

Project Title: “Strengthening Transparency and Effectiveness of the Parliament and Government of Georgia”

Execution Modality: NEX

Total budget: USD 1,808.820

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| • Government | USD 416,940 |
| • Regular/UNDP TRAC 1 | USD 649,175 |
| • EC RRM | USD 742,705 |

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Brief Description of the Project:

Georgia lacks the human and institutional capacity to rapidly adapt and absorb new policy frameworks to enhance democratic governance and citizen participation in development processes. However, the President, the leadership of the Parliament, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and of the State Department on ITs revealed new initiatives in promoting modern management systems with ICT-component mainstreamed in it. The project builds on the experience of number of related UNDP projects: "Improvement of Public Administration System for Development of Democratic Governance", "Modernization of Program and Administrative Systems of Ministry of Foreign Affairs", "Modernization of Financial System of Georgia" -the 1st and 2nd Phases, "Support for Democratic Governance in the Imereti Region of Georgia", "ICTD Framework for Georgia", "Development of the Ministry of Justice in Georgia: Civil Registry Component", Strengthening Institutional Performance and Capacity for Public Sector Control. The project is a pilot initiative to develop and use e-tools to facilitate intra-governmental coordination and, thereby, efficiency and transparency. It will help to facilitate participation in the decision-making process and policy dialogue increasing accountability of the Government. The project can be replicated in other countries of Southern Caucasus

Project Objectives:

The overall objective of the project is to increase the capacity of the parliamentary bodies and the central Government to exercise accountable and efficient public management. This overall objective will be achieved through better alignment of executive and legislative branches of power, ensuring the transparency of decision-making, policy dialogue and better public accountability. Advanced methodology and e-tools will be used in order to achieve the objective. This includes creation of nets and provision of modern hardware and software, as well as training for public servants. The Main activities are as follows:

- To strengthen the law making process
- To improve the internal organization of the Parliament;
- To strengthen institutional capacity to develop regulatory and legal policies;
- To strengthen public management skills and capabilities;
- To improve the document management procedures;
- To implement the corporate Management Information System;
- To train the MP and staff on issues related to their roles and responsibilities as well as professional skills development;
- To provide "train the trainers" programs and training courses/sessions for the above Parliamentary and the Governmental agencies; this includes training of civil servants about best practices for effectively delivering public services to the people;
- To strengthen business and technical skills of the civil servants;
- To enhance transparency and responsiveness of the parliamentary processes;
- To provide public institutions with tools both in terms of transfer of technology and transfer of knowledge in order to improve accountability;

- To create new participatory mechanisms and to develop tools for facilitating wider access to public information and networking by citizens and to promote public awareness of government services and information available online;
- To ensure the record of citizen complaints/requests and to track progress through extended net-points and public access terminals at the Parliament, Prime Minister's Office and Georgian National Library.
- To establish overall e-links between the (i) Parliament, (ii) Administration of the President, (iii) Prime Minister's Office, (iv) Ministry of Justice and (v) Georgian National Library via Metropolitan Area Network (Tbilisi MAN) facilities; their provision with computer hardware, peripheral, office, media, net and special equipment;
- To provide the Parliament with Internet service and to enhance its website.

Achievements to Date:

