



DECEMBER MONTHLY REPORT No. 12/2009

Project title	Support to the Anti-corruption Strategy of Georgia (GEPAC)
Reference number	2007/DG1/VC/779
Project duration	1 September 2007 – 31 March 2010
Implementation	Economic Crime Division, Directorate of Co-operation , DGHL Council of Europe
Project budget	700.000 Euros
Reporting Period	1 December – 31 December 2009
Reporting Date	11 January 2010
SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE PROJECT AGAINST INDICATORS	
Activity	Design, create and continuously update of a special webpage on the anti-corruption activities of the Coordination Council and the project on the Ministry of Justice website
Output Reference	Activity 1.4
Aim	To support the institutional consolidation of the Anti-Corruption Coordination Council, including its public presentation as part of outreach capacity development.
Outcome	<p>GEPAC supported the development of the Council's website presentation in English and Georgian languages within the framework of its Secretariat at the Ministry of Justice. The dedicated website became operational in December 2009, containing key GEPAC documents such as Inception Report and Narrative Progress Reports.</p> <p>The links to the web pages are: http://justice.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=GEO&sec_id=456&lang_id=ENG http://justice.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=456&lang_id=GEO www.coe.int/gepac</p>
Follow up	The website will be continuously updated with new relevant information on project developments and other reform related actions as it becomes available.
Activity	Organize corruption perception and attitude surveys on corruption levels
Output Reference	Activity 2.2
Aim	To measure the corruption perceptions and experiences that will serve as a baseline for future reviews and for monitoring the impact of the anti-corruption measures pursued through the new national Anti-Corruption Strategy.
Outcome	<p>In April 2009, the GEPAC project initiated and supported two corruption surveys: of the general public and of public officials. The surveys were commissioned (after a call for interests and evaluations) to an independent survey company in Georgia, GORBI, an affiliate of Gallup International. Both survey results were finalised in English in early December 2009, and are being translated into Georgian.</p> <p>The survey findings indicate improvements in reducing petty corruption in Georgia. The general public survey assessed the degree of integrity various service providers; and, to assess the existing corruption reporting</p>

	<p>system, prevailing attitudes, and the role of the Georgian legal system. Aspects of the educational and public health care systems, as well as electricity, water and gas utilities were examined. The top three most frequently visited public institutions by respondents are health care facilities, educational institutions and the office of the civil registry, where very few respondents, if any, were asked to pay anything outside of official fees.</p> <p>The public officials survey showed marked differences in the number of observed cases of corruption in the last five years. The most important improvement was noted in human resources management. Most public officials consider cronyism and bribes as practices of the past. The top three institutions that public officials trust the most and consider to have high performance standards are the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Energy and the Ministry of Finance.</p> <p>Each of the surveys contains a summary and both have been now endorsed and accepted by the Georgian authorities, who have agreed to initiate the dissemination and public information of the survey results.</p>
Follow-up	The survey results will be widely disseminated and published in the electronic media. An open public presentation for the media is scheduled to take place in the end of January 2010. At this event, representatives of the Anti-Corruption Council and GORBI company will present the Survey methodology and results, and discuss other follow up issues. The relevant survey results will also be integrated as baselines/benchmarks in the forthcoming AC Strategy Implementation Plan and shall be serving in identifying crucial and through areas for future reforms and intervention in terms of prevention of corruption..
Activity	Training of public officials dealing with granting access of public to information
Output Reference	Activity 5.1
Aim	The targeted group of Activity 5.1 was expanded to include staff of Tbilisi Mayor's Office, and in particular to strengthen the professional skills and share best practices with those officials in charge of dealing with the public information request.
Outcomes	<p>The final training event on free access to public information for representatives of local authorities took place on 26 December 2009. The previous two trainings were organised for municipal officials responsible for public information requests in two regions of the country outside the capital. The final training targeted municipal officials in Tbilisi: the Tbilisi Mayor's Office and its Special Services Structures dealing with Transport Department, Administration Privatization. The training was provided by Ms Tamar Gurchiani, Council of Europe Expert. The project team members also participated by facilitating the discussions during the training.</p> <p>The training covered the legal framework governing free access to public information and issues and challenges in applying of the existing regulations. The event also provided a dedicated question and answer session to allow participants to address the practical challenges encountered in their specific institutional set up. At the end, training evaluation questionnaires were distributed in order to receive feedback and collect proposals and ideas for future events.</p>
Follow-up	Completed
Activity	Trainings for police officers on the Code of Conduct
Output Reference	Activity 5.2
Aim	To raise awareness among the police officers about the Code of Ethics
Outcomes	Two back-to-back trainings sessions on Code of Ethics for police officers took place on 9-10 December 2009 at the Police Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for a total of 37 police officers. The training was delivered by Mr Dominik Fasching, Council of Europe expert, who currently works for the Prevention and International Relations Unit of the Federal Bureau For Internal Affairs in Austria, and Mr Ivane Khazhalia, another Council of Europe Expert, who is also a regular trainer on the Code of Ethics at the Academy of the Ministry of Interior of Georgia. The issues discussed included the Georgian and Austrian codes of ethics and their key provisions, challenges from practice, and lessons learned. The attendees engaged in a lively discussion and expressed interest for further communication with colleagues from abroad, including specialised anti-corruption courses offered by the Austrian Federal Bureau For Internal Affairs.

CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS, INCLUDING PLANNED REMEDIAL ACTIONS

The biggest challenge is a very short time frame in which to implement the remaining project activities. The challenge is compounded by the holiday season, which, given the two different calendars according to which public holidays are scheduled (Gregorian calendar for the CoE and West European counterparts/experts and the Julian calendar for Georgian institutions) will effectively result in 3-4 weeks of limited availability of various relevant partners.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Several meetings took place with the Anti-Corruption Coordination Council, the national institutions' contact point Mr. Vato Lejava, the Analytical Department, and the Head of the Georgian Judicial Training Centre during the field mission of Short-Term Adviser Ms Marijana Trivunovic on 8-10 December 2009. As a result, a number of agreements were reached on the upcoming activities, detailed in the following section.

During the meetings, the GEPAC team was also informed of changes of staff within the Analytical Department at the Ministry of Justice, including the upcoming departures of the Head of the Department and of another key officer. Replacements will be confirmed on consecutive basis and the GEPAC Tbilisi team will keep in close contact with the Ministry on this issue.

During a follow-up meeting on 18 December 2009 with Mr Vato Lejava, Chief Adviser to the Prime Minister of Georgia and Ms Tina Burjaliani, Deputy Minister of Justice, it was further proposed that the planned study visit to a comparable anti-corruption institution should last no more than one week (if visiting two institutions) and should involve the representatives of the Analytical Department and one Anti-Corruption Coordination Council member. The Analytical Department representatives are yet to be identified and potentially will include replacements of the two departing staff members as above mentioned. .

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT PERIOD

The main activities planned for January 2010 and beyond are the following:

Output 2: Update and revision of the Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan

- Activity 2.1: Advice to Government of Georgia on the Anti-Corruption Strategy

During the December meetings noted in the previous section, Mr Vato Lejava, Chief Adviser to the Prime Minister and Ms Tina Burjaliani, Deputy Minister of Justice requested that the Project's Short-Term Adviser Ms Marijana Trivunovic prepare an analytical presentation which should be delivered through a workshop dedicated to issues of monitoring and reporting on the Anti-corruption Strategy implementation. The possibility of expanding the workshop to include topics related to elaborating an implementation plan, particularly implementation benchmarks was also addressed. The proposed date of this session was indicated as 10-12 February 2010, but the exact terms need to be confirmed during the month of January 2010. There will also be an opportunity to review and comment on the next draft of the Anti-corruption Strategy, but the exact timeframe for this activity will also need to be confirmed in January 2010, in line with the progress of the Anti-corruption Strategy development.

Further, as it was agreed that the Anti-corruption Coordination Council will proceed with inclusion of public participation in the strategy development process, a public consultation event was agreed to be taking place during January 2010. A half day workshop for national NGOs and academia is planned at the State Chancellery on 15 January 2010. A public announcement about the public consultation process on this event will be made in early January 2010 in consultation with the Analytical Department at the Ministry of Justice.

- Activity 2.3 – Support the Coordination Council in organization of the workshop on the results of two perception and attitude surveys

A second event will be organised for media representatives in January 2010. Georgian Anti-corruption Coordination Council officials, together with the survey company GORBI, will present the results and methodology of the two recently finalised Surveys. This event is planned to take place at the chancellery and/or MoJ premises (to be confirmed) on 27 January 2010, and will last for approximately 2 hours. The list of potential participants (journalists) will be drafted with the help of Analytical Department and perhaps the press centre of MoJ.

In overall, the project team will keep in close contact with the state institutions about the progress on the Anti-corruption

Strategy drafting process and any potential assistance required.

Output 4: Capacities of the Prosecution to investigate and prosecute high level corruption is strengthened

- Activity 4.4 – Up to 2 study visits to European counterpart institutions for representatives of specialized units (within law enforcement agencies) shall be organised:

One study visit hosting country has been now identified, and that is Slovenia. Cooperation agreement needs to be obtained, and the second counterpart institution needs to be confirmed.

Output 5: Integrity and Institutional capacity for preventing corruption at the General Prosecutor's Office is reinforced

- Various trainings under outputs 4 and 5 (4.2, 4.3, 5.3)

A number of training topics were identified during the month of December meetings with counterparts as noted above. They identified areas of training needs/themes include the following: criminal liability of legal persons; internal inspections for Inspector General of the MoJ; corruption in private sector (possibly financial investigations); and training of tax inspectors to detect corruption offences