

Azerbaijan CSO monitoring report Revenue Watch Institute
Monitoring report on the assessment of the application of Open Government Partnership
Initiatives at sub-national level

Note:

The given report has been developed on the basis of information collected and checked by the monitoring group of Oil workers' Rights Protection Organization of, as well as replies to information requests, information published in press and social surveys. The report studies the status of implementation of **2012-1015 National Activity Plan (NAP) on the promotion of Open Government Partnership**, reflects the problems revealed by the organization and suggests the recommendations for the resolution of these problems.

The authors of the report confess that the ideas stated are their personal ones and do not reflect the policy and conceptions of the project donors. Any mistake, omission or incorrect explanation in the provision or analysis of the information is the core responsibility of the authors of the report.

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1. Introduction

The adoption of the Declaration on Open Government Partnership with the participation of a couple of countries in September 2010 turned out to be an important step in the expansion of global transparency initiatives. The document stresses that the countries that are committed to follow transparency and openness principles in their international responsibilities and target to meet the expectations of their citizens in this direction declare the dissemination of open government idea internationally to be one of their main objectives.

The initiator-states that are members of Open Government Partnership Initiative declare that the platform is open for all countries that are loyal to the principles of the World Declaration on Human Rights, UN anti-corruption convention and other international documents on human rights and good governance.

Following this in January 2011 the “Open Government Partnership” initiative was more thoroughly discussed by world leaders, civil society representatives and business people in Washington, US capital. The main question of those discussions was the following: how can government openness and public participation be promoted? During the first meeting the organization committee was founded with the participation of 8 countries 10 civil society participants under the leadership of US and Brazil. The primary duty of the committee was to develop the sketch of “open government” initiative. In September of the same year the “Open Government Partnership” was founded and officially declared in New York City by 8 countries. 43 countries stated their intention to join the initiative. Three months later in December 2011 a business meeting was organized in Brazil with the participation of 43 new member-countries and the development of national activity plans related to “Open Government” initiative was discussed. Following the meeting the Open Government Partnership already turned into an international volunteer initiative.

Azerbaijan joined this Declaration in 2012. To continue the initiatives in this field ***2012-2015 National Activity Plan (NAP) on the promotion of Open Government*** has been adopted. The NAP determines the following four directions:

- **Increase the transparency in the activities of state agencies;**
- **Provision of accountability;**
- **Expansion of public participation;**
- **Application of new technologies.**

The NAP includes various events for the implementation of Open Government Partnership in 2012-2014, the time frame for those events and the responsible executive bodies.

Despite the fact that the NAP has already been adopted for more than a year the public awareness on the implementation of the plan is too small. The situation is even worse in the regions due to low public activeness of the population, poor development of the civic society and political institutions and lack of quality information-communication infrastructure.

Taking into account this factor the Oil Workers’ Rights Protection Organization has carried out its own monitoring. The monitoring has been carried out in Lankaran and Shirvan cities, as well as Salyan, Neftchala regions with the participation of local civil society organizations and activists and a report on the outcomes has been developed. The report evaluates the implementation of ***2012-2015 NAP on Open Government Promotion***, reflects the positive trends, discrepancies and problems and

states the proposals and recommendations on increasing the effectiveness in the implementation of *NAP*.

2. Short summary of the monitoring report

The international initiative on the promotion of open government fosters the implementation of activities on 4 directions: ensure *(i) fiscal transparency; (ii) accessibility of information; (iii) public participation; (iv) disclosure of income and property declaration*.

Taking into account the lack of sufficient information on the work of state agencies, the importance of community participation in decision making process and short project duration the monitoring group has decided to carry out the monitoring on two directions only – public participation in the work of government agencies and informing the public on the activities of state bodies.

Why is monitoring on public participation essential? In reality the dialog with public activists is very ineffective. The queries of NGO, mass media and citizens are not replied to. Besides, the events of NGOs on the discussion of regional or national problems are illegally hindered and usually such events are not allowed at all. No discussions or public hearing are held on regional projects or state programs and the formal events organized do not include all stakeholders. The initiatives, proposals and recommendations of NGOs and local communities on the implementation of these projects and programs are not taken into consideration.

