

Open Government Partnership Steering Committee

August 31, 2021

Dear Members of OGP Steering Committee,

Azerbaijan, as one of the first countries joined OGP, always highly valued the principles of this initiative. 2 NAPs that have been adopted and successfully implemented since then, played important role in achieving the goals of transparency, social participation, accountability and technological innovation.

Following the recommendations of Criteria and Standard Subcommittee several significant measures to further improve the enabling environment for NGOs operating in Azerbaijan have been included in the 3rd NAP covering the years 2020 – 2022, approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on February 27, 2020.

Although the full execution of the NAP is to be finalized by the end of 2022, some measures, pursuant to the 2018 resolution of the OGP Steering Committee has already been implemented. Additionally, it should be mentioned that the implementation of the NAP has been affected by the extreme conditions of COVID-19 pandemic and respective response measures.

The state of implementation of the measures envisaged by the “National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022” by government agencies in 2020 was assessed by the Secretariat of the Commission on Combating Corruption. As a result of the assessment conducted in accordance with the aforementioned methodology, it was determined that during the reporting period, the National Action Plan was implemented by 86%.

The Open Government Azerbaijan Platform, that consists of the representatives of leading NGOs and state bodies, also monitored the implementation of the NAP-2022, and prepared a monitoring report. According to the monitoring, the average implementation rate of the activities envisaged to be implemented in 21 paragraphs in the National Action Plan was 72.22%. Activities on ten paragraphs were fully implemented, activities on 2 paragraphs were implemented under 50%.

Below is detailed information on the actions taken in 2020 – 2021 (August) with regards to the implementation of the “National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government 2020-2022” (Annex 1).

Additionally, the summary of implemented measures related to the recommendations of Criteria and Standards Subcommittee is attached to this letter (Annex 2).

Annex 1.

THE INFORMATION of the Commission on Combating Corruption of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the actions taken in 2020 related with the implementation of the “National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government 2020-2022”

1. Measures to prevent corruption and strengthen transparency in the activities of state bodies		
1.1	Drafting methodology for detection, analysis and prevention of corruption risks in accordance with progressive international practice	2020
The methodology has been drafted taking into account the international experience. The methodology developed for government agencies in order to detect and prevent corruption risks will be posted on the websites of the Prosecutor General's Office and the Commission on Combating Corruption.		
1.2	Developing annual action plans on corruption risks assessment and their prevention by state bodies, submission of information related with current implementation of such action plans to the Commission on Combating Corruption	2020-2022
As new methodology for detection, analyzing and preventing corruption risks in 2020 was developed, in the following years government agencies during the process of preparation of an action plan for the implementation of this clause, will provide to the Commission information on the measures taken owing to the methodology.		
1.3	Supporting specialized non-governmental organizations in order to carry out researches and surveys to study the causes, characteristics and level of corruption, in general and in the specific fields	2020-2022
In relation with the implementation of this clause, the Council of State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan conducted 2 grant competitions, one together with the Commission on Combating Corruption and other one individually, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and impossibility of conducting mass trainings and activities, these two projects were shifted and implemented by the distribution of food and medical hygiene items to low-income families. Also, despite the fact that the relevant actions were taken by Commission in order to support specialized non-governmental organizations for conducting public polls, martial law was declared in the country during Patriotic War and in accordance with Article 13.1 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Martial Law" the polls were postponed to the year 2021.		

1.4	Taking measures for the declaration of assets and financial information by public officials	2020-2022
<p>Prepared drafts on amendments to several legislative acts related to the submission of asset and financial information by public officials submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers by letter dated 21.10.2020. The mentioned drafts included the revision of the list of public officials who must provide financial information to the Commission on Combating Corruption, clarification the scope of information which should include in the content of the financial declaration, as well as new regulations on the duration of submission financial information and supervision submitted information, etc. The drafts also define the rules and forms of submission of asset and financial declaration by public officials.</p> <p>Also, in accordance with the draft Regulations of the Disciplinary Commission of the Milli Majlis (Parliament), the Commission is entitled to control the submission of financial information by the members of Parliament, to receive the financial information and to conduct preliminary investigation on that information.</p>		
1.5	Organizing e-learning courses (webinars) for civil servants on anti-corruption and ethics rules	2020
<p>The State Examination Center has prepared training modules on "The issues of application of rules of ethical conduct in the civil service", "Fight against corruption", "Ethical rules and fight against corruption" and "Prevention of conflicts of interests". Relevant training was conducted for civil servants of the Ministry of Energy on 02.12.2020. Besides, the Commission plans to support several specialized non-governmental organizations in organizing an e-training course on fight against corruption and ethical conduct for civil servants in 2021.</p>		
1.6	Providing support to the specialized non-governmental organizations for conducting trainings on anti-corruption and ethics rules	2020-2022
<p>This clause was fully implemented by the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Energy, the State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture, the State Customs Committee, the State Statistics Committee, the State Migration Service, the State Advertising Agency and the Center for Economic Reforms. The Commission states that other central and local executive authorities have partially implemented the clause due to the COVID 19 pandemic, measures must be taken for the implementation of this clause in the following years.</p>		
1.7	Expanding technical and human resource capabilities of the "161-Hotline" call center operating under the supervision of General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan and creation of a unified portal for electronic complaints (161.az) in order to improve the complaint procedure related to corruption offences	2020-2022
<p>During the reporting year, the "161-Hotline" call center which operates under the Anti-Corruption Directorate with the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan received totally 4661 appeals. In order to expand the human resource capacity of the "161-Hotline" call</p>		

