in Tbilisi and Kutaisi a series of structured interviews with Committee chairpersons, Deputies and senior staff of parliament, national expert, contracted partners and other stakeholders. The evaluation team also interviewed UNDP CO senior staff and the project manager.
* The evaluator attempted to collect quantitative information on the impact of the project’s initiatives. As discussed further in the report, this has been achieved to a certain extent.
* The evaluator observed one of the key project activities taking place during the time of the mission: the budget workshop with three Committees, as discussed in the section on component 1 of the project.
* Finally, the evaluator presented his preliminary findings at a validation meeting on 21 June 2013, which included the senior management of the UNDP Country Office and the project manager. The validation meeting provided comments and opinions on the main findings, as incorporated in this report.

**3.5. Challenges to the end-of-project evaluation**

The first conceptual challenge for the evaluation of the project was the attribution question: to what extent can one attribute a change in parliament’s functioning to an intervention by a project? Experience in other countries and in other parliamentary strengthening projects indicates that neither the implementation of specific activities nor the expenditure of resources is necessarily or uni-dimensionally correlated with parliamentary strengthening. This is largely due to the large number of intervening variables in parliamentary performance. Choices by the country’s leadership and parliament’s decisions can have a decisive impact on project implementation. Therefore, there is no substitute for nuanced policy and conceptual analysis. For instance, the change in political majority in parliament seems to have generated a renewed political interest and political will to implement structural reforms as prepared by the project over the last years. While the quality of the work in developing these proposals during these years of the project is beyond any doubt, the impact of the work depends now to a large extent on the changed political external environment.

A second challenge for the evaluation was to accurately review the sustainability of the project’s achievements. This means one has to assess the ability of supported activities and functions to continue after the project ends. In order to do so, the evaluator reviewed to what extent the project has focused on structures and procedures beyond individual activities and workshops. Lessons learned from the evaluation of other parliamentary projects indicate that specific activities can be sustained by an institution such as parliament if the capacity building project has managed to ensure that the appropriate organizational structures and procedures have been put in place and are observed. The success of such approach depends on the level of national ownership. In this context, it was noted that the project has substantially contributed to the development and adoption of a thorough methodology for program budgeting.

**3.6. Profile of the evaluator**

Franklin De Vrieze is an international parliamentary development and governance expert with almost 20 years experience. He is a former Program Manager of UNDP’s Global Program for Parliamentary Strengthening (GPPS), and in that capacity provided technical advice on issues such as the Benchmarks for Democratic Parliaments and the Global Parliamentary Report.

In 2011, he continued to work on parliamentary strengthening and governance as a independent consultant. He conducted parliamentary evaluation and programming missions in - amongst others - Moldova, Montenegro, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Solomon Islands, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago and Vietnam.

From 2001 to 2008, he worked for the OSCE Mission in Kosovo as Head of the Central Assembly and Political Parties Section. He coordinated the parliamentary capacity building programs and technical assistance projects with the Assembly of Kosovo.

He is an author on parliamentary development and public affairs; and studied political science and international relations at the University of Antwerp in Belgium. He is a Belgian National.

**IV. Assessment of the project "*A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy"***

As mentioned above, the evaluation of the project is divided into three main sections: “Project design”, “Project implementation” and “Project management”.

**4.1. Project Design**

The section on project design reviews to what extent the Project Document has provided a solid and workable basis for successful project implementation. The initial Project Document, drafted in 2009-2010 has been revised in 2012 on the occasion of the no-cost extension of the project, extending the maximum timeframe for implementation from December 2013 to June 2013. The following review of the Project Design analyses the revised Project Document and reviews to what extent comments on some shortcomings in the Project Document as identified in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) have been taken on board while drafting the revised Project Document.

1. The “***situation analysis***” within the Project Document provides a good overview of the context in which this Project Document has been drafted. This context includes the role of the Parliament according to the Georgian Constitution, the democratic transformation since the Rose Revolution, the previous UNDP project (2004-2008), the gender equality instruments and mechanisms which the Parliament with the support of UNDP has established, the improvements in the functioning of Parliament since 2004, and Georgia’s international agenda.

The revised Project Document includes a couple of extra paragraphs following the political changes of 2012. It mentions the reluctance of the previous leadership of parliament to push forward certain reforms and the lack of political will to effectively exercise budgetary control. While these issues are rightfully included in the situation analysis, it is also noted that this analysis cannot be found in the previous annual reports and was put in writing after the change in political leadership.

As mentioned in the MTR report, the situation analysis would have been complete with additional information on the European Commission’s Eastern Partnership Program, it’s importance for Georgia and for the consolidation of the democratic transformation. This is relevant for e.g. the work with the European Integration Committee.

2. The "***strategy chapter***" of the Project Document is comprehensive and well written. It outlines the major Parliamentary responsibility areas in which the project will support capacity development as well as the four project modules or foundations on which the project is built: budget policy, local governance, human resources & law making, and international partnerships. The policy shift from a traditional budget cycle on budget line items to program budgeting has been well argued, indicating the need for capacity support for the Budget and Finance Committee and the Parliament Budget Office. The need for support to the Local Governance Committee and with which partners is also well developed in the Project Document. The rationale for further support to the Parliament’s human resources policy builds upon the results of the previous UNDP project with the Parliament, as one of the few crossovers between the previous and the current UNDP project. The Strategy Chapter has remained largely unchanged in the revised Project Document.

3. The ***sustainability of the project activities*** is briefly described in one paragraph of the Project Document. Considering the mixed results of Parliament’s follow-up to the “sustainability document” at the end of the previous project, a more thorough consideration of sustainability measures in the Project Document of the second project would have been useful. The MTR recommended that a sustainability strategy be developed in 2012 and discussed with Parliament at the Project Board. In this way, the Project Document would have strengthened its sustainability approach if it had a thorough exit strategy, reflecting the views of all stakeholders, in particular stakeholders in Parliament, on a possible UNDP exit from Parliament at the end of the project. The revised Project Document does not provide more insights into the sustainability policy and exit-strategy for this project.

4. ***Assumptions and risks*** are well described in the Project Document. In terms of the different risks, specific countermeasures have been outlined. It would have been useful, as is the case in the project reports, to add marks (between very low and very high, or between 1 and 5) for the likelihood and the impact of each of the risks, as considered at the time of project drafting or start of the project. The different countermeasures are targeted at specific risks, including to raise issues at higher level, such as Project Board and the Speaker of Parliament. These countermeasures are well designed.

5. The ***management arrangements*** in the Project Document are built on the functioning of the Project Board. Particular challenges have occurred in relation to the frequency of the meetings and the composition of the Board. In terms of frequency, the original Project Document stipulated meetings on a 'quarterly basis', while the revised Project Document envisages meetings on 'regular basis'. As far as the composition of the Board is concerned and as mentioned in the MTR, it is advisable that the Project Board includes Parliamentarians from both majority and opposition parties, as well as civil servants. The composition of the Project Board has not been specified in the revised Project Document.

The Project Document refers to a staff structure composed of a project manager and an administrative/financial assistant. Taking into account the four rather diverse technical assistance areas, the MTR advised that the Project Document had foreseen in a (part-time) international Senior Technical Advisor, with the profile of a former member of Parliament or experienced Parliamentary development advisor. This would have brought more “gravitas” and Parliamentary technical expertise to the project team. The issue of a possible Senior Technical Advisor has not been raised in the revised Project Document. The Parliament’s in-kind contribution has been mentioned in the Project Document, along-side providing working space for the project staff. This is good practice and to be welcomed.

6. The section on ***monitoring, evaluation and reporting*** is good. It outlines the quarterly progress reports and annual reports. The MTR recommended an innovative and multi-dimensional communication strategy for the project. Best practice in Parliamentary project is to plan for it from the project design phase onwards.

7. The ***Results and Resources Framework (RRF)*** is a comprehensive overview matrix, outlining the intended outputs, targets for the different project years, indicative activities and responsible parties – as per the UNDP standard format. While the RRF is good, couple of aspects could have been different, as already mentioned in the MTR. The baseline and indicators are now all put under output 1, instead of being structured under the four different outputs. The annual targets are detailed and often quantitative. However, the Project Document did not provide information on the mechanisms how to collect the quantitative data from the activities in order to be able to measure if the annual targets were achieved. Couple of examples: while one of the annual targets stipulates “At least 70% of legislative initiatives opened up for public debate”, the Project Document does not indicate through which mechanism such data will be collected. The same applies for the annual target “Quality of budget scrutiny at committee hearings considerably increased (yes/no) “. It would have been useful to insert budget figures per output in the RRF.

In conclusion, the evaluation of the project design is positive. The Project Document is very comprehensive and it addresses the main project planning components in a professional way.

**4.2. Project Implementation**

As mentioned above, the project has four main project outputs: budget processes, local governance reform, human resources management & lawmaking, and international partnerships. Under each output, we provide a description of the initiatives taken under that output, followed by an evaluation commentary and the evaluation chart.

The evaluation of the implementation of the project outputs is based on four criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact/sustainability:

* Relevance: Evaluating to what extent the Project addressed the existing and changing needs of the Parliament and how well the Project displayed a coherent set of activities.
* Efficiency: Evaluating to what extent the Project inputs delivered the desired outputs in an efficient way, with minimum waste of time, human and material resources.
* Effectiveness: Evaluating how much the program outputs influenced the institutional capacity of Parliament to become a more democratic, functional and inclusive institution.
* Impact/Sustainability: Evaluating to what extent the results of the Project will last, in the short run (impact) and long run (sustainability), with focus on national ownership over the process.

At the end of each output section, a rating for each of these criteria between “low” and “very high”, has been given, for all activities within the specific output.

Output 1: Budget processes

*1.1. Description of activities*

* Support the Parliament in effective involvement in PBB methodology development
* Strengthen knowledge and analytical skills of MPs to review a program-based budget
* Facilitate a process involving all relevant stakeholders in the process, thus building consensus and increased awareness on the PBB approach
* Organize workshops /meetings/ discussions with various national and international stakeholders
* Identify capacity development needs for staff and Parliamentarians in budgetary issues and deliver targeted capacity development programs
* Support the Parliament in preparing and advocating informed conclusion about the draft budget
* Encourage more interaction between the BFC and the State Audit Institution

*1.2. Evaluation Commentary*

The Parliament through its Financial and Budgeting Committee exercises general and consistent oversight over the national budget. Meantime other parliamentary committees are authorized to oversee the budget in the areas falling under their scope of competence. While the traditional line-budget offers few information and thus opportunities for parliamentary oversight, an annual budget document developed as a programme-based budget provides more and more clear information to the parliamentarians.

The Program Based Budgeting (PBB) methodology, as developed by the Ministry of Finance, took shape with the full input of the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). Throughout the project period, the Project advised the PBO on its input in the discussions on the PBB methodology. In June 2011 the Ministry of Finance (MoF) submitted the methodology to the Parliament for review; and the Project played a key role to strengthen the Parliament to discuss, scrutinize and agree on the methodology. Throughout the project period, the Project launched a variety of capacity building activities both for the Members and Staff of the Parliament, which contributed to the adoption of the PBB methodology and the enhanced capacity of parliament to scrutinize program budgets.

The capacity building activities were prepared in full consultation with the chairperson and staff of the Committees. The participatory way of programming by the project manager is to be welcomed. The approach to have all stakeholders, inside and outside of Parliament, participating in the same training generates additional project output. In this way, the workshops have contributed to better informed debate in Parliament on budget matters, and a more competency and inclusive decision making process, which is the ultimate objective of the project under this output.