Due to similar reasons the evaluation of access to public information in the regions is very important. In reality local state agencies either keep their reports closed for public or do not include all the information and indicators required in the reports that they reveal. The periodic reveal of information and its dissemination via internet remain a problem too.

Taking all these into account there is need for an independent monitoring of the activities considered in *NAP* on public participation in local state governance and on accessibility of public information.

Various methods have been applied during the monitoring the purpose of which was to promote Open Government Partnership by studying the implementation status of the *NAP* and to achieve the increase of transparency in the regions of Azerbaijan. Inquiries have been sent to local government agencies for evaluating the implementation status of the *NAP*, different stakeholders have been surveyed, local media has been analyzed and the web sites of local state agencies have been studied. More than 10 information queries have been sent to the executive bodies of 4 regions, as well as Lankaran and Shirvan cities and Salyan and Neftchala regions, about 200 citizens have been surveyed in the administrative units stated and the data from the web sites of local government bodies for the past two years have been analyzed.

The monitoring outcomes show that certain activities considered to be implemented locally on *NAP* have not been realized at all, whereas the rest have been implemented partially or completely. The main activities not implemented include the following:

- **No public council and partnership network within local state agencies has been founded;**
- **Local state agencies have not held press conferences on their activities and not organized events in the format of direct communication with the public;**
- **No guide on the legislation regulating the activities of local state bodies has been developed and disseminated among population.**

The activities in these directions have been carried out in none of monitored cities or regions.

The following activities considered in the *NAP* have been carried out partially:

- **1 (Neftchala region) out of 4 areas monitored has the practice of developing annual reports on the activities of local state bodies and placing those reports on their web sites;**
- **The local state bodies have the practice of regularly informing the public on their**

activities. However, there are shortcomings in regular dissemination of information and in provision of information. For instance, there is no information provided on the budget expenses of the region.

- The local state bodies have appointed responsible persons on information issues. However no internal proceeding rules related to freedom of information necessary for the effective functioning of those persons have been adopted.
- State bodies have used the practice of “open door” civil forums. It has been determined that 3 out of 4 monitored regions have held such open meetings. It was impossible to get any information on the conduction of “open door” or mobile meetings with the people of Neftchala region.
- Certain steps have been taken to ensure the public participation in state governance by using internet resources. Thus, the web sites of the executive bodies of the regions (cities) show email addresses for the citizens to send their proposals and opinions. All of those sites now have “electronic application” section.

3. Directions of monitoring

The monitoring has been carried out on the following 2 directions considered in the National Activity Plan on 2012-2015 Open Government Promotion:

(i) Monitoring of public participation

Public participation in state governance is the mutual activity of civil society institutes and the citizens themselves with government bodies in order to realize the interests and benefits of various social groups. Public participation, being a mechanism influencing the governance, ensures more effective decisions that reflect public interests, formation of active public control over the execution of the decisions made, formation of trust between citizens and the government, consensus between the government and public on the resolution of various problems and more precise determination of the needs of the society.

The monitoring suggests conducting the evaluation of public participation in local state governance on the following directions:

1.1. Evaluation of the current situation in the establishment of public councils and partnership networks within local state bodies. Article 4.1 of the National Activity Plan states that both central and local executive bodies carry responsibility for the establishment of councils or partnership networks in order to improve the cooperation between the state agencies serving the population and civil society institutes. This activity was to be carried out in 2012-2013.

1.2. Evaluation of the situation in the provision of public participation in state governance by using internet resources. Article 4.3 of the Plan states that web sites shall be used for enlarging the public participation in decision making process that are of public importance, web sites shall have the sections to receive the proposals and opinions of the citizens, to hold discussions and interactive question and answer sessions. According to the document this activity should have been started as of 2012;

1.3. Evaluation of the situation in the conduction of “open door” civic forums. Article 4.4 of the Plan states that the state bodies shall conduct “open door” civic forums as a tool to realize public participation in the governance. According to the document this activity should have been regularly conducted as of 2012.