center, in 2020, 5 new staff members appointed to the consultant position in the Organizational and Information Support Department of Anti-Corruption Directorate. Besides, for further improvement of press service, a new website of the Prosecutor General's Office was made available to the public and detailed information about the "161-Hotline" contact center was posted on the website (161.az). It is planned to work on the creation of a unified, single electronic application portal in the following years.

1.8	Creating a unified hotline for appeals to the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman), with the aim to provide better opportunities for citizens to appeal and increase the efficiency of their consideration.	2020
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This clause has been fully implemented and 916 single hotline call center have been established for appeals to the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

1.9	Drafting annual reports by state agencies on measures taken to raise awareness on ethical behavior issues, the cases of violation of ethical rules, imposed disciplinary sanctions and disclosure of relevant information to public	2020-2022
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Although measures have been taken by government agencies to raise awareness on ethical issues, some government agencies didn't prepare and present annual reports and cases about ethical conduct violation or imposed disciplinary actions, and disclosure of such information. The Commission notes that in the next years, works on the implementation of this clause should be further improved.

1.10	Developing the cooperation with the international organizations specialized in the areas of open government and anti-corruption	2020-2022
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Implementation of the clause was fully implemented by the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Commission. Thus, the Commission and the Prosecutor General's Office collaborated and cooperated closely with international organizations which specialized in open government and anti-corruption fields, such as the Open Government Partnership Organization (OGP), the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Anti-Corruption Commission for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (OECD), the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA), the European Partners Against Corruption (EPAC), the European Anti-Corruption Coordinator Network (EACN), the International Transparency School and others, as well as participated in online events which organized by the abovementioned international organizations.

2. Measures on ensuring financial transparency

2.1	Disclosing information about parameters of state budget draft and consolidated budget for the current year and for the next three years before submission it to the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan	2020-2022
<p>The clause was fully implemented by the Ministry of Finance. Thus, the “Statement on Preliminary Indicators of State and Consolidated Budgets”, “Initial Budget Statement” was prepared and published in the mass media, as well as on the website of the Ministry of Finance on September 3, 2020. The document contains macroeconomic forecasts for the medium term, main directions of expenditure and revenue policy, forecasts on public debt, etc. as well as the main parameters of the state and consolidated budgets for the current year and for the next three years. Also, on December 21, 2020, the draft law (bill) on the state budget for 2021 was posted on the website of the Ministry of Finance.</p>		
2.2	Involving civil society institutions in discussions of the state budget draft	2020-2022
<p>The clause has been fully implemented by the Ministry of Finance. In order to provide opportunity for public discussion detailed indicators of state and consolidated budget drafts for each year, as well as “Preliminary Budget Statement”, “Citizen's Budget Guide on state and consolidated budgets of the Republic of Azerbaijan” books was prepared and posted on the official website and social network pages of the Ministry of Finance. As a result of these measures, the participation of civil society institutions and mass media in discussions of state budget draft have been significantly increased.</p>		
2.3	Disclosing information about the indicators of implementation of state and consolidated budgets by the end of the next month after the reporting period	2020-2022
<p>The clause was fully implemented by the Ministry of Finance. Thus, information which submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers according to Articles 20.2 and 20.7 of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Budget System", comparative analysis of revenues and expenditures in annual and quarterly reports of the implementation of revenues and expenditures of state and consolidated budgets, bills (drafts) of state budget and on the implementation of the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as combining the parameters of the consolidated and state budgets for 2020, relevant information and drafts that reflect 19 different indicators for the country which based on the open budget index assessment methodology were posted on the official website of the Ministry.</p>		
2.4	Disclosing information about the categories of expenditures and revenues of the approved budget for the next budget year (including expenditures of budget program)	2020-2022
<p>Due to the Patriotic War and the declared martial law in our country, which began on September 27, 2020, there was a delay in the discussion of the state budget and consolidated budget drafts of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2021. However, after the approval of the state budget for 2020, the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan “On the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020” and the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on its</p>		