A first workshop on PBB in 2010 resulted in the inclusion of the Parliament's Budget Office in the working groups under the MoF on the elaboration of the PBB methodology. A second workshop in 2011 (co-organized with GIZ) achieved to ensure the participation of all stakeholders in the process, including the Parliament’s Budget and Finance Committee and the then Chamber of Control (now State Audit Office - SAO).[[10]](#footnote-10) The workshops were conducted in an inclusive way and at a level of high expertise. Qualified national persons from Parliament, Government and SAO as well as Polish and Estonian experts discussed the requirements of the reforms and the particularities of the process. In addition, the project organized trainings and on the job coaching, for instance by an US Treasury resident budget expert of the Georgian MoF, for the staff of BFC/PBO and sector committees.

It is to be noted that the project did succeed in bringing on board specialized technical expertise on program budgeting and budget cycle issues. With the Slovenian budget expert (former Director of the Budget Department of the Slovenian Ministry of Finance), there were detailed discussions on classification indicators, budget codes and structure for the PBB. The combination of national and international expertise and the quality of knowledge and experience shared has been appreciated by the Committee chairpersons and the members of the Committees. During the evaluation meeting in June 2013, one of the Committee chair persons said that *"From all donor projects, UNDP has responded best to our needs and inquiries for training and technical expertise".*

Apart from trainings and workshops, several study visits have been planned in this direction. The study visit to the Netherlands in June 2011 for the Members and Staff of the BFC and PBO was very instrumental in terms of the Dutch experience on parliamentary oversight. It increased the participants’ knowledge in the field of budgetary oversight, PBB, performance auditing and other related areas. A second study visit to Germany in 2011, in cooperation with the GIZ project, targeted the issues of program budgeting at local level and performance auditing and relations between audit institutions and parliaments.

At the time when the draft budget was submitted to the Parliament for adoption at the end of 2011, the project organized a number of on the job trainings and seminars with the input from an international consultant in PBB.

Reviewing the result of the efforts by the end of 2011, it can be concluded that the Project made considerable efforts to ensure that the parliament was sufficiently ready for a quality review of the budget under the new PBB methodology. However, the government had not yet managed to prepare itself sufficiently and could not achieve the criteria for PBB as developed earlier on. The first version of the 2012 program budget presented by the MoF was of insufficient quality, carried minimal information, which prevented the Parliament to substantially scrutinize the draft. A new version of the 2012 budget did include some more information, but was submitted only in the end of November, which did not give Parliament sufficient time for scrutiny. In addition, a review of the quality of budgetary hearings in the Parliament indicated ongoing problems in parliament in terms of rather poor quality of questions, unpreparedness of MPs, lack of capacity of opposition MPs to follow-up on the questions unanswered by the Government. In conclusion, despite the efforts of the project, at the end of 2011 the parliament remained unable to exercise its oversight functions effectively.

In 2010-2011, the Project also invested in trainings in Public Finance Management (PFM). Workshops in Tbilisi focussed on issues such as the electronic procurement system and the Tax Code of Georgia. In 2011-2012, the Project supported the Staff of the Budget and Finance Committee and Budget Office to participate at a number of workshops organized by the Slovenian Centre for Excellence in Finance. The project ensured a multiplication effect of these workshops by organizing a one-day event where the participants of trainings prepared presentations and shared received knowledge with their colleagues.

The above mentioned activities - study visits to European countries, trainings and seminars by prominent local and international experts, workshops between legislative and executive bodies to share experience and foster common approach during the reform process – resulted in a considerable increase of professional capacities of the Parliament in the area of budgetary oversight and a successful adoption of the PBB methodology with around 80% of recommendations of the Parliament taken into consideration by the MoF.

In 2012, the project had to adapt its approach and the activities in a considerable way, in view of the planned parliamentary elections in October 2012 and expected move of the Parliament from Tbilisi to Kutaisi. Considering that at that stage it was unclear whether the Staff would be moving to Kutaisi, and what type of organizational changes would be taking place, including elections of new MPs, it was decided to focus less on the capacity development work (trainings, seminars, study visits) and concentrate on activities which would promote the sustainability of project products and ensure a smooth transfer of knowledge and capacities from the current Parliament to the next one.

The adaptability of the project is to be commented positively, as it demonstrated the capacity of the project to review activities and approaches with the aim to continue contributing to project objectives and outcomes, taking into account the changed political context in which the project was working.

So, during 2012 and 2013, the Project worked with a local organization – Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG)[[11]](#footnote-11) – on a Handbook on Georgia’s Budgetary System for new MPs and staff of the Parliament. The Handbook's aim was to consolidate budget-related information in a concise publication and easy-to-understand language so as to make it usable for all MPs, irrespective of their occupation and knowledge of economics and/or finances. After a number of drafts produced by PMCG experts followed by recommendations from the UNDP Project manager, the final document was prepared. From evaluation meetings it was understood that the Handbook has been widely used by Members of Parliament and staff.

The introduction of program budgeting in Georgia coincided with another reform at the State Audit Office, namely, the implementation of performance audit (PA). To ensure that the Parliament had sufficient information on the essence of PA and saw a link between PBB and PA systems, the Project worked with the GIZ project "Support to the Chamber of Control of Georgia” to organize a special seminar on PA issues in early 2012. Participants got acquainted with the audit process and the roles that supreme audit institutions and parliaments play in it.

At the end of 2012, the Project organized a training on program budgeting for NGO and media sector delivered by PMCG local and international experts. This workshop aimed at raising awareness of the target group on the budgetary system in Georgia so that they duly perform their functions to monitor the budgetary processes, provide their expert conclusions (NGOs) and to provide the public with relevant information (media). While the event was much welcomed, the workshop also revealed that NGOs and media need further support in raising their skills in the field of program budgeting and public finances in general.

Following the elections of the new Parliament, the Project has been supporting the new MPs in increasing their knowledge and capacities in the budgetary oversight process. The Project organized for the Members of the Budget and Finance Committee a workshop, as well as for the functional committees of health, education and agriculture sectors. These workshops were conducted with the expert input from the PMCG. In addition, the Project organized for a group of newly elected MPs a study visit to Sweden on Budgetary Oversight.

As is the case in most democratic countries, the Parliament of Georgia is authorized to oversee the legitimacy of the public expenditures through the State Audit Office. While the project provided considerably inputs aimed at strengthening parliament's role in ensuring accountability on the usage of state funds by ministries and state administration, and the project facilitated increased interaction between parliament and officials of the State Audit Office, the results in terms of parliament performance remain limited. As the recent "Parliament Needs Assessment" report stated: *"The Georgian Parliament or committees do not use intensively the conclusions or Examination Reports of the State Audit Office that could provide a fruitful basis for parliamentary discussions or debates ultimately contributing to strengthening of Parliament’s oversight function."[[12]](#footnote-12)* The lack of interest and political will to follow-up on the findings of the State Audit Office under the previous parliament can be considered one of the main reasons for this. While the MTR recommended to develop an “2012 Roadmap for Parliamentary Follow-up to the Reports of State Audit Office”, the Project kept focusing on the budgetary oversight at the budget planning stage. The pre-electoral period did not give opportunities for engaging Parliament in the areas of follow-up on the findings of the State Audit Office.

As far as the current parliament is concerned, there is need for a visible change of course in terms of resources and political attention to issues raised by the State Audit Office, if the level of accountability is to be substantially different by the end of this mandate of the parliament as compared to the previous one.

In order to make this visible change of course, the parliament leadership is currently contemplating to substantially upgrade the role and functioning of the Parliament Budget Office. It is understood that the number of staff persons would be increased. The Office would no longer serve exclusively the Budget and Finance Committee but would be of service to all MPs. And its mandate would be broadened, to foresee in the possibility that the Parliament Budget Office will conduct financial estimates upon requests of MPs, e.g. for a private member bill. This upgrade of the PBO is envisaged by the end of 2013.

It takes place against the background of a rather mixed picture of the functioning of the PBO during the previous parliament. At the time, there was very little demand for a strong PBO and its functioning was rather formal. This took place in a context of an overwhelming majority of 80 % for the ruling party, providing little incentive for a strong and independently functioning parliamentary budget watchdog. In the current context of a coalition government of very diverse parties with a numerically strong opposition in parliament, the prospect for an independent and expertise based PBO is higher. The profile of the PBO has already been raised by the new political majority, demanding that the PBO reviews the financial impact of all draft laws before the draft law is considered for inclusion in the parliament agenda by the Bureau. Sometimes, the PBO is not in a position to confirm the government estimates in the draft law due to lack of human resources to investigate it or due to the lack of details provided by the government. The increase of staff to the PBO will be able to address this, at least partly. The PBO also needs to develop a more systematic way to respond to requests from MPS and needs to communicate more clearly what services it can provide to the MPs.

The substantial reorientation and upgrade of the mandate and resources of the PBO is to be welcomed, and can -- in part -- be attributed to the high profile attention of the UNDP project to this Office and to the role it plays and could be playing for deepening the role of parliament in the budget processes. At the same time, it was noted that the Committee could have ensured better coordination with the different support projects, by discussing these matters not only with the GIZ - project but also with the UNDP project. While parliament is missing out on an opportunity for quality advice by UNDP on such institutional reform, one can wonder if this could have been prevented if the UNDP-GIZ cooperation from last couple of years had been underpinned by a cooperation framework, such as an MoU or joint Work plan, as was suggested in the MTR report. However, it is understood that in 2012, the GIZ project was short of funding, which gave them less possibilities to engage in parliamentary support activities.

In any case, the follow-up by parliament to the reports of the State Audit Office, the new role for the PBO and the practice of PBB are areas where a new UNDP Parliamentary project can consider offering technical expertise and coaching in the years to come.

*1.3. Evaluation Chart*

* There seems to be a strong political consensus on the usefulness of the concept of Program-based budgeting among all stakeholders, including majority and opposition parties, Court of Audit and international experts. As the Georgian parliament discussed the program budgeting as of 2012, the relevance of the UNDP project activities under this output is very high.
* This project component has been run in a very efficient way, with optimal use of time, human and material resources. At a time when the project was waiting for new funds to arrive, the project managed to bring on board high level international experts from the U.S. Treasury at almost no cost. With the Dutch funds, maximum number of activities was organized. The efficiency is very high.
* The effectiveness of the project activities in the area of budget oversight is high. While members of the Committee, with support of the staff, have already a larger say during Parliamentary discussions on budget issues, the effectiveness of project activities will become even more visible as the newly elected Parliament leadership seems interested to strengthen the role of parliament in the budget process.
* Since the policy decision has been taken for Georgia to move to program budgeting, the impact and sustainability of project activities under this project output are secured. Considering the high demand for the technical assistance and training, the national ownership of activities can be considered high. The plans for upgrading the PBO further enhance the impact of the project's contributions so far.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Evaluation OUTPUT 1* | Low | medium | high | very high |
| Relevance |  |  |  | X |
| Efficiency |  |  |  | X |
| Effectiveness |  |  | X |  |
| Impact / Sustainability |  |  | X |  |

Output 2: Local governance reform

2.1. Description of activities

* Develop options for an effective local governance system in cooperation with the UNDP LG project
* Review draft legislation and ensure harmonization of sectoral legislation with the Organic Law of Georgia on Local Self-Government and Council of Europe recommendations
* Support coordinating role of the Committee in involving various stakeholders in this process
* Support the committee in institutionalizing a two-way dialogue with citizens and relevant local and national bodies on local self-governance reform issues.
* Support the committee to analyze the capacity needs of its staff and design a targeted capacity development package

2.2. Evaluation Commentary

When the Project Document was being drafted in 2009, the reform of local governance was considered of high importance for the majority party at the time, and thus for the policy priorities of the parliament. A strong and results-oriented involvement of the project in the area of local governance reform was made possible due to the commitment of the highly motivated chairperson of the Committee on Local Governance. In this context, and up to the election of 2012, the Committee could play a central role in the area of local governance reform, with the appreciated support of the project.