The monitoring also considers checking whether the activities considered have been implemented or not. The following monitoring questions have been selected within the framework of public

participation evaluation:

- **Have Public Councils been established within regional (city) executive bodies and if so how much actual is their activity?**
- **Have the official regulations regulating the activities of the Public Councils been approved?**
- **Have the public participation criteria in Public Councils been determined and has independent civil society been involved into this process?**
- **Are there any visual aids – mass media materials, reports, information sources that prove the conduction of public events that reflect the activity of Public Councils in place?**
- **Do the web sites of local state governance bodies have special sections for the proposals and opinions of citizens?**
- **Do the web sites have a special section for discussions and interactive questioning and answering?**
- **Are “open door” civil forums conducted and are there any instructions on the organization and rules of such forums in place?**

(ii) Monitoring of information accessibility

The openness and accessibility of information with public load are among the most important conditions for the openness of the government. Public information is facts, opinions and knowledge that are created or gained during the implementation of public duties defined by the legislation. Without the openness of information it's impossible to ensure active public control of the civil society over the government activities.

According to article 1.0.1 of the Law on “State secret” the information related to the military, foreign-political, economic, intelligence and counter-intelligence and operation-investigation activities of the country, as well as the information protected by the country and the dissemination of which can be harmful for the security of the country are considered state secrets. Any information on state governance except the ones above mentioned shall be open.

The provisions of the Activity Plan on information openness are based on the legal mechanisms of the country legislation on information accessibility. Hence, according to Article 50 of the country Constitution anybody has the freedom to legally search, gain, pass, prepare and disseminate any information they want. According to article 5 of the Law on “Freedom of Information” openness of information and freedom of its sharing are the main principles in the realization of information freedom. According to article 6 of the Law on “Obtaining Information” revealing information is the main duty of state bodies. The information shall be maximum open and information owners carry the responsibility for the violation of right to gain information.

Evaluations on the following directions are offered on information accessibility within monitoring framework:

2.1. Evaluation of the situation in the appointment of authorized persons on information issues in local state agencies. According to article 1.1 of the NAP local executive bodies shall appoint the authorized persons on information freedom, adopt the internal rules on information freedom and inform the public about this. The implementation period for this obligation is 2012-2014.

2.2. Evaluation of the situation in regular provision of information to the public by local state bodies on their activities. According to article 2.1 of the NAP local state agencies shall regularly place the updated information on their activities on their websites. This obligation shall be executed regularly as of 2012;

2.3. Evaluation of the situation in the development of annual reports by local state agencies on

their activities and their placement on their web sites. According to article 2.2 of the NAP local state agencies shall develop annual reports on their activities and place them on their web sites. This obligation shall be regularly executed as of 2012.

2.4 Evaluation of the situation in the organization of press conferences and events in the form of direct communication with the public by local state agencies on their activities. According to article 2.3 of the NAP local state agencies shall hold press conferences and events in the form of direct communication with the public on their activities. This obligation is considered to be implemented as of 2012.

2.5 Evaluation of the situation in the preparation of guides on the legislation regulating the activities of the local state agencies and the dissemination of the guides among population. According to article 2.4 of the NAP local state agencies shall compile the simple and easy version of the legislation regulating their activities as well as guidelines and disseminate them among population. This obligation shall be implemented as of 2012.

The following monitoring questions have been selected within the framework of evaluating the accessibility of public information during the monitoring:

- **Has the authorized person on information freedom been appointed?**
- **Are there internal rules related to information freedom and if so is this document accessible for everybody?**
- **Do state bodies reveal their annual reports on their web sites?**
- **Do local state agencies develop guidelines on legislation regulating their activities and disseminate them among population?**
- **Do local state agencies hold press conferences and events in the form of direct communication with the public on their activities?**
- **Have local state agencies placed information on their activities on their web sites since the start of NAP implementation (2012) and if so how often is that information updated?**

The experts that carried out the monitoring directly have evaluated the actual implementation status of the NAP on the above mentioned 2 directions having applied one or several of the methods proposed in the monitoring methodology.