<p>application, indicators at the level of paragraphs of functional, economic and administrative classifications of state budget expenditures for 2020, information on programs and similar measures envisaged in the state budget for 2020, total amount of tax and non-tax revenues of the budget for 2020, as well as indicators of sources of both categories were posted on the official website of the Ministry of Finance.</p>		
2.5	Disclosing approved public debt indicators for the next budget year (new borrowings, total debt amounts and interests (per cent) to be paid)	2020-2022
<p>This clause has been fully implemented. Thus, the forecast indicators of public debt for 2020 (new borrowings, total borrowings and interest to be paid) were posted on the official website of the Ministry of Finance.</p>		
2.6	Disclosing results of the auction of issuing state loans (bonds)	2020-2022
<p>The clause has been fully implemented. Thus, the results of the auctions on the issue of government bonds were available on the official website of the Ministry of Finance no later than the day after the auction (January 14 and 21, 2020, February 5, 11, 18 and 25, March 3 and 10, April 29, 5, May 12 and 19, June 9, 16 and 23, September 1, November 10 and 17, December 8 and 15).</p>		
2.7	Disclosing information about the foreign public debt of the Republic of Azerbaijan	2020-2022
<p>The clause was fully implemented by the Ministry of Finance. Thus, the external public debt of the Republic of Azerbaijan was posted on the website of the Ministry of Finance in the "Public Debt" section and regularly updated.</p>		
2.8	Increasing public awareness activities on state budget and consolidated budget projects (drafts), as well as reports on the implementation of the state budget	2020-2022
<p>The clause was fully implemented and throughout the current year the Ministry of Finance carried out public awareness-raising activities related to the state budget and consolidated budget drafts, as well as reports on the implementation of the state budget. Employees of relevant departments of the ministry participated in various awareness-raising events, including video conferences.</p>		
2.9	Disclosing results of control measures by the bodies exercising state financial control	2020-2022
<p>All the bodies exercising state financial control have posted official results of implemented control measures on the official websites.</p>		
2.10	Disclosing annual financial accounts of large state-owned enterprises and extra-budgetary state funds	2020-2022
<p>The clause was implemented by most state enterprises and state funds. The Commission notes that the disclosure of financial accounts should be carried out on time in the following</p>		

years as well.		
2.11	Increasing the functionality of the unified public procurement internet portal, expanding the range and scope of information posted there.	2020-2022
<p>“The e-Government Development Center” public legal entity regularly promoted the single internet procurement portal through social media networks, as well as conducted more than 1,000 trainings for government agencies and entrepreneurs to expand the activities of the single internet procurement portal. Currently, video instructions about the usage of the portal in COVID-19 pandemic days have been added to the portal and those instructions have been updated regularly. The dissemination of information in the media about the functionality and effectiveness of the use of single internet portal of public procurement continues.</p>		
2.12	Disclosing opinions of the Chamber of Accounts on the execution of state budget and extra-budgetary state funds, and disclosing semi-annual and annual reports on the activity of the Chamber of Accounts on its official website	2020
<p>Reviews prepared in the current year, as well as reports on the activities of the Chamber of Accounts have been posted on the official website of the Chamber in the "reviews" and "reports" sections.</p>		
<p>3. Measures on combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing</p>		
3.1	Improving legislation and establishment of mechanism for coordination to ensure periodic conducting of risk assessment of the system on combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing (hereinafter Risk Assessment)	2020
<p>The clause has been fully implemented. Thus, in connection with the provision of periodic conducting of risk assessment of the system on combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing, and the organization of preparation for the assessment in this area Cabinet of Ministers by Resolution No. 404, dated October 21, 2020, established a Coordination Council composed of heads of relevant government agencies and public (social) associations.</p>		
3.2	Determining the methodology required for risk assessment	2020
<p>In connection with the implementation of this clause, it is noted that the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan has prepared a framework document on the National Risk Assessment and the proposed methodology for its implementation, which is submitted to the Coordination Council.</p>		