Since one of the objectives of the Project is to support the Parliament increase its law-making capacities, the Project recruited a national legal expert to consult the Local Governance Committee. The expert was tasked with assisting the Committee in reviewing and analysing draft legislation, initiating and drafting laws; providing on-job training to the Committee staff to increase their capacities in the field and offer daily guidance in legal drafting, research and legal analysis.

As a result of intensive work of the expert and based upon consultations with the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure (MRDI), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and other stakeholders, the Committee took a lead role to push forward the harmonization process of sectoral legislation with the Organic Law of Georgia on Local Self-Government and the Council of Europe (CoE) recommendations. As a result, and during 2011, the Committee successfully advocated for the adoption of amendments to 27 sectoral laws. Amendments to several other laws have been prepared by the legal expert and later adopted by the Parliament during 2012 spring session. In terms of time allocation, the project's expert -- up to the 2012 elections -- worked with the Committee chairperson (50 % of time), other members of the Committee (30 % of time) and committee staff (20 % of time).

The expert also drafted a number of publications on local governance issues. To ensure quality of the publications, the Regional Governance Project of UNDP reviewed the draft texts and provided comments. The cooperation between different UNDP projects and the quality assurance role by the UNDP Country Office is to be welcomed.

In addition to the work of the national legal expert, the Project supported the Local Governance Committee in organizing the first donor coordination meeting on June 2011, as well as a number of meetings with the representatives of NGOs, regional media and Academia. The Project donated a collection of around 100 international publications in the area of local governance to the National Library of the Georgian Parliament. In order to promote the public outreach on the development of reforms, the project’s expert researched the websites run by local municipalities, studied the international experience and drafted a Guide on Developing Websites of Local Municipalities. To enhance media outreach, the project with the Institute of Regional media Initiatives of Georgia (IRMIG) launched over the period of one half year eight newspaper additions on local governance issues. The comprehensive outreach support of the project to the Committees work on local governance is a tangible and visible project deliverable. The project also established partnerships with the GIZ local governance project, the National Association of Local Authorities (NALA) and NDI.

As noted at the time of the MTR, the central role of the Parliamentary committee on Local Governance in shaping the policy depended to a large extent on the profile and influence of the chairperson. It was written, *"With new elections, there might be a new chairperson of the Committee; in which case the sustainability of the high profile role of the Committee is uncertain."[[13]](#footnote-13)*

After 2012 parliamentary elections, the composition of the Local Governance Committee has been changed; the new Chair and vice chairs appointed. To raise their awareness in the area of local governance and support their active participation in the reform process, the Project organized a two-day training session for the Members of the Committee in Kobuleti in November 2012. After the training, it was agreed to continue cooperation with the Committee. In March and June 2013, the project organized study visits to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia on Local and Regional Governance with the aimat raising awareness of Georgian MPs and Ministry representatives on the established systems of self-governance in the Baltic states. In all these initiatives, expertise from UNDP Project “Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia” was extensively used and synergies were made.

However, it is fair to say that the level of activity and results under this project component has dropped after the 2012 elections. The reasons are threefold. Firstly, as parliament moved to Kutaisi, there are less opportunities for meetings between the Committee and its chairperson, on the one hand, and the project and its expert, on the other hand. Secondly, the current chairperson has less in-depth knowledge and experience on local governance issues as compared to the previous chairperson. Thirdly, no Committee Work plan has yet been agreed, which slows down the cooperation between the Committee and the project.

Nevertheless, the project succeeded in building the capacity of the Committee staff on all issues relevant to the work of the committee. The project's expert worked closely with the staff, sharing one office. Even after the end of his contract, Committee staff still meets regularly with the expert and solicits his advice.

The sustainable achievements of the project under this component are the pieces of legislation which amended the sector legislation in line with the Organic Law and the CoE recommendations. These issues have been voted and remain in place. The introduction workshops for new MPs in 2012 enabled handing over the information to newly elected MPs and thus facilitated the institutional memory and the sustainability of the project investments.

However, since there is currently a large UNDP project on regional and local governance, one can argue that there is no need to continue UNDP's assistance to local governance reform in the framework of the parliamentary project. It seems more appropriate to cover all local governance issues in the other project, which mobilized most local governance experts in Georgia.

The MTR recommended to prepare a realistic exit strategy for UNDP support to the local governance committee, in case a new project would not prioritize on supporting this particular committee. This recommendation received proper follow-up. The recently launched UNDP Project “Fostering Regional and Local Governance in Georgia” has a parliamentary component targeting Committee’s capacity building. Besides, this Parliamentary Project’s Local Governance Expert is also recruited by the mentioned Project, which brings additional value through providing in-depth knowledge on committee capacities, provided support and existing challenges.

2.3. Evaluation Chart

* The relevance of the UNDP project activities from 2010 to 2012 under this output is very high, considering the importance attached to local governance reform and decentralization as mechanism for economic development throughout the country.
* The efficiency of project activities is high. Partnerships with other organizations and expertise of local and international experts contributed to best use of time and financial resources in the project. After the elections, the efficiency of this project component seems in decline.
* The effectiveness of project activities to shape the local governance reform in the country is rather good. The Committee on local governance, in the previous mandate, made lot of efforts to become the central platform for policy making and policy implementation in cooperation with all stakeholders. Currently, the Committee seems not to claim this central role any longer.
* As mentioned in the MTR report, the sustainability of project’s efforts under the previous parliament depended to some extend on the chairperson remaining in his position after the elections. Since that did not happen, project results might lose some of their impact. Still, the sustainable achievements of the project under this component are the pieces of legislation which amended the sector legislation in line with the Organic Law and CoE recommendations. These issues were voted and remain in place.

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| *Evaluation OUTPUT 2* | Low | medium | high | very high |
| Relevance |  |  | X |  |
| Efficiency |  |  | X |  |
| Effectiveness |  | X |  |  |
| Impact / Sustainability |  | X |  |  |

Output 3: Human Resources Management & Law Making

3.1. Description of activities

* Support the Parliament administration in the ongoing reorganization process, including functional analysis of positions, Job Descriptions, recruitment process;
* Support introduction of the staff evaluation system and the attestation process in the Parliament;
* Support organization of the competition for vacant positions, following the reorganization and attestation;
* Design the specific capacity development program for the staff;
* Engage national experts on legal drafting and analysis to develop and implement training plan for committee, faction, and Research department staff;
* Strengthen the parliament's outreach and communication initiatives, via a Communication Strategy.

3.2. Evaluation Commentary

 ***Human Resources Management***

Currently, Parliament employs 1,027 employees (603 permanent staff members and 424 on the basis short and long term contracts). The work is organized under 15 Departments and the 15 Committee Offices.

The daily functioning of the Personnel Department is mainly recordkeeping rather than Human Resources Management (HRM). The Department basically accomplishes administrative work, by creating, registering and maintaining personnel information. However, few activities are implemented in the areas of staff training and performance management. During the evaluation visit to the new parliament in Kutaisi, it was observed that Department staff is located in large rooms which are not fully convenient for working process. The main discomfort is caused by the noisy functioning of the central ventilation system that additionally causes a chronically lack of oxygen.

During the entire period of implementation, the Project provided considerable support to the Parliament in developing a modern HRM system. In 2010 an HR consultant conducted a staff needs assessment and proposed recommendations for modern recruitment techniques. To implement the recommendations and take further steps in the Parliament’s organizational reform, the project brought on board an experienced national expert group, the Personnel Management Centre (PMC). Its experts conducted the organizational survey, reviewed and produced new job descriptions for all positions, produced recommendations on the statutes of Parliament’s structural units and made a research on HRM systems of different European parliaments to be used as the best models of systems of performance evaluation and staff recruitment. PMC proposed different systems of evaluation, such as 360o, Scale and MBO; developed intellectual skills tests exclusively for Parliament, adapted the personal multifactor questionnaires, prepared a *Guide to Interview*, and delivered a five-day training for Parliament’s Personnel Department on staff recruitment methodology. By the end of the assignment, PMC produced the final report with the sustainability plan. Following the 2012 elections, the Project organized a briefing for the new parliament leadership with a view to promote the implementation of the recommendations (e.g. staff performance evaluation) and ensure transfer of knowledge to new Parliamentary administration.

Evaluating all efforts in the area of Human Resources Management, it is clear that the project has provided tremendous input; and that all reform proposals are now on the table. However, so far the political will was very limited to make a qualitative shift towards a professional, independent and accountable system of recruitment, evaluation, promotion and career development. Since the current SG of parliament has shown little interest and readiness to follow-up to the recommendations for a more professional HRM policy, it is now up to the Speaker to make the decisions and ensure their implementation. It would be appropriate for the UNDP Country Office to put its weight behind the comprehensive set of proposals developed over the last years and work more closely with the Speaker himself, either through the UNDP Country Director or through a new international Senior Parliamentary Advisor. As part of the needed, in-depth organizational changes, it is reasonable to plan for a new Head of the Human Resources Department, which has considerable experience in human resources management and knows how to lead a process of change management in the public sector. The current head of the Department would be well placed within other section of the Administration.

As parliament moved from Tbilisi to Kutaisi in the second half of 2012, only 40% of staff were planning to move with the Parliament. However, after parliamentary elections and change of government, which promised to bring Parliament back to Tbilisi, almost 100% of staff stayed with the Parliament, in anticipation of the return to Tbilisi [some of the interlocutors called it "staff on a suitcase, ready to pack and go any moment"]. If the draft constitutional amendment on Parliament’s location (the *amendment provides for taking out the clause on the seat of Parliament from the constitution*) would not be adopted, there is a considerable chance that a large part of the current staff might leave the parliament.

 ***Staff Trainings***

During the entire period of project implementation, the Project has delivered considerable training programs for staff of parliament.

In 2011-2012 the project organized workshops on the legislative process for staff from the Parliament’s Legal Department. The seminar addressed issues such as initiators of draft laws, stages of legislative process, role and responsibilities of committee and its staff, dealing with financial legislation, etc.

While the training was useful, it also revealed the systemic challenges and gaps which such trainings cannot overcome, such as current practice to work with hard-copies of laws and the lack of access to electronic versions of draft laws, the absence of an electronic editor and the absence of a searchable electronic database of laws. It is understood that the World Bank would initiate the lawmaking process digitalization project.[[14]](#footnote-14) In the absence of a resolution of these structural issues, capacity building of legal staff will have less than optimal result in terms of improved the parliament's functioning in terms of review of legislation.