Monitoring methods

- **Surveys for official state authorities;**
- **Social surveys for various stakeholders and population;**
- **Interviews with the representatives of official state authorities and various stakeholders;**
- **Analysis of local media;**
- **Conduction of visual observations on directions selected as research objects.**

The geography of the monitoring and institutes collaborated

The monitoring was conducted in August-October 2013 on the basis of monitoring methodology developed by the expert group of OWRPO in Lankaran, Salyan, Neftchala regions and Shirvan city.

Analysis of the outcomes gained on monitoring directions

The outcomes of the monitoring that covered several cities and regions of the country show that though a year and a half has passed since the start of the execution of National Activity Plan and most activities should have already been completed, local state agencies are not active in the

implementation of the activities considered. Part of the activities reflected in the document are not implemented at all whereas the execution of the rest has problems. Thus, the following points have been determined on the execution of NAP based on the evaluation on directions and indicators selected on the basis of monitoring methodology:

1) Situation in the establishment of public councils and partnership networks within local state agencies

The primary duty of the monitoring in this direction was to clarify the actual situation in the formation of Public Councils considered to be established within local state agencies according to the NAP, as well as the status of these institutes, their real potential and formation principles. As the result of the monitoring the following was revealed:

- *No public council or partnership network was established within local state agencies in any of the administrative-territorial units selected as monitoring objects for the past year and as half since the start of NAP implementation.*
- *The talks with local state agencies made it clear that there is not sufficiently clear idea on the status and possible activities of the Public Councils.*
- *There are no visual aids – mass media materials, reports or information resources that approve the conduction of public events – that reflect the activity of Public Councils.*
- *No reply has been gained to the enquiries sent to various state agencies to find out the reason the establishment of Public Councils is delayed.*

Note: only two out of all local state agencies in all cities and regions – police departments and social protection centers had “public councils” and “public commissions” prior to the approval of NAP. However no information has been acquired within monitoring framework on the criteria by which these councils determine public participation and on the actual activities that they carry out. The case is especially true about the “public commissions” that function within social protection centers where only 1 out of 9 employees represent the NGO sector whereas the remaining 8 belong to government agencies. Even with that 1 person, the criteria of selection are not clear and it is still unclear whether he actually represents independent civil society institutes or not.

Conclusion: Though the establishment of public councils under the heads of executive bodies of the regions (cities) is very important, these institutes have not been founded. Sample regulations and instructions that regulate the status and activity of such councils have not been developed.

2) Situation in the provision of public participation in state governance by using internet municipal resources

The main objective of the monitoring in this direction was to evaluate how much effectively local state governance agencies utilize their web sites with the purpose of involving citizens into the management process and considering their opinions in public decision making process in accordance with NAP requirements. The monitoring revealed the following:

- *The web sites of the executive bodies of the regions and cities have email addresses for the acceptance of proposals and opinions of the citizens. Besides, all of those sites have “electronic application” section. Citizens can enter that section, include their name, gender, social status and contacts and select one of “proposal”, “complaint” and “application” links. Then they can put their comments on the large page that will open and click on “send” button. The appeals of the experts to local executive bodies on how much effectively citizens use email address and email application options have not been*

responded to.

- *None of the web sites of the executive bodies involved in the monitoring have special sections for discussions and interactive questioning and answering. Thus, the present sites do not offer the citizens online communication option with these agencies and the interactive communication is in fact one-sided.*

Conclusion: the fact that local executive bodies have email addresses and enable the submission of electronic applications are positive steps in the involvement of citizens into local state governance by the utilization of internet resources. However it's very important to have interactive communication between the citizens and state agencies on these web sites in order to make the process more active and transparent. Such a communication considers immediate replies to the electronic applications of the citizens directly via the web site. Interactive virtual contact would urge the people in power to treat the opinions, proposals and complains of citizens with more responsibility.

