

PAR implementation and monitoring in Georgia

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The Public Administration Reform Roadmap 2020 was approved in 2015. The scope of the PAR covers six policy areas: policy planning, public service and HRM, accountability, service delivery, public finance management and local self-government.

The implementation of the PAR is coordinated through a council composed by Deputy Ministers, representatives of key Governmental Agencies, some international organizations and national CSOs. Meetings are held twice a year. First monitoring report was recently released.

Despite some progress made by Georgia, there are challenges which need to be addressed. The assessment approaches of the Government and CSOs can be compared to the discussion whether the glass is half full or half empty.

Overall conclusion on implementation and monitoring of PAR:

- Despite the efforts of the middle level officials or units, which may not have sufficient political weight, capacity and human resources, the reform implementation pace is rather slow. The reform needs stronger coordination.
- The government lacks holistic approach towards the reform implementation and monitoring; actions have been taken under some of the policy areas (Public Service Reform, Policy Planning and Coordination), while other areas are neglected, or even weakened (Local Self-Government). All these may result in uneven development of the reform process, which is built upon six pillars and all of them are essential for establishing professional, depoliticized, accountable and effective public administration.
- Holistic approach to PAR monitoring is not applied by civil society sector either, mainly due to large scope of the reform and lack of resources to mobilize CSOs around the reform. Lasts but not least, monitoring mechanisms and CSO cooperation framework under PAR are vague.
- PAR is more complex than just ticking some boxes. According to local experts, the existing monitoring report is quite general. Evaluation should look at outcome and impact level changes. CSOs have capacity to provide qualitative and in-depth analysis on various topics of PAR.
- Overall, there is a lack of published information on PAR implementation and monitoring on official websites. Information should be published more proactively.

- There is an impression that delays in certain areas are linked to political interests (decentralization reform and enhancing local self-governments, the law on freedom of information)
- Policy development and coordination system needs further development before having quality policy documents issued by the state institutions
- The Civil Service Law with some delays came into force in 2017, however not fully. It is hence too early to assess outcomes. Having a new law is seen as a positive development, despite the impression that it was adjusted to the current state of affairs in public service sector. The law making process is described by the Civil Society as participatory. Some of the CSO recommendations were taken into consideration. However there are number of challenges, such as public servants' classification and remuneration, performance assessment and training systems.
- The 6th pillar of the PAR is weakest, since neither strategy was developed nor capacity building actions were taken. Abolishing self-governing status to seven cities gained in 2014 was a step back in decentralization reform. On March 5 2018 in the Parliament the Nation Vision of Local Self-Government and Decentralization was presented by the Prime Minister and Chairman of Parliament, promising to transfer wide range of competencies and resources from the national to local authorities, as well as enhance civil participation by 2025.
- Implementation of the OGP action plan was included among main priorities of the Accountability pillar. Georgia joined OGP in 2011 and assumed the position of Lead Co-Chair of OGP for 2017-2018 in 2017. According to the Independent Reporting Mechanism [report](#) on implementation of Georgia's third OGP action plan (2016-2017), while the country has made progress in several aspects of the open government agenda, the government needs to leverage its year as lead co-chair of the partnership to deliver more transformative reforms that scale up practices to improve citizen engagement and public accountability across all levels of government". Major achievements include the monitoring system for public officials' asset declarations and launching of the new Budget Monitor portal by the State Audit Office.

Recommendations:

- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be defined more clearly
- CSO engagement in monitoring and evaluation process should be increased and expanded
- Holistic approach should be applied to PAR and work enhanced in all six policy areas, rather than picking more *convenient* components from the entire process
- Coordination between the implementing agencies and CSOs should be enhanced