The project engaged the resources of other projects in the UNDP CO to offer a number of training sessions to Parliamentary staff, on human rights protection mechanisms, comparative constitutional set up and election legislation. The involvement of other projects into the work of the Parliamentary project is a good practice of “Parliamentary mainstreaming” throughout the UNDP CO, and is to be encouraged. In case of lack of resources, one could go one step further in engaging internal-UNDP resources and consider requesting experts from other UNDP COs for short assignments.

As it was identified in the needs assessment survey by the Project’s HR expert in 2010, increasing the Staff’s language skills (particularly English) remained one of the most pressing needs in the Parliament. In order to ensure that staff are strengthened to freely communicate with their foreign colleagues in verbal and written form and conduct research of professional information in English language, the Project decided to provide English language courses. Courses were specifically focused on financial English, legal English and official communication in English. In July 2012, the Project finalized the specialized English language courses for the parliament staff. The courses, which lasted over one year, covered around 80 staff members.

While the courses have probably helped participants to improve their performance in writing, reading and understanding legal texts, do presentations, lead interviews, and operate in English, one can still wonder if it is the job of a UNDP parliamentary program to conduct or finance language courses. This question is particularly relevant, as the Head of the Training Centre of Parliament, during the meeting with the Evaluator [in Georgian with English translation], claimed that the Center regularly organizes language courses for all staff (in addition to ICT courses). It would therefore be more logical that the language courses be entirely financed by the parliament secretariat and delivered through its Training Centre. Such observation is in line with the recommendation during the MTR, which suggested that the UNDP parliamentary project would share the burden of the language courses with other institutions.

As the Georgian Government decided to move the Parliament from Tbilisi to Kutaisi in 2012, the Parliament announced a call for a six-month internship program. The initiative aimed at selecting the interns in Kutaisi (mostly the population of Imereti region) and created a pool of qualified experts, who can become potential candidates in taking up the vacant staff positions in Parliament. This was one of the recommendations of the MTR. A total of 124 interns were trained with the project's assistance. Interns have been working in different structural units and many of them are currently applying for announced vacancies in the Parliament.

The Parliament has its own Training Centre, which is part of the HRM Department. It consists of 3 employees, whose responsibility includes the planning of training activities, organizing of training sessions, preparing and disseminating training materials, identifying training needs through conducting periodic assessments of capacity building needs or gaps. When we met the head of the Head of the Training Centre in Tbilisi in 2011 in the framework of the MTR, the Training Centre was not really active and very few if any trainings took place. Two years later, and now located in Kutaisi, not much has changed. While parliament staff has benefited from trainings on various topics through a number of assistance projects from EU, UNDP and other donors, the Training Centre had very little own output. It is understood that part of the reason is related to the very limited budget for supporting the learning opportunities for staff. Although there is a huge interest of staff in improving/learning management skills, updating the knowledge of different laws, improving communications, etc., the Training Centre - which was created with the support of the first UNDP parliamentary project and then handed-over to the Parliament management - has apparently not made any significant own contribution to the professional development of staff since, and doesn't make much sense in its current format.

With a view to strengthen sustainability of staff professional development, a new initiative is required. To rely on donor programs for the bulk of the professional development of parliament staff and MPs is not sustainable and not a good policy. Either one can consider creating a Training Department within Parliament, under a new leadership and not subordinated to the HRM Department; or one can consider creating an independent 'Parliamentary Institute for Permanent Learning'. In both cases, there will be need for a substantial budget, an institutional framework of cooperation with relevant Universities and think-tanks and guaranteed input and cooperation of MPs, e.g. from the chairperson of the Committee on Procedural Issues (which could have it in its mandate to deliver courses on parliamentary procedures).

 ***Support to parliament outreach***

During the 2010-2013 constitutional review process, UNDP worked together with NDI in supporting the outreach activities of parliament. While NDI supported the town hall meetings and public meetings, UNDP supported the web platform public input, including enabling public voting on draft amendments.

It was the first ever project of this type in Georgia in which the public was so actively involved in lawmaking. During only one month the website had over 23,000 visits and each survey question concerning a particular amendment had on average 2,500 votes. Experts produced articles; there were ads posted in various media sources, live stream of meetings, etc. Although the project administered the web site, it might have been better if done by parliament staff, although they did provide support. The end result and impact of January 2013 public discussions was that the constitutional amendments were modified to reflect the position of experts and concerns of citizens. This model of cooperation with NDI can possibly be replicated on other issues as well, e.g. the budget process.

In 2011 Project hosted a PR expert who delivered trainings in public outreach for the parliament staff. The expert identified key challenges facing Parliament, in particular the lack of a communications strategy (both internal and external). For this purpose the Project recruited an international PR expert to support the Parliament in drafting the strategy. The Strategy was finalized by June 2013. It envisages a number of communication department changes, further external department activities, enhanced media relations, better external events organization and more extensive online communications, amongst others. Key issue is that the Communications Department will shift its focus from the Office of the Speaker (as was the case during the previous parliament) towards the entire institution of parliament, and the streamlining and professionalization of its communication.

In addition, the project has invested in how the Georgian media report on the Georgia - EU relations. In order to overcome the lack of information within the Georgian society about the priorities of Georgia’s foreign policy, particularly in regards to the EU-integration, the Committee on European Integration hosted an event with the representative of Georgian media (both electronic and printed) on the topic.

In response to the violent dispersal of 17 May 2013 Action on Anti-Homophobia, the project jointly with UNDP Legal Empowerment Project organized a conference aimed at awareness raising of MPs and the public on minority rights. The event supported Parliament in exercising its oversight function over the implementation of laws and government actions protecting fundamental rights. MPs, government representatives, CSOs attended the event in June 2013.

3.3. Evaluation Chart

* The relevance of the UNDP project activities under this output is very high, considering the vast need for change in the area of human resources structures and procedures. As parliament has moved to Kutaisi but might come back to Tbilisi, uncertainty reigns. Focus on the structural management issues and procedures is thus a highly relevant approach. The trainings and the support to the outreach of parliament is also highly relevant for the functioning of the institution.
* The efficiency of the project inputs depended on factors outside of the project staff’s control. The project overcame (in 2011) procurement problems in hiring the human resources consultancy company and managed to catch up for the lost time, as the main reports and recommendations were delivered in time during 2012. Also on other activities the use of time and resources was good. The project made well use of UNDP internal resources in providing trainings.
* The Parliament’s human resources policy has benefitted a lot from the long-standing UNDP project support (previous and current project). The implementation and consolidation of the HRM approach is, to a large extent, now depending on the action taken by the new parliament Speaker. The effectiveness that outputs are realized are mainly in relation to the approved Job Descriptions, staff performance evaluation and new recruitments.
* The sustainability of the project’s investment in HR policy is hard to confirm at this moment in time. It is yet unclear what percentage of staff would stay if parliament moves back to Tbilisi or stay in Kutaisi. The communications strategy is expected to be adopted, thus substantially increase the level of sustainability of the project's work in this area. The full impact of the project's support in the areas of training (e.g. for legal staff) depends on other project's sustained investment in the lawmaking process digitalization project.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Evaluation OUTPUT 3* | Low | medium | high | very high |
| Relevance |  |  |  | X |
| Efficiency |  |  | X |  |
| Effectiveness |  |  | X |  |
| Impact / Sustainability |  | X |  |  |

Output 4: International Partnerships

4.1. Description of activities

* Parliamentary study visits to The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany and Poland;
* Strengthening the work of the Foreign Relations Committee & EU integration Committee;
* Participation in Survey for the UNDP-IPU Global Parliamentary Report.

4.2. Evaluation Commentary

After receipt of funding in 2011 from The Netherlands, the project organized a number of parliamentary cooperation capacity building events. In June 2011, there was a study visit to The Netherlands for the Members and Staff of the Budget and Finance Committee and Budget Office. It helped at increasing their knowledge and sharing Dutch experience in the field of budgetary oversight, program budgeting, performance auditing and other related areas.

As part of the support to the organizational and human resources policy of Parliament, a visit to the Czech Parliament took place in October 2011. The study visit to Prague, financed by the Czech Trust Fund, for a small group of staff offered an important learning opportunity on management and Parliamentary administration issues.

Two separate visits to Germany, in cooperation with the GIZ, helped to understand the German experience in the field of program budgeting and performance auditing on national and local levels; and involved MPs and staff from the Budget and Finance Committee, Legal Committee and Local Governance Committee, along with the SAO, MoF and municipalities. Study visits to Sweden, Latvia and Lithuania – all of them had a parliamentary partnership component in the program, as extensive meetings took place with counterparts committees in all these parliaments.

In November 2012, the newly-composed Committee on European Integration initiated the proposal for a new draft law on consumer protection, which should be harmonized with EU legislation. This requires strong knowledge of the practice and legal framework in the EU member states. To support the Committee in increasing its law-making role, a study visit to Poland took place for the EU Integration Committee Chair, its staff and representatives of ministries of Economic Development and Justice.

Good practice requires that the project ensures follow-up in Georgia after each visit. Since the above mentioned visits took place in the framework of specific project areas (budget oversight and program budgeting, human resources policies, strengthen legislative function), this follow-up has been ensured. In this way, the international visit will not be a one-off event but clearly linked to the comparative experience sharing process within the component of technical assistance to a Committee and Department.

In addition, it would be appropriate to make sure that every delegation writes down the conclusions of its mission, adopts its report and submits the report to a central depository compiling information on such visits. This will be most likely the Department on International Relations in the Secretariat. Currently, such depository of reports from working visits abroad does not exist. Very few parliamentary delegations write down and adopt a report of their mission. It would be appropriate for the Bureau of the Parliament to issue guidelines to this effect, covering the preparation, reporting and follow-up to parliamentary working visits abroad A UNDP Senior Parliamentary Advisor can work with the Speaker and the Bureau on a policy and mechanisms to thus further upgrade the outputs of such working visits abroad, and thus their contribution to the further improvement of the functioning of parliament.

While recognizing the relevance and added value of above mentioned visits to EU countries, it would also be useful for the project to consider areas of Parliamentary functioning where dialogue and exchange with neighbouring Parliaments can be organized. This issue was already mentioned in the MTR report as well. Regional cooperation can bring added capacity building value and political leverage to the program. The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly is one of the appropriate venues for this. In addition, one can consider organizing a workshop with chairpersons of EU integration committees of countries where parliament had an important role to play in the EU integration process (Baltic States, Croatia). Such workshop might be useful for the EU Integration Committee to develop its multi-year strategy and to identify the resources needed to strengthen the parliamentary input and oversight on EU approximation issues in Georgia.

The project also supported the Foreign Relations Committee. This committee had noted that many citizens and decision makers are insufficiently aware of the international treaties that are ratified by Parliament and have little information the country’s international obligations. In order to promote the transparency of parliamentary work in the area of international policy, the Project upon the request of the Foreign Relations Committee decided to publish a handbook (in Georgian) on international legal acts adopted by the Parliament in 2008-2012. The electronic version of the handbook is posted on Parliament’s website.

In February 2011, the Project supported the survey for Global Parliamentary Report, initiated by UNDP and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The report (published in April 2012) provided an assessment of the state of parliaments worldwide, examining the way they are responding to the increasingly complex demands of the public. The survey was designed to gather the views of parliamentarians on this theme. The target was to survey 1,000 parliamentarians from around the world, 20 Members from each parliament. The Project thus interviewed 20 MPs of the Georgian Parliament according to the provided questionnaire forms. The Project selected key persons (vice-speakers, committee chairs, opposition/minority leaders) and maintained maximum political and gender balance during their selection.