3.3	Submitting statistical and other necessary information for risk assessment to financial monitoring body, and its summarising	2020-2022
The statistical data collected in "Single database on crimes related to legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing (PL/TM)" operating under the Anti-Corruption Directorate with the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan summarized and sent to the Financial Monitoring Service for analysis		
3.4	In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing", conducting of annual sectoral risk assessments in respect to subjects of monitoring and other persons who are monitored by regulatory authorities and informing the financial monitoring body about results.	2020-2022
The results of the annual field risk assessments which are conducted by the control bodies in relation to monitoring participants who are supervised and considered in the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing" are being sent to the Secretariat of the Coordinating Council in accordance and within the time limits prescribed in paragraph 10 of the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 404 dated October 21, 2020		
3.5	Conducting annual risk assessments of the crimes related to money laundering by the criminal investigation authorities in accordance with their investigative jurisdiction and informing the financial monitoring body about results	2020-2022
The information was sent to the Financial Monitoring Service by the respective authorities.		
3.6	Conducting annual analysis, in accordance with the risk assessment methodology for the purposes of determination of the risks, trends and typologies of using transactions and operations with cash, securities, real estate, vehicles, legal entities, as well as import-export transactions for money laundering and terrorism financing purposes	2020-2022
Relevant work has been done to implement the clause. Thus, the Ministry of Economy (with respect to the registered legal entities and real estate), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (with respect to the registered vehicles), the Customs Committee and the Central Bank (with respect to the import-export operations) conducted strategic analysis of PL/TM risks, trends and typologies of cases according to paragraphs 12.1-12.3 of Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 404 dated October 21, 2020, and submitted analytical data to the Secretariat of the Coordination Council.		
3.7	Disclosing risk assessment reports and informing the relevant state bodies, controlling bodies and other persons involved in monitoring, as defined by the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing" on those reports	2020-2022

This clause will be implemented after the national risk assessment is finished in accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 404 of October 21, 2020		
3.8	Bringing national legislation in the field of combating legalization of criminally obtained money or other property and terrorism financing in line with the international treaties ratified by the Republic of Azerbaijan, inter alia improving the legislation related to the identification of beneficial ownership	2020-2021
<p>A number of projects have been implemented together with The European Union and the Council of Europe under the second phase of the Good Governance Partnership (SGP-II) program. Moreover, in the framework of a technical assistance project implemented by the Financial Monitoring Service with the participation of a well-known international expert laws "On Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing" and "On Targeted Financial Sanctions" were drafted. At the same time, a working group consisting of representatives of the Financial Monitoring Service and the State Tax Service was established in January 2020 to harmonise the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the recommendations of the International Financial Action Task Force (FATF) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Working Group has several key issues related to the identification of beneficial owner in tis agenda. The relevant proposals on the amendedments to the legislation will be drafted and presented till the end of the year.</p>		
3.9	Improving the cooperation with international organizations specialized in AML/CFT and drafting action plan in order to ensure preparations for the process of evaluation	2020
<p>The implementation of the clause has been completely fulfilled. Thus, within the framework of comprehensive preparations for the 5th round assessment which will be conducted by the MONEYVAL Committee of the Council of Europe, the Ministry of Economy held talks with experts with rich experience in international organizations and signed an agreement on consulting services. Also, within the framework of the second phase of the EU Partnership for Good Governance (OGP) project employees of the State Tax Service participated in the training courses, such as "Strengthening the fight against money laundering and asset recovery in Azerbaijan" on July 13-17 this year, "Methods of data analysis: Microsoft Power BI" theme, as well as on "Application of the Warsaw Convention" which held on July 24. At the same time, the participation of an employees of the State Tax Service in the two-week program on "Investigation of Financial Crimes" to be organized by the Investigation of Tax Crimes Acamedy of the OECD on September 7-18 this year is confirmed.</p>		
4. Measures to improve public services		
4.1	Improving effectiveness in public service delivery by broadening the possibility of obtaining and submitting documents in electronic form	2020-2022
Necessary steps have been taken by government agencies to implement this clause. Thus, in the reporting year State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President		