3) Situation in the conduction of “open door” civil forums by state bodies

The main objective of the monitoring in this direction was to clarify whether “open door” civil forums have been conducted with the purpose of learning the problems of citizens and settlements and considering the opinion of people on the resolution of those problems. The monitoring revealed the following:

- *Regional executive bodies conduct “open door” and “open microphone” meetings with citizens in the areas monitored;*
- *Heads of executive bodies of Salyan region have conducted total of 10 meetings with the population including the villages called “open microphone” during the implementation period of NAP. Unlike villages, there were problems with the meetings held at center of the region. Hence, some of the meetings were attended by the representatives of executive bodies, municipalities and budget organizations rather than regular citizens. No announcements were placed about the event and the invitations have been sent individually.*
- *The executive body of Lankaran has conducted 51 meetings with the citizens in the center and villages during the implementation period of NAP.*
- *No “open door” meetings have been conducted in Neftchala region or Shirvan city.*

Conclusion: The conduction of open meetings with citizens by local state agencies in accordance with NAP does not happen in all regions. Whereas more than 50 meetings have been held in Lankaran for a year and a half, no meeting has been conducted in Neftchala at all.

4) Situation in the appointment of authorized persons on information issues in local state agencies.

The replies to the information enquiries sent to the executive bodies within monitoring framework make it clear that authorized persons on information issues in each region (city) have been appointed. At the same time the correctness of this information is approved by the presence of “provision and analysis of information sector” in the organization structure of the executive bodies of these regions and cities placed on their web sites. However, according to NAP the executive bodies of the regions and cities should have adopted internal rules on information freedom and informed the public about this, besides appointing the authorized person on information issues. The monitoring revealed that this did not take place.

Conclusion: Though authorized persons on information issues in the executive bodies of the regions (cities) have been appointed, the internal rules on information freedom have not been

adopted.

5) Situation in the provision of regular information by local state bodies on their activities.

The monitoring did not reveal any practice on the conduction of press conferences or dissemination of press-releases by the executive bodies of the regions (cities) in order to provide regular information about their activities to the public. The same situation was observed in the local departments of the central executive bodies of the regions monitored. There are only newspapers that belong to the executive bodies of the regions (cities), but they do not meet the information needs of the population. Important information such as the allocation and amount of public funds, reports on budget expenses on separate state agencies, utilization of state property, state procurements, the amount of utility fees collected from population, the quality and quantity indicators reflecting the actual situation of education and health sectors is not published in official local newspapers or placed on official websites or disseminated among population. Besides, no information is provided on state projects and programs, wages at executive bodies and other local government agencies, vacancies and employment terms. The information on the types of services offered by central executive bodies and the situation related to the utilization of these services is not provided.

Conclusion: Both local official newspapers and web sites provide information that is not important and useful for the public, but rather allowed by the executive bodies, that is of no importance for the population, does not consist of figures and economic indicators, but rather collection of words. This picture proves that the list of quarterly, semi-annual and annual public information that the local executive bodies have to disseminate among population shall be approved.

6) Situation in the development of annual reports by local state bodies on their activities and their placement on the web sites

Though the annual reports of heads of executive bodies in all of the cities and regions monitored are published in local newspapers, not all of these agencies place their reports on their web sites. The monitoring revealed the following:

The official web sites of local executive bodies have the annual reports of the EB on their official web sites. (Salyan February 14, 2013; Neftchala February 13, 2013; Shirvan February 18, 2013; Lankaran February 9, 2013)

(i) The web site has short information about the events the annual and semi-annual reports of Salyan REB head, rather than the reports themselves. That information includes the following:

- <http://salyan-ih.gov.az/news/46.html> “Results of 2012 in the region were discussed”.
- <http://salyan-ih.gov.az/news/63.html>. “First quarter of 2013 was summed up in Salyan region”
- <http://salyan-ih.gov.az/news/100.html> “Meeting on the 9 months’ outcomes of the social-economic development of Salyan region was held”.

This short information includes only the fact that head of EB has given a report and the names of officials who have made a speech related to the report. The content of the report itself is not in place.