The Project Document envisaged the development of a Strategic Partnership Plan with European parliaments; but as far as the evaluator could observe, such plan has not yet been realized.

4.3. Evaluation Chart

* The relevance of the outreach visits is high, since they are clearly part of the specific program components on budget process and human resources management.
* While organizing inter-parliamentary meetings is often time consuming and asks considerable human resources from the project, there is no doubt on the efficiency with which the project team has been preparing the visits, and planned their follow-up. In addition, costs were shared with UNDP Project “Fostering Regional and Local Development in Georgia” and the GIZ-project in different cases, thus ensuring maximum output for the limited financial input.
* The effectiveness of these visits in terms of upgrading the performance of the Parliament in the specific areas is entirely linked to the way in which the project’s interlocutors respond to the project. While the visits are often an eye opener for participants, they also strengthen their confidence to proceed with reforms. However, it is hard to exactly track down the effectiveness of one visit in relation to final outcomes of parliamentary decision making. Further reporting by Parliament might help nevertheless.
* The sustainability of the study visits’ results cannot be measured in the short term. Putting Georgia on the map in Europe is an important additional dimension of the impact of the visits. The sustainability of the working visits can be enhanced if the Bureau issues guidelines on preparation, reporting and follow-up to parliamentary visits abroad. The Handbook on international treaties is also useful to build institutional memory and strengthen the impact of the project support on knowledge dissemination.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Evaluation OUTPUT 4* | Low | medium | high | very high |
| Relevance |  |  | X |  |
| Efficiency |  |  | X |  |
| Effectiveness |  |  | X |  |
| Impact / Sustainability |  |  | x |  |

**4.3. Project Management**

Under this heading, a series of issues relevant to project management of the project are discussed.

* **Project reporting**

The project manager successfully delivers quality reporting on project activities, both in terms of the annual reports as in terms of the quarterly reports. The reports follow the structure of activities as outlined in the Project Document, and give a self-rating on achieving each of the program components, their timeliness and completion rate. The reports enable the reader to follow project implementation in detail. The specific indicators from the Project Document and the annual targets were hard to assess considering the limited human resources available to the project team. While the initial 2010 annual report focused almost entirely on activity reporting, following comments in the MTR and as of 2011 reporting on results in the functioning of Parliament has increased. As donor for this project, the Dutch Embassy, expressed satisfaction with the quality of reporting.

* **Project’s human resources**

The project manager is one of the strongest assets of the project, due to her detailed knowledge of Parliament and her efficiency to implement the project’s work plan, while also ensuring flexibility in project delivery. She is well respected in Parliament and has good relationships with other partner organizations. She managed very well to guide the project through the transition period after the elections and established good working relationships with the new Speaker’s Cabinet and other stakeholders on the developments of the project. Together with the project’s administrative / financial assistant, she constitutes the project team.

As mentioned in the MTR report and in view of the high technical nature of the project, it would have been advisable to have in the project team also a “Senior Parliamentary Advisor” (SPA), either part-time or full-time. As in other UNDP parliamentary projects, the SPA would give technical input on key parliamentary development issues, provide policy advice to the Speaker and deputy Speakers, and ensure quality control on project deliverables. It is recommended to envisage an SPA in the design of a next program.

* **Project Board**

The Project Board should offer quality control and guidance to the project team. During the entire period of project implementation, challenges occurred related to the frequency of its meetings and the availability of the members of the Board, as already noted first time in the MTR report. The Project Document foresees that the Board meets on quarterly basis. In reality, the Board met only twice in three years: in December 2010 and May 2012.

The composition of the Board is not ideal since it has Parliamentary staff only and no elected members. Best practices is to include in the Board both Parliamentary staff and MPs from majority and opposition parties. The limited role of the Board has left the project team much on its own in seeking solutions to specific implementation challenges, such as managing activities while waiting for new financial resources to arrive (January-June 2011) or facilitating the project's transition after the 2012 elections.

* **Gender policy in Parliament**

A gender review of Parliament gives mixed results. While 60 % of the staff are female (561 women on a total of 943 staff persons), the number of women MPs is very low (9 women on a total of 150 MPs in the previous parliament and 17 in the current parliament). Neither the constitutional amendments in 2012 nor the new electoral code foresaw any measures to increase the number of elected women in Parliament.

The Project Document refers to the Parliamentary Gender Equality Council and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality. Within the framework of the 2012 & 2013 budget workshop, the issue of gender budgeting was touched upon, though more awareness raising will be needed. A future program could look into this more in depth, and deepen the cooperation with the UN Joint Gender project. If interested, the Speaker could launch a gender related public event on the occasion of 8 march, International Women Day. In addition, one could consider more enhanced parliamentary outreach to women organizations or groups dealing with gender based violence or domestic violence.

* **Donor coordination in Parliament**

With the support of the project, the Local Governance Committee during the previous mandate initiated a donor coordination meeting for all organizations working in this particular area. While continuing Committee specific donor coordination initiatives, the need for Parliament-wide donor coordination remains. In Winter 2011, the Cabinet of the then Speaker organized an annual donor meeting. A needs assessment document was shared and could have been followed up by a joint comprehensive review and possibly joint activities. This did not happen, and coordination continued upon personal initiatives of staff of the different projects.

When the new parliamentary leadership took office, the Chief of Cabinet of the new Speaker organized a new donor meeting, though its results are still pending. A more hands-on approach and clear vision on donor coordination is needed in order to make the efforts effective (as outlined in the Recommendations section of this report). Nevertheless, jointly co-sponsored activities, e.g. on constitutional outreach by UNDP and NDI or on the working visit to Germany on budget matters by UNDP and GIZ, have already increased the output beyond what the projects or organizations could reach individually. As mentioned in the MTR report, it will be beneficial to provide a framework and policy background to such bilateral cooperation through an MoU or exchange of letters between two organizations cooperating on specific outputs.

In addition, the UNDP project has drafted and published an electronic publication, "Overview of the International Donor Supported Activities in the Parliament of Georgia in 2008-2012". The aim of the publication is to provide a detailed overview of the reforms which have been introduced in parliament over the past years and how different donor projects have contributed to them. To transfer knowledge to the new Parliament and raise their awareness on reform processes in the institution, the Project introduced the publication to the newly-appointed Chief of the Speaker’s Cabinet, charged with directing donor activities in the Parliament.

* **Project’s implementers and contractors**

The UNDP project team has worked together with a selected number of organizations and institutions as project implementing contractors. Not mentioned in the Project Document as project implementers, these institutions were contracted through a regular procurement procedure. Three national institutions were selected: the Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG), the Institute of Regional media Initiatives of Georgia (IRMIG) and the Personnel Management Centre (PMC). With PMCG the project worked in Output 1 and Output 3; with IRMIG in Output 2 and with PMC in Output 3. All 3 institutions are well respected in Georgia. Moreover, PMCG has also been selected by the EU Delegation to conduct the comprehensive needs assessment of the Parliament of Georgia, which will form the basis for the future EU-funded program with parliament.

Cross examining the satisfaction of beneficiaries at parliament (MPs and senior staff), UNDP and other organizations of each of these institutions, the feed-back was overwhelmingly positive. PMCG is a fast growing consultancy company, which delivers quality analysis on a wide range of policy questions in Georgia. It is respected among MPs from the current ruling parties and current opposition parties. PMC has experience on human resources issues in various official institutions in Georgia.

From an evaluation point of view, the quality of their outputs, as described in previous pages, justifies their selection for the work for which they have been selected.

* **Relations with UNDP and UN Agencies**

During the project implementation period, the parliamentary program regularly interacted with the Country Office, in general, and with the Governance Program in particular. On more than one occasion, the project could call upon in-house expertise from UNDP to assist in workshops or provide contributions during knowledge exchange with MPs. This practice, initially driven by the lack of project financial resources in early 2011, also provided an opportunity for cross-fertilization within the UNDP governance program. It also encourage "parliamentary mainstreaming" in other programs of UNDP.

The United Nations Country Team in Georgia[[15]](#footnote-15), coordinated by the Resident Coordinator, brings together a number of organizations and programs dealing with policy areas relevant to the work of the MPs. These include OHCHR, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, etc. So far, the UNDP parliamentary project has worked together in limited way with UN Women in terms of gender awareness raising. For most other policy areas, the UNDP parliamentary project hardly liaised with other UN agencies in Georgia.

The evaluator considers that parliament Committees can receive substantial policy support through UN in-house expertise. This can become a potential growth area for the next UNDP-implemented parliamentary program. The UNDP parliamentary program can function as a “resource centre” for other UNDP programs and other UN agencies which need to engage with the political leadership and with the Georgian parliament in order to make progress in their area of work. For instance, the UN work on climate change and ecological matters, MDGs, gender or human rights, for instance, will be well served when liaising with the UNDP parliamentary project. Investment in a parliamentary project can benefit programs outside of the UNDP Democratic Governance cluster. The investment in a parliamentary program would be spent even better if it involved the UN work as a whole.

The evaluator considers that the UNDP parliamentary support program should not be a stand-alone set of activities and could to be more aligned with other UNDP program units and UN agencies in Georgia. They should contribute to the project design of the next phase of the program (e.g. if there are components related to Human Rights, Climate Change, MDGs, anti-corruption), and ensure parliamentary mainstreaming in their programming. Parliamentary mainstreaming means that all agencies and projects of a UN Country Team consider and include possibilities and requirements for engagement with parliament, thus enhancing the instruments to achieve program objectives.

**V. Lessons Learned**

*This chapter will draw some lessons learned from the implementation of the parliamentary project in Georgia so far. The following 8 lessons learned are not exhaustive, as many more could be added. The evaluator considers them as rather exemplary in terms of their relevance for approaches and themes in future parliamentary programming.*

**5.1. Planning for institutional development**

The current UNDP project and the previous phase were looking for ways to support the institutional strengthening of the Parliament of Georgia, for instance by putting a comprehensive Human Resources policy in place or agreeing on a methodology for program budgeting. Institutional strengthening is the result of a complex process which involves rules and regulations, knowledge and expertise, resources and planning, commitment and vision. Such complex process can best be guided under an agreed comprehensive plan to strengthen the institution of parliament. A Strategic Development Plan for parliament is discussed and agreed upon with all relevant stakeholders in more and more countries. Once in place, it enables the donors and assistance projects to direct their assistance towards the implementation of this plan. The experience of the current project in Georgia reveals the limits of what a single project can achieve in the absence of the agreed targets and sequencing priorities of such institutional strengthening plan. If the Parliament of Georgia in future would decide to embark upon the process of designing and implementing a strategic development plan, UNDP would be well placed to assist, taking into account the accumulated knowledge globally on designing and implementing such plans for parliament.

**5.2. Designing a solid Project Document**

Good project implementation starts with a good project design, which is reflected mostly in the RRF. A good RRF is critical to give direction to the design and implementation of annual work plans. It also facilitates thorough and fair periodical evaluation of the project implementation. An RRF should not be so ambitious to cover every expectation one can imagine for the support area in question. Key monitoring & evaluation concepts should be introduced in the Project Document and RRF. For example, indicators should be phrased in a way that allows them to function as indicators of measurement of progress rather than as activities.