<p>of the Republic of Azerbaijan ensured access to number of certificates sent by government agencies through MyGov (Electronic Government) portal. The following e-services has been launched by respective state authorities on MyGov portal: The State Insurance Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan - Insurances medical cabinet service, Council for State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations - "SƏLİS" service, The State Service On Property Issues - real estate information, The State Agency for Advertisement of The Republic of Azerbaijan - ADRA Permit System, State Committee for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons - reference service on the status of IDPs, Azersu Open Joint-Stock Company - electronic water portal. Moreover, the Electronic Auction System created on the Information Portal of the Republican Commodity Exchange. In addition, "Permit Acquisition and Monitoring System" was created and successfully used to ensure easy distribution of permits related to the quarantine regime during the coronavirus pandemic.</p>		
4.2	<p>Establishing in the sectoral regulatory legal acts of the principle that if the document or information required for any public services is available to another government agency, that document or information is obtained from the relevant government agency via Electronic Government Information System without requesting the citizen to submit it, also increasing the number of e-services based on this principle</p>	2020-2022
<p>The amendments to nearly 400 laws (more than 50 drafts) were prepared in order to incorporate this principle into relevant legislation.</p> <p>Also, in accordance with paragraph 4.2 of the Rules on formation, maintenance, integration and archiving of state information resources and systems approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated September 12, 2018, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan developed the Registry of Information Sources that is designed to facilitate the implementation of this principle by the state bodies. Information on 814 primary information sources has already been approved and included into the registry. Moreover, the software was developed for the Document Registry, which will provide a transfer from document-based to data-based provision of services. The information on more than 173 types of documents is included in the Registry. The abovementioned registries are created within the Public Services Electronic Registry (http://dxr.az) and it is made available to all the government agencies.</p>		
4.3	<p>Improving of electronic admission process of citizen appeals to local executive bodies, as well as measures to increase the number of e-services provided by local authorities</p>	2020-2022
<p>All local executive authorities provided with the mechanism for receiving citizens' appeals electronically. The vast majority of executive authorities has ongoing projects for further development of the number and the scope of e-services. The commission notes that the work to increase the number of e-services by local executive authorities should be continued in the next years.</p>		
4.4	<p>Carrying out of annual generalizations (analyses) of court decisions that</p>	

	annulled acts of public authorities, as well as recognized actions or inactions of public officials as unlawful, and submitting these generalizations to the relevant state authorities	2020-2022
<p>The Supreme Court started the application of “The electronic inquiry on evaluating the quality of justice and the activity of courts”. The application collects information regarding the hearings of administrative cases in courts, and it additionally allows to find out whether the administrative proceedings conducted in the pre-trial administrative bodies were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the legislation. Annual summaries and analytical reports are currently being prepared based on the information provided by the application. Furthermore, the Supreme Court regularly summarizes and analyzes the state of enforcement of the court decisions by administrative bodies.</p>		
4.5	Creating of a mechanism for improvement of public services based on the results of the assessment of these services on the basis of ASAN Service Index	2020-2022
<p>According to Clause 2.4 of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 262 dated September 11, 2014, the Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations once a year evaluates public services included into the Electronic Registry of Public Services on the basis of the parameters of the “ASAN service index”. Upon completion of the assessment, reports on the results are prepared and submitted to service providers, and the rates for the “ASAN service index” are made public. The results of the assessment provide information about the situation with the organization of services by service providers (state bodies) and it helps to identify deficiencies, present suggestions for their elimination and the improvement of service delivery.</p>		
4.6	Improving of the mechanism of preliminary registration of housing rights in uncompleted multistoried buildings, creation of possibility for real-time verification of rights for the apartments in such buildings through the online resource	2020-2021
<p>In connection with the implementation of this item, the draft law "On Amendments to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan" On the State Register of Real Estate" was prepared by the Ministry of Economy and submitted to the Ministry of Justice. The draft envisages the addition of provisions related to the security record to the said Law. This draft was sent to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the relevant ministry for submission to the Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan together with other draft normative legal acts prepared to bring the existing legislative acts in line with the Law on Amendments to the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the same time, relevant documents and information are sent electronically to the body maintaining the state register of real estate through the one-stop system of construction and operation permits operated by the State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture.</p>		
4.7	Improving of E-Government infrastructure and increasing the number of information systems and resources integrated to Electronic Government	2020-2022

	Information System	
<p>The implementation of the item was carried out in full, several improvements was made to the E-Government infrastructure by the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations. Moreover, in accordance with paragraph 8.1 of the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated February 3, 2014 No. 100 "On the application of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated December 27, 2013 No. 875-IVQD" On amendments to the Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan " The State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations conducted an assessment of the organization of the "Employment Contract Notification" subsystem of Centralized Electronic Information System of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, submitted a report on the results to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the Ministry of Economy. The improvements of the system were made by the relevant public authority.</p> <p>In order to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and process optimization in the integration of state information resources and systems for obtaining and using information from primary sources, the State Agency has established the ASAN Bridge system, the National Information Exchange Platform of E-