- Unified Local Area Network (LAN) for the Parliament was upgraded and finalized. The unified LAN was implemented and tested; complete equipment of Parliament local area computer network (LAN) was purchased, network devices were renewed, its new segments that appended 400 points were built. The number of points available in the network exceeds 900 points, i.e. potential end-users. The Offices of the Parliamentary Secretary of the President of Georgia and the Parliamentary Secretary of the Government of Georgia joined the LAN of the Parliament.
- Computer hardware, peripheral, media, office, network and special equipment, operational systems, office, anti-viral and other standard software packages are provided and installed
- Development, testing, adjustment, and implementation of the software systems/modules/packages was completed
- A new, completely different Web portal of the Parliament was introduced
- Extensive application of modern ICT-tools in the process of modernization of (a) management capacities and (b) the law drafting and preliminary consideration were completed
- The Parliament's Training Centre was refurbished; the Training Centre was provided with office and special furniture/accessories/facilities, as well as with hardware and special equipment
- Process analysis was conducted and new process flows were devised
- The internal organization of the Parliament is rationalized
- Continuous and responsive training strategy was implemented by: devising the structure of the Training Centre, developing the first curricula, training staff of the Centre in training methodologies and training development methodologies;
- Basic mandatory training courses, which comprised delivery of training for staff and parliamentarians in a variety of topics, were delivered. The following training sessions were carried out by highly qualified experts and trainers: Legislative proceedings; Law-drafting & law-making, Government oversight, Personnel management, Public relations, Document flow & management, EU Integration Processes, International Law, Management; E-governance, Business Ethics, Accounting, State Budget Planning, Execution and Monitoring, Basic computer skills
- Relevant training aids (textbooks, manuals, guides, certificates) were prepared and published;
- A methodological-practical manual "Personnel Management", a special reference book "Table Dictionary for Officials", 12 brochures from series "Public Service Library – Recommendations for Officials"; as well as from the series of "Public Service Library – The Official and the Law", a Table book "Collection of Normative Acts for Members of the Parliament and Officials of the Parliamentary Staff" regarding the most necessary practical issues for MPs and officials prepared by the project were submitted to all the Parliament committees, factions and departments of parliamentary Staff;
- Additional advanced training was delivered through partners, such as university, language institutes and specialized NGOs, to complement the basic mandatory training.
- Improvement of law-making process through clarification of roles, rationalizing document flows and improving MPs' and staff understanding of the system is in progress

- The process of improvement of the visitors' entrance to the Parliament, making it more accessible, user-friendly, open and informative was completed. The agreement on establishment of the new sub-division, the Parliamentary Information Centre was achieved. The Centre is to ensure the communications between the parliament on one hand and citizens, NGOs, media, trade union and private sector on the other
- The performance of the PR activities of the Parliament further activated and the level of involvement of civil society in the law-making process increased along with transparency of relevant procedures
- Documents reflecting the Parliament activity, its factions, MP's groups, committees, deputies, staff subdivisions, location of offices inside the building, legislative proceedings, as well as the other illustrated materials, booklets, brochures, reference books, maps and etc. were developed
- Professional skills of the staff responsible for the functions of public and mass media relations were increased, modern methods, tools and culture of work established
- The pilot model of Parliamentary Regional Office in Western Georgia (Kutaisi city), which would be responsible for managing the relations with various parliamentary units, civil society, citizens, regional and local authorities, was developed by the project

Challenge:

- Incomplete financing or sudden interruption of financing;
- Possible difficulties of institutionalization of some approaches and recommendations of the Project associated with higher country authorities (President, Leadership of the Parliament and Government);
- Incomplete, incorrect and delayed performance of obligations by subcontractors;
- Necessity of effective and efficient donor coordination;
- Needs of lobbying of project innovations through Government bodies;
- The Parliament represents different political directions and all of them have their own strong requirements to the project; the newly created factions and units also require assistance from the project, which couldn't have been foreseen by the project in the stage of its planning. Due to this kind of facts, the project undergoes through budget and project revisions and needs reallocation of funds or additional recourses;
- The Parliament has such a complicated structure, and is so conservative institution, that is was extremely difficult to introduce changes and innovations. The structural changes proposed by the project have been implemented after introduction of modifications in the legislation.
- The problems related to the regional representations of the Parliament: intervention in the relations between the local governments and the regional representations of the Parliament are out of competence of the project, but this kind of problems affect its normal implementation process.

Next Steps (attach work plan):

These areas of work will be a continuation of the current work in terms of capacity and institution building of the parliament, including necessary investment in equipment, in addition to a stronger focus on the regional representation of the parliament - building upon the experience in the Imereti region - and building institutional mechanisms for consultation between the parliament and civil society, particularly in the regions