**5.3. Building upon the political momentum**

In the first two years of the project (2010-2011) and during 2013, the project has managed well to build upon the political momentum and political interest to make changes to the way how the Georgian Parliament works. Building upon the momentum requires that sufficient time is given for implementation and consolidation of the practices promoted by the project. As the budget process in parliament and the new approach of program budgeting had gained momentum, sustaining the efforts will enable a solid result in terms of building better understanding of budget processes among MPs, more thorough oversight on budget priorities and audit results.

**5.4. Developing consistent M&E practices**

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is an important component of project management. There should be a consistent M&E mechanism designed in the Project Document. Ideally, such mechanism should be run by either a unit / person within the project or within the UNDP Country Office. Parallel to the M&E mechanism, there should also be a mechanism to enable punctual adjustments of the RRF, for instance on the occasion of the MTR. This will ensure a structured flexibility for project implementation.

One of the key tools for successful M&E is the availability of quantitative data on the performance of the beneficiary institutions and on the results of the project deliverables. Therefore, the integration of data collection mechanisms in future project design should enable more consistent M&E during project implementation and quality assurance.

**5.5. Ensuring leadership commitment and access**

Leadership commitment and policy implementation consistency are the decisive elements for the success of capacity development projects like the present one. Lack of leadership commitment and implementation inconsistency can cause interruption or stagnation in the project implementation. When the leadership of parliament changes, as happened in fall 2012, the project management should consider proposing adjustments to the RRF in the areas where new programmatic opportunities might arise. Currently, the no-cost extension resulted in an extension of the project implementation period with 6 months.

Access to the leadership of the parliamentary institution and regular consultations with the chairpersons of Committees are also requirements to make sure that project planning and implementation meets the needs of the individual MPs and of the Committees, which are the main policy platform in parliament. As the new Speaker of Parliament is more accessible than his predecessor, the Country Office can seize upon this opportunity to bring the proposed structural reforms to the attention of the new Speaker and discuss in greater detail how the project can work with the Speaker in ensuring their implementation.

**5.6. Planning for sustainability**

UNDP and The Netherlands have invested considerable resources in this project and rightly expect that the policy impact and the technical results be sustained after the closing date of the project. This means that the Parliament of Georgia will continue to allocate resources, for the Parliament's Budget Office and the reform of the Human Resources system, amongst others, that the knowledge products will remain accessible, that lessons learned and best practices will not be left aside after the closing date of the project.

One of the ways of planning for sustainability is to draft a “sustainability document” at the very end of the project period (as was the case after the previous project). This document will list the initiatives which the Parliament of Georgia and the UNDP will take after closing of the project to oversee the continued application of the knowledge gained through this project. The ‘sustainability document’ could foresee in a quarterly or bi-annual report by the Georgian Parliament on the follow-up to the agreed sustainability measures. This quarterly or bi-annual report will provide the basis for any possible future support request, if need be, towards another UNDP project with the Parliament of Georgia. The reports on follow-up to the sustainability document can also be shared with the donor, the Embassy of The Netherlands.

**5.7. Accessing international expertise and best practices**

To be successful, parliamentary development projects need to find the right balance between domestic expertise and international expertise, between relying on the national legal and policy framework and exploring best practices from other parliaments worldwide. Long-term and short-term national experts have provided solid input on a number of technical areas. The absence of an international Senior Parliamentary Advisor (SPA) has been observed as a gap in further quality assurance and technical input, although a number of short-term international experts contributed to the project. Searching the right mix of international human resources requires accessing the networks of UNDP, IPU, national parliamentary institutions and personal networks as well.

**5.8. Recognizing change as a gradual process**

Projects usually plan institutional change in a logical and time-sensitive approach. However, changes do not always occur in a logical or timely way. Some changes might happen unexpectedly or not at all; or institutional changes might require more reflection and political arm wrestling than anticipated. Institutional changes often do not happen in a fully fletched way within the lifespan of a project. This is particularly the case for parliamentary projects, as parliaments are political institutions, lead by persons who have a political agenda and whose timing does not necessarily coincide with the timing of a project, even if agreed upon in advance.

The lack of political will under the previous parliament administration to implement proposed reforms testifies to that. Flexibility to adjust timelines can be required, recognizing that change is a gradual process. When adjusting a project, maintaining the quality of service delivery needs to remain the criteria. The United Nations has experience and credibility to do so, in particular for running projects with emphasis on national ownership. This has also been one of the strengths of this project in Georgia.

**VI. Recommendations for future UNDP parliamentary project planning in Georgia**

*Based upon the above evaluation of the project 'A Strong Parliament in a Consolidated Democracy', the evaluator puts forward a total of 20 recommendations as relevant for the next UNDP-implemented parliamentary program. The recommendations are divided into three sections: design of the new project, implementation of the new project and management of the new project.*

A . Recommendations on Project Design

The European Commission has launched the Eastern Partnership Comprehensive Institution Building program (CIB) for the countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.[[16]](#footnote-16) The CIB is jointly developed and implemented with the partner country to ensure effective institution building of a limited number of core institutions which are central in preparing the ground for and implementing future agreements (Association Agreement, Free Trade Area).

One of the building blocks of the CIB are the multi-annual Institutional Reform Plans, which aim is to identify measures to be taken by the selected institutions to enhance their institutional capacity to carry out reforms foreseen under the new political agreements with the EU.

Based upon the "Action Fiche" drafted in 2011, it is understood that the EU Delegation will most likely be the main donor of a future UNDP-implemented parliamentary program in Georgia.[[17]](#footnote-17) The future UNDP Project Document will need to be developed in close consultation with the EU Delegation and taken into account the work undertaken in preparation for the Institutional Reform Plan for parliament. Following are a number of recommendations for the drafting of the UNDP Project Document.

1. The project design needs to be informed as broad and as practical as possible. Flexibility is important especially for a key governance and political institution like parliament. The evaluator appreciates the "Needs Assessment of the Parliament of Georgia", as prepared by PMCG. The document is a thorough functional review of the functioning of parliament; and can thus inform to a large extent the project formulation. At the same time, it is advisable that the project design keeps flexibility to include also a number of additional issues not mentioned in the needs assessment report, such as the parliament interaction with and oversight over independent institutions and regulatory agencies; the functioning and increased role of the Committee on EU Integration; and the role of parliament in budget review and financial oversight.
2. To enhance sustainability of parliamentary capacity building, the project design needs to put more emphasis on structures and procedures beyond activities and workshops. The current project evaluation has already made some suggestions for such structures and procedures, such as guidelines on preparation, reporting and follow-up to parliamentary working visits; procedures on interaction with the State Audit Office and follow-up to its reports; a Communications Plan with its own implementation Road Map and follow-up mechanisms; the need for a legislative tracking mechanism. The project design can identify in greater detail the structures and procedures which can further enhance sustainability of the future project’s support.
3. The evaluator recommends that the drafting of the new Project Document takes into account the observations from the review of the current Project Document: to articulate baselines, outcomes and outputs in a targeted and result oriented way, to prepare an appropriately detailed and rigorous Results and Resources Framework, to foresee measurable indicators which cover both participation in project activities and improvements in parliamentary performance.
4. An important dimension of sustainable capacity building in parliament is the inclusive drafting and unanimous adoption by Parliament (or the Bureau) of a Strategic Development Plan. The Strategic Plan needs to be adopted by consensus and across party lines and show the way to strengthen the parliament in the next 5 to 7 years. The Strategic Plan needs to go beyond a donor matrix, although an implementation road map indicating the required resources including those from support projects can be useful. The EU-initiated Institutional Reform Plan will (most likely) form the basis for such Strategic Plan and its Implementation Road Map. A new UNDP parliamentary support project should foresee in technical advice in accompanying the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and put in place appropriate instruments, such as: a parliament-based 'Strategy Support Unit' to be accountable for the implementation, Annual Work Plans of parliament in relation to the reforms envisaged in the Strategic Plan, quarterly reporting to the Bureau on implementation of the Strategic Plan; an external and independent mid-term review of the Strategic Plan.
5. One of the cross cutting issues in UNDP project design is gender mainstreaming. Taking note of the increase in representation of women MPs in parliament following the 2012 elections, this might be the right time to address more thoroughly the opportunities for gender mainstreaming in the work of parliament. There is need for more broad awareness raising on the usefulness of a parliament policy on gender mainstreaming, while also initiating operational and administrative procedures to ensure that throughout the core business of Parliament (legislation and oversight), gender mainstreaming is initiated. The goal is that consideration of gender in all aspects of parliamentary life (e.g. budgeting, policy consideration, proposals for laws, all aspects of the parliament’s own administration) should take place as a key aspect of the natural, default operational frame of the institution. A future program could look into this more in depth, and deepen the cooperation with the UN Joint Gender project. If interested, the Speaker could launch a gender related public event on the occasion of 8 March, International Women Day.
6. The evaluator recommends that the new project includes the prospect of a successfully accomplished exit. An exit strategy needs to be founded on a progressive transfer of skills and roles whereby the capacity receiver gradually assumes the role of the capacity provider and undertakes (or participates in) the development of a cadre of members and officials. The new project needs to direct its activities to the exit process in a much more explicit and purpose-driven manner than done so far. This is not to say that the Parliament of Georgia will no longer need external support. However, it should be possible to formulate a project design which enables the reduction of the level of support significantly but naturally over time without adversely effecting the operation of the Parliament of Georgia.