Note: The report of Salyan REB is published in “Galaba” newspaper the founder of which is the agency itself.

(ii) The annual reports of Lankaran REB are published in “Lankaran” newspaper the founder of which

is the agency itself. The reports are not placed on the web site of the agency (<http://lenkeran-ih.gov.az/index.html>). Only once – in October 2013 information about the 9 months' outcomes and short content of the report was placed on the website within the implementation period of NAP. That information can be acquired from the below link:

<http://lenkeran-ih.gov.az/news/360.html> “The final outcomes of 9 months were discussed at the council meeting”

(iii) Information on the annual reports of Neftchala REB is published in “Gundogar” newspaper the founder of which is the agency itself. The reports have also been placed on the web site of the agency (<http://www.neftchala-ih.gov.az/>). According to monitoring outcomes, REB has placed the following materials of report nature for the past year and a half:

- “Report of Mr. I.M. Valiyev, head of Neftchala region Executive Body on the results of the social-economic development in the first half of 2012” - <http://www.neftchala-ih.gov.az/news/15.html>
- Report of head of Neftchala Region Executive Body on the activities made in 2012 and issues due for 2013 <http://www.neftchala-ih.gov.az/news/34.html>
- Report of the head of Neftchala region Executive Body on the results of the social-economic development in the first quarter of 2013 <http://www.neftchala-ih.gov.az/news/45.html>

(iv) Information on the annual reports of head of executive body of Shirvan city is published in “Ishig” newspaper that belongs to the agency. These reports are not placed on REB web site (<http://shirvan-ih.gov.az/>). The only information the site has is the fact that a report on the results of the first half of 2013 have been issued. The information consists of two sentences only: “A meeting has been held on the results of the social-economic development of Shirvan city. 300 people attended the meeting”. Information can be gained from below link: <http://shirvan-ih.gov.az/news/70.html>

“A meeting on the results of the first half of 2013 was held in Shirvan city”.

Conclusion: The reports on the activities of city and regional executive bodies are published in local official newspapers that are issued in very small number. Neftchala region among the areas monitored is the only exception. Though concise the reports of the past year and a half are placed on web sites besides being published in official newspaper. Local newspapers are published in small number and it is impossible to get them from the kiosks. All the copies are sent to local state agencies in the form of subscriptions.

The presence of “Report” section on the web sites is extremely important. The reports in Neftchala for instance are placed in “News” section. This makes the search process more difficult.

But even the short report provided by the EB of Neftchala region does not cover all the activities these agencies should be carrying out. Therefore standard report forms for the accountability of executive bodies of each region and city shall be developed; these forms should include report sections, list of information and indicators to be reflected, frequency of submission and dissemination methods.

7) Situation with conduction of press conferences and events in the form of direct communication with the public by local state agencies on their activities.

No practice on the conduction of regular press conferences, briefings, open discussions with civil society institutes by local and central executive bodies on their activities in accordance with NAP was found in cities and regions monitored.

Conclusion: So far the local government bodies are not able to see the role of NGO and media as main public oversight institutes. Therefore they do not consider it necessary to conduct regular press conferences, briefings and open communication meetings for the civil community about their activities. It seems there is need for trainings on the collaboration of local government agencies and press and NGOs, educational guidelines and instructions for quality and effective implementation of NAP.

8) Situation in the development of guides on the legislation regulating the activities of local government agencies and their dissemination among population.

It is not always easy for regular citizens to understand laws and other legal acts full of terms. Due to this reason the project considers the publication of special explanatory guides for legal documents related to the activities of local state agencies and their dissemination among population. However the monitoring outcomes show that this practice had not been applied in any of the areas studied.

Conclusion: The monitoring revealed that the activities considered in the NAP have not been implemented locally. There are a couple of documents that should be put into the form of guides and disseminated among population. These documents include: Law on “State service”, “Rules of Ethical Conduct of state officials”, “Acquisition of Information” and “Struggle against corruption” and Regulations on “Local executive bodies”. One of the options is that the Commission on State Service develops the sample documents and the local executive bodies provide mass publications based on this sample. Another option is that the civil society organizations develop these documents for the executive body of a pilot region (city) with the support of NGO Council. Later all remaining executive bodies can use this sample for their reports.

Schedule reflecting monitoring outcomes

Monitoring directions selected in accordance with the National Activity Plan	Activities considered on monitoring directions	Implementation status of the activities		
		<i>Fully implemented</i>	<i>Partially implemented</i>	<i>Not implemented</i>
<i>Evaluation of the level of participation in local governance</i>	Establishment of public councils and partnership networks within local state agencies			<i>Not implemented</i>
	Provision of public participation in state governance by the utilization of internet resources		<i>Partially implemented</i>	

		Conduction of “open door” civil forums by state agencies		<i>Partially implemented</i>	
<i>Evaluation of accessibility of information</i>		Appointment of authorized persons responsible for information issues in local state agencies		<i>Partially implemented</i>	
		Regular provision of information by local state agencies to public on their activities		<i>Partially implemented</i>	
		Annual reports to be developed by local state agencies on their activities and their placement on the web sites		<i>Partially implemented</i>	
		Conduction of press conferences and events in the form of direct communication with public on their activities			<i>Not implemented</i>
		Preparation of guides on the legislative acts regulating the activity of local state agencies and their dissemination among population			<i>Not implemented</i>

Generalization of proposals for the resolution of problems

The Monitoring Group on the implementation of the “2012-2015 National Activity Plan on the Promotion of Open Government” considers the realization of the following proposals important in order to improve the implementation of the Activity Plan taking into account the problems and findings it has revealed:

- **There is need to prepare sample instructions of the public councils to be established with state agencies.** The instructions should reflect the rules, principles for the establishment of public councils, the criteria for determining structure, the status of this institute, as well as its mandate, authority, duties and rights;
- **There is need to improve the effectiveness of public participation in state governance by using internet resources.** Public discussions should be organized on the web sites of local state agencies and special section for interactive questioning and answering should be created;
- **Sample internal implementation rules on freedom of information should be prepared for the application at local agencies;**
- **There is need to develop rules on regular provision of information to public by local state agencies on their activities.** The rules should also reflect information about the frequency of publication of this information, its placement on the web site, regular update and publication in newspapers. The list of information that must be published should include the

following:

- *Budget forecast on region (city), implementation indicators of the budget;*
 - *Reports on budget expenses of various state agencies;*
 - *Environment, damage to environment and dangerous environmental impacts;*
 - *Payrolls, names, telephone number, email addresses, education and layout of officials;*
 - *Orders, decrees and decision (since they came into force);*
 - *Generalized statistic information, including generalized statistics of crimes and administrative offences;*
 - *Reports on activities;*
 - *Implementation status of local state programs also the funds spent on their implementation;*
 - *Court acts ;*
 - *Information on the consumption of utilities (gas, electricity and water);*
 - *The amount and utilization of the utility fees state companies and first collect from the population;*
 - *Utilization of state property;*
 - *Information on state procurements;*
 - *Quality and quantity indicators reflecting the actual condition of health and education sectors.*
- **The annual reports of local state agencies on their activities should be developed in a single form.** Those rules shall indicate the importance of stating the implementation status of the activities of the executive bodies within their authorities on the basis of statistical data, the development of the EB reports in accordance with the Regulations on Local Executive Bodies and the placement of those reports completely on the web site.
 - **The normative-legal documents related to the activities of local executive bodies should be in an understandable language for regular citizens, published in the form of special guides and disseminated among population.** There is need to disseminate Law on “State service”, “Rules of Ethical Conduct of state officials”, “Acquisition of Information” and “Struggle against corruption” and Regulations on “Local executive bodies” among population. Either the Commission on State Service can prepare sample documents or the civil society organizations can develop the documents for the executive body of a pilot region (city) with the support of NGO Council.
 - **Local state agencies should conduct briefings and press conferences with local media and NGOs at least once a year.**