B. Recommendations on Project Implementation

1. To strengthen the legislative and policy analysis output of parliament, the evaluator recommends that the next project provides on a larger scale legislative technical advice to a number of selected Committees. In the current project, main technical assistance has been given to the Finance and Budget Committee and the Local Governance Committee. A future UNDP program should be able to support up to 4 or 5 Committees. In addition to skills building workshops, the project should address the issue of targeted legislative advice to functional committees to review incoming bills or to assist in preparing private members bills on topics of good governance within the areas of priorities of the project (e.g. legislation on public access to official documents, transparency, anti-corruption, etc.) and the production of policy briefs. Such technical advice can be offered by either a Senior Parliamentary Advisor (depending on his/her profile) or by national or international legal consultants.
2. Planning and management of Committee work is another area in which Committees require skills and capacity, in particular parliamentary procedures related to the operations of committees. The evaluator recognizes the need to develop focused committee annual work plans, to clarify the committees’ Terms of Reference, to publish Committee annual reports, and to produce manuals and guidelines on subjects within the committees’ scope of responsibility.
3. The legislative process in the Parliament of Georgia is hampered by a number of deficiencies or gaps, as identified by PMCG. They include the absence of a searchable electronic database of laws tailored for the parliament's lawmaking needs, inadequate quality of explanatory notes on the reasoning of initiation of the draft law, lack of sufficient institutional capacities to conduct policy planning and evaluation, unnecessary expediency of the legislative process in a considerable number of cases, lack of sufficient review of fiscal and economic effects of draft laws including private members bills. It is therefore recommended that the new project conducts a comprehensive review on the legislative process in Georgia, from policy formulation to the promulgation of the law.[[18]](#footnote-18) The assessment will make recommendations on legal and procedural streamlining in the law making process, to be discussed when reviewing the parliamentary rules. Such assessment will complement the legislative tracking mechanism, which the World Bank is preparing, and form the basis for any further capacity building initiatives in the area of legislative drafting.
4. The new parliament leadership envisages to strengthen the Parliamentary Budget Office with additional human and financial resources and an extended mandate. This will be an important step in the further institutional development of parliament, provided that the Budget Office can emerge as the technically competent resource centre within parliament, staffed with appropriately qualified and well remunerated professionals and be allowed to set its own agenda on a non-partisan basis. The evaluator recommends that the next UNDP parliamentary project provides technical support to the Budget Office, for instance in the area of program budgeting, for at least another two years. At the same time, the sustainability of the Budget Office should be analyzed carefully to avoid donor-dependency.
5. In many developing democracies, Parliament is primarily focused on adoption of new legislation, without following through on the implementation of legislation. Implementation challenges are often related to the speed with which the government issues secondary legislation, knowledge of the legislation, conceptual clarity and possible contradictions in legislation, and enforcing of the legislation. Also in Georgia, Parliament is very little engaged in overseeing the implementation of legislation. Since this area of Parliamentary activity is relatively new, we recommend a pilot research sub-project to review implementation of a number of selected laws, including desk research, interviews, field visits, consultations with Committees, line ministries and courts. This pilot research phase can be followed by a series of roundtables to verify and discuss the findings of the research. Possible pilot research priorities can be related to the implementation of good governance legislation, e.g. in the area of anti-corruption[[19]](#footnote-19): Law on Corruption and Conflict of interest in Public Service; Law on State Procurement; Law on Internal State Audit and Inspection.
6. In order to strengthen Parliament’s oversight capacity, we recommend a research sub-project on the independent institutions and regulatory agencies in Georgia and their interaction with Parliament. The research will assess the functioning of a selected number of institutions and their legal framework, with the aim to bring them into accordance with European/international standards. The research needs to result in a set of recommendations and legislative amendments aimed at bringing more coherence and consistency in the way how the agencies interact with Parliament and strengthening the Parliament’s institutional oversight capacity. The research and legislative review will then be followed by a coaching process for relevant staff and Committee chair persons.[[20]](#footnote-20)
7. Parliament's relationship with voters also needs to be addressed in a future UNDP assistance program. The Parliament has individual bureaus for every MP elected through the majoritarian system. The main functions of the bureaus include easing the communication of MPs with voters, organizing meetings or discussions, reporting to the constituencies of the recent developments or progress attained in resolution of community or national issues, etc. Previously the MPs had their individual bureaus, financed and sustained by the municipalities. The Parliament allocated 5,000 GEL at the start to equip the new bureaus. Further the Parliament allocates 5,000GEL on monthly bases to every bureau to support their activities. However, it is left at the discretion of a MP to decide on the staffing of the bureau and use of the allocated monthly allowance on the condition the money should be spent solely for the needs and operations of the bureau. There is need for more consistency and policy guidance by parliament on the use of the offices, the Job Descriptions and remuneration of the staff working in the offices, the outreach and communication of the offices. In addition, if the electoral system would move to a proportional system, the system of constituency offices will also need revision. The new UNDP parliamentary project would be well placed to conduct a feasibility study on reformatting the constituency offices as regional parliamentary constituency and information centres.

C . Recommendations on Project Management

1. During the current project the Project Board has been faced with challenges in terms of its composition and the frequency of its meetings. As recommended at the MTR, the composition should include parliamentarians from ruling party and opposition, and be the direct beneficiary of the project, such as the chairpersons (ruling party) or deputy chairpersons (opposition) of the Committees with which the project works. The composition of the future Project Board could be as follows: 3 MPs from ruling parties, 2 MPs from opposition parties, 2 senior staff persons (Chief of Cabinet of Speaker, SG), Head of Budget Office (if that is a substantial component of the future project), 2 person from the UNDP, 1 person per donor organization, and the SPA (ex-officio) and Project Manager (ex-officio). The Project Board should meet 3 times per year. In addition, it is recommended to include a summary list of all decisions taken in the minutes of Project Board meetings, including the timeframe for implementation of the decision and the person responsible for overseeing the implementation. Verification of implementation of previous decisions needs to be on the agenda of each Board meeting.
2. Donor coordination initiatives were, on a very limited scale, conducted by parliament over the last couple of years. Personal contacts between different projects did occur, though a clear concept on donor coordination in the parliament of Georgia is lacking. Based upon practices in other parliaments,[[21]](#footnote-21) an effective concept of coordination at three layers is suggested. A first layer brings together the donors, such as the EU Delegation, USAID, German Embassy, UNDP, etc. It is suggested this coordination is inserted in the agenda of the Ambassadorial meetings of UNDP, where heads of missions meet on a regular basis. A second layer brings together the implementing organizations and projects, such as NDI, WFD, UNDP-project, etc. The Chief of Staff of Cabinet of Speaker is well placed to call for these meetings. It is advisable that these meetings are based on the Strategic Plan of parliament, discussing how different projects will contribute to achieving the parliament's Plan. The meetings can be scheduled every second month. A third layer involves regular, informal meetings in non-office setting where staff of projects exchange relevant information on developments and project activities. These informal gatherings can take place at e.g. weekly basis.
3. Based upon the information available, it looks that the EU will award the resources for a future parliamentary program to UNDP, while subcontracting specific components to other organizations. WFD and CESS-CDPG would be interested to be part of this EU-funded project.[[22]](#footnote-22) Through a series of MoUs, the project should establish a framework for programmatic coordination, resource sharing and reporting among the agencies implementing the project.
4. In terms of project human resources in a future project, there will be need for (at least) one Project Manager (in charge for delivery of UNDP project), Deputy Project Manager (in charge for liaison and coordination with other projects under the umbrella of the EU-funded UNDP project), a financial-admin assistant, a Senior Parliamentary Advisor (P-5), a national Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, project driver and one or two technical experts (P-4), e.g. legislation & procedures expert, and strategy & oversight expert, as well as short-term national and international consultants. The SPA will increase the in-house technical expertise and bring best practices to the project, as recommended at the MTR.
5. Good project management requires the possibility for MPs and staff to call upon the support of the project for the capacity needs they would like to see addressed. In order to do so, comprehensive information on the project’s objectives, timeline, financial and human resources and areas of expertise need to be made available to all stakeholders and beneficiaries. The evaluator recommends a detailed ‘project communication plan’ to prepare for a comprehensive effort to regularly inform MPs and parliament staff on the UNDP project and what it has to offer. The ‘project communication plan’ will include, amongst others, a circular on the overall UNDP project distributed within parliament, a monthly update email or newsletter to all MPs and staff, a project calendar widely disseminated in parliament and to other partners and beneficiaries (CSOs, government ministries, etc.), a presentation leaflet on the project, etc. In addition, the information on the parliamentary project on the UNDP Country Office web site deserves regular and more detailed updating.
6. Monitoring and Evaluation is an ongoing sound project management practice. This can be achieved through constant improving of project practices, end of year review meetings with all stakeholders, and UNDP Atlas project monitoring. There should be a clear and comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation template, which should be filled in and submitted quarterly to the Project Board. It is recommended that a next project has an additional staff person, a national Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.
7. Good project management suggests a substantial role for the UNDP Country Office in quality assurance. For a larger scale EU-funded project, this role becomes all the more important, for instance quality assurance related to timely Project Board meetings, timely recruitment of staff, and review of work plans, reports and publications. Enhancing the quality review for publications can be done through feed-back on draft texts from thematic experts at UNDP or other UN agencies; and collect feed-back on the effective use of knowledge products. It is recommended to develop a “UN Georgia Knowledge Matrix” to plan the delivery of UN Agencies’ in-house expertise to parliamentary Committees and other target groups. The UNDP can organize regular meetings of all UN agencies interacting with parliament, upon the initiative of the UNDP Country Director. UNDP Georgia's parliamentary project does not function on its own: UNDP is implementing over 70 parliamentary programs worldwide. It would be useful to strengthen interaction with the UNDP Community of Practice on parliamentary development (New York).

**Annex 1: Agenda of the in-country mission, 15 – 21 June 2013**

**Saturday, 15 June 2013**

18.00-19.30 Sophie Guruli, UNDP Parliamentary Project Manager

19.30-20.30 Beka Mikautadze, Chief of Speaker’s Cabinet

21.00-22.00 Niko Nergadze, Head of Public Relations Department

**Sunday, 16 June 2013**

12.00-13.00 Viktor Dolidze, Chair of European Integration Committee of the Parliament

Irina Tsertsvadze, Staff of EU Integration Committee

14.00-15.00 David Azmaiparashvili, Director of Public Audit Institution, State Audit Office (SAO); also Former Head of Staff of Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament

David Churadze, Former Senior Staff of Budget and Finance Committee of the Parliament

16.30-17.30 Shorena Kakhidze, Head of Parliamentary Budget Office

**Monday, 17 June 2013**

10.30-11.00 Jamie McGoldrick, UNDP Resident Representative

12.00-13.00 Helga Pender, Attache (Project Manager) Democratization and Civil Society, EU Delegation

15.00-16.00 Boris Nadiradze, Project Coordinator, Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)

**Tuesday, 18 June 2013**

12.00-12.45 Alexandre Svanishvili, Project’s former Local Governance Expert

13.00-14.00 Paata Beltadze, Deputy Ombudsperson

16.00-17.00 Giorgi Jerenashvili, Policy and Management Consulting Group (PMCG)

17.30-18.00 Inita Paulovica, DRR, Gigi Bregadze, Program Analyst

**Wednesday, 19 June 2013 (Parliament, Kutaisi)**

12.30-13.30 Diana Asatiani, Head of HR Department

13.30-14.30 Tata Omiadze, Head of Parliament’s Training Centre

16.00-17.00 Aleksandre Tabatadze, Head of Legal Department

**Thursday, 20 June 2013**

11.00-12.00 Khatuna Gogorishvili, MP, Member of Procedural Issues Committee (UNM)

14.00-14.40 Davit Onoprishvili, Chair of Budget and Finance Committee

14.40-15.10 Gigla Agulashvili, Chair of Agrarian Issues Committee

15.30-16.30 Nino Vardosanidze, Parliamentary Program Officer, NDI

**Friday, 21 June 2013**

10.00-11.00 Ambassador Pieter J. Langenberg, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

11.15-12.15 Ia Kutaladze, Director, Personnel Management Centre (PMC)

13.30-14.15 Sophie Guruli, UNDP Parliamentary Project Manager

15.00-16.00 Gia Jorjoliani, First Deputy Chair of Regional Policy and Self-Government Committee

17.00-17.30 De-briefing with Inita Paulovica, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, and Gigi Bregadze, Programme Analyst Governance.

**Annex 2: Follow-up to Recommendations of the 2011 Mid Term Review Report**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Recommendation as proposed in 2011 Mid Term Review Report | Yes/No/Partly | Comments / explanations on the follow-up during 2011-2013 |
| Program budgeting |
| 1. | Develop an “2012 Roadmap for Parliamentary Follow-up to the Reports of Chamber of Control”.  | No | The Project kept focusing on the budgetary oversight at the budget planning stage. Besides, the pre-electoral period did not give opportunities for engaging Parliament in this activity.  |
| 2. | MoU between UNDP and GIZ outlining activities which both organizations plan to do together | No | Due to expected parliamentary elections and Parliament’s move to Kutaisi, it was decided to downsize capacity development activities. In addition, in that period GIZ was short of funding, which gave them less possibilities to engage in parliamentary support activities.  |
| 3. | Policy paper on “program budgeting and the Parliament of Georgia”, to be offered to the newly elected Parliament’s Committee on Budget and Finance for their review and adoption. | Yes | “Budgetary Process in Georgia: Handbook for MPs” was prepared and published by the Project for the newly-elected parliamentarians. |
| 4. | Two policy forums on gender sensitive budgeting, followed by one publication | No | Due to expected parliamentary elections and Parliament’s move to Kutaisi, it was decided to downsize capacity development activities. |
| Local Governance reform |
| 5. | Link this component to the knowledge and resources on local governance at the Democratic Governance Group of UNDP and/or the UNDP Regional Center | Partly | Project had intensive cooperation with UNDP Local Governance Project and the latter’s expertise was used by Project at various occasions |
| 6. | On the up-to-30 citizens’ queries received on weekly basis: draft concept paper on best practices and recommendations of effective analysis and monitoring on citizens' queries  | Partly | A special needs assessment was undertaken, which revealed the need for recruiting an expert tasked with developing special case management software to monitor citizen queries. The recommendation has been shared with the Committee.  |
| 7. | Prepare a realistic exit strategy for UNDP support to the local governance committee, in case a new project would not prioritize on supporting this particular committee. | Yes | Recently launched UNDP Project “Fostering Regional and Local Governance in Georgia” has a parliamentary component targeting Committee’s capacity building. Besides, Parliamentary Project’s Local Governance Expert is also recruited by the mentioned Project, which brings additional value through providing in-depth knowledge on committee capacities, provided support and existing challenges. |
| Human Resources policy |
| 8. | Recommendation for a comprehensive action plan, with timelines, for structural reforms in the areas of performance appraisal, staff recruitments, Parliament secretariat organizational structure and the related regulations. We recommend the creation of Standard Operating Procedures / Parliamentary Handbook, reflecting the new organizational structure of Parliament.  | Partly | Comprehensive recommendations in the area of human resource management have been provided to the Parliament, covering topics such as performance appraisal, staff recruitments, etc. Handbook, reflecting new organizational structure of Parliament, has not been prepared as there have been no organizational changes so far. However, special handbook on staff recruitment, intellectual tests, etc. have been provided to the Parliament’s HR Department. |
| 9. | Study visit to one or two Parliaments in Europe related to human resources management.  | No | Due to expected parliamentary elections and Parliament’s move to Kutaisi, it was decided to downsize capacity development activities. Besides, study visits and other types of professional development activities are effective only in case the Parliament is willing to implement reforms in this field and introduce changes in the Department’s operation (mission, objectives, tasks, etc.), which has not been evident up to now. |
| 10. | Technical input to trainings and capacity building programs at the Training Center by offering international and parliamentary expertise.  | No | Due to expected parliamentary elections and Parliament’s move to Kutaisi, it was decided to downsize capacity development activities. |
| Parliament’s interaction with independent institutions and regulatory agencies in Georgia |
| 11. | Research on the functioning of a number of selected agencies in Georgia, and recommendations to improve consistency and coherence among the agencies and institutions. Recommendations will also include ways to strengthen Parliament’s institutional capacity for oversight.  | No | Given the political layout in the country before the parliamentary elections (constitutional majority in the Parliament and only formal checks and balances system in place), the implementation of this activity would have no tangible results. In post-electoral period, it was necessary to equip newly-elected MPs with basic knowledge and skills on their role and functions. Therefore it was decided to include the mentioned initiative at the later stage – in the frames of upcoming large-scale UNDP-EU project. |
| Parliament’s transfer to Kutaisi |
| 12. | “Summer University on Democracy and Parliamentarism” in Kutaisi, for persons already living or prepared to move to Kutaisi and neighboring municipalities.  | Yes | One-month intensive training was provided to 124 interns recruited by the Parliament in Kutaisi and neighboring municipalities. Training covered different topics related to parliamentary work. Interns have been working in different structural units and many of them are currently applying for announced vacancies in the Parliament. |
| 13. | Substantial program of capacity building for newly elected MPs and staff in 2013 and 2014. We recommend that UNDP advocates for a substantial budget allocation for the Training Center in Parliament. We recommend that the UNDP project assists the Training Center in developing a comprehensive training plan for 2013-2014, and provides external Parliamentary experts to help executing the training program. | Partly | Extensive training has been offered to the newly elected MPs in the areas of Project’s direct involvement – budgetary oversight and local governance. No support has been extended to the Training Centre which still has no budget of its own and the move to Kutaisi also obstructs the possibilities of inviting external experts to provide trainings. |
| 14. | a comprehensive induction program for newly elected MPs | Partly | As mentioned above, trainings in the area of budgetary oversight and local governance was provided to the newly elected MPs. An induction program was mainly offered by NDI which has been regularly providing this support to the Parliament during last years.  |
| 15. | It is advisable that the Parliament leadership assumes full responsibility for the ICT component of the transfer to Kutaisi. UNDP will thus continue to focus on programmatic areas of Parliamentary functioning.  | Yes | UNDP has not been involved in ICT component. |
| Recommendation on management issues |
| 16. | A “sustainability document” be signed between UNDP and the Parliament at the end of the current project period, which foresees in a three months follow-up report on its implementation. | N/A | No “sustainability document” has been prepared as the Project is continuing its operation until December 2013 at a minimum and, highly likely, beyond that. |
| 17. | In terms of the “sustainability document” of the previous project, we recommend to the UNDP CO to discuss soonest with the Secretary General the gaps in follow-up as identified in our review.  | Partly | With the new Secretary General in place, it would be difficult to discuss this issue, as the responsibility for previous activities and its follow-up is largely on the former top officials of the Parliament (former Secretary General and members of Speaker’s Cabinet). However, the Project ensured sustainability of its project outputs and knowledge transfer to the current Parliament through a variety of activities, such as handbooks for MPs on Budgetary processes, summary of international agreements ratified by previous Parliament in 2008-2012, overview of donor support activities in 2008-2012, etc. In addition, Project’s recommendations in the area of HR management have been shared with the Secretary General and Chief of Speaker’s Cabinet. |
| 18. | We recommend that reports go beyond reporting of the outputs of individual activities and focus more on results in improved Parliamentary functioning. We recommend that the project issues periodic thematic reports, e.g. a thematic report on program budgeting, thematic report on current practices of Parliamentary oversight over the government, outreach and social media, etc. Such thematic reports will enhance visibility of the project, and can be shared nationally and internationally.  | Partly | In addition to project reports, different thematic reports/papers by Project experts, including on quality of committee hearings on budget, public outreach, have been produced. They have been mostly shared with the donor and direct beneficiaries (selected departments, committees). |
| 19. | We recommend a part-time international Parliamentary development expert to join the project team in 2012 in order to provide additional technical knowledge, to increase the project’s output in terms of Parliamentary oversight and to conduct the required research and coaching to MPs and staff. | No | Invitation of international parliamentary development expert has not been considered feasible in the frames of the on-going Project as the 2012 was quite a transitional year for the Project in view of the pre- and post-electoral period, new Parliament and new MPs in place, who needed time to familiarize themselves with their functions, Parliament’s role and identify needs and set new visions for further development |
| 20. | Innovative and multi-dimensional communication strategy for the project. The communication strategy will ensure that the project activities and the results in the functioning of Parliament be communicated regularly at domestic and international level.  | Partly  | No special communications strategy has been envisaged for the Project. However, a very important initiative - support to the Parliament in developing its communications strategy – has been provided which has become a better promotion of project activities with Parliament as well as different local and international organizations and media (all the sides were involved in the strategy discussions). Besides, Project regularly posted short stories on its activities (trainings, workshops, study visits) on Parliament’s website – both on Georgian and English versions. |
| 21. | Donor coordination. We recommend that the UNDP CO discusses this matter with the Speaker. UNDP can offer to submit a revised concept note on donor coordination.  | Yes | Project consulted and supported the newly-elected Parliament (Speaker and his Cabinet) with the organization of the first donor coordination event. An international expert was recruited to provide recommendations on good practices on donor coordination. The recommendations will be used to draft a concept note on donor coordination. |
| 22. | Preparations for a possible follow-up project need to be accelerated during 2012. We recommend to engage in further consultation with the EU delegation in Tbilisi and the Parliament of Georgia to identify in greater detail the program areas which UNDP can support within an EC-funded project as part of the CIB.  | Yes | Respective consultations have been undergoing with the EU Delegation. A large-scale project co-funded by EU is expected to be launched from 2014. |
| 23. | A joint mission to Georgia of staff of UNDP and EC to further discuss the potential of synergies between electoral cycle support and Parliamentary development assistance, for the first half of 2012. | Partly | Constant coordination was ensured with the electoral project. Synergy was applied in cases when electoral project’s intellectual resources were needed for capacity building exercises provided for the MPs and staff of the Parliament (training on electoral systems, etc.) |

1. The State Audit Office is Georgia's supreme audit institution. According to the Constitution, the Chamber is to supervise the use of state funds and other resources of the state. It is also authorized to inspect the activities of other state bodies that are responsible for financial and administrative control and to present proposals regarding the improvement of tax legislation to Parliament. The Office is accountable to Parliament, which also elects the Auditor General. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Dennis Sammut,* Georgia: the next episode, EPC Commentary, Brussels, May 2013; http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub\_3508\_georgia\_-\_the\_next\_episode.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See: UNDP *Handbook on Planning, monitoring and evaluating for results, New York, 2009 (revised: 2011), 232 pp.* <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. An example of ratings given for each of the evaluation criteria to parliamentary strengthening projects, can be found at: MURPHY, Jonathan, *Strengthening Effectiveness and Transparency of the Parliament of Georgia, Project Evaluation and Formulation,* London / Tbilisi, August 2008, 32 pp.; DE VRIEZE, Franklin &BEECKMANS, Ruth & AHMAD, Raza, *Evaluation of the UNDP Parliamentary Project in Pakistan and Recommendations*, October 2012, Brussels / Islamabad, 77 pp. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/parliamentary_development/parliamentary-development-strategy-note-.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/oppd/Page_8/engaging_and_supporting_parliaments_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/self-e.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.agora-parl.org/standardsfordemocraticparliaments> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. http://sao.ge/?action=0&lang=eng [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. http://www.pmcg-i.com/ [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Policy & Management Consulting Group, Needs Assessment of the Parliament of Georgia - Preliminary Report, Tbilisi, May 2013, p. 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. De Vrieze, Franklin, Assessment of the UNDP Parliamentary project in Georgia and recommendations, Brussels / Tbilisi, December 2011, p. 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Policy & Management Consulting Group, Needs Assessment of the Parliament of Georgia - Preliminary Report, Tbilisi, May 2013, p. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. http://www.ungeorgia.ge/eng/ [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/regional-cooperation/enpi-east/cib\_en.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/aap/2012/af\_aap\_2012\_geo.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The most recent comprehensive legislative assessment can be found in: OSCE - ODIHR, Law Drafting and Regulatory Management in Georgia: An Assessment, Warsaw, November 2005 (updated September 2007), 46 p. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. http://transparency.ge/en/anti\_corruption\_commitments [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. An extensive analysis on this topic has been conducted for Moldova: De Vrieze, Franklin, *Independent and regulatory agencies in Moldova and their interaction with parliament,* UNDP Moldova, Chisinau, 2011, 164 p. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. ##  De Vrieze, Franklin, *OSCE Coordinates Parliamentary Support Programmes in Kosovo*, Helsinki Monitor, vol. 18, no. 1 (2007)

 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) has worked for several years with the Security and Defence Committee of the Parliament of Georgia on issues of oversight over security institutions. See: http://www.cess.org/ [↑](#footnote-ref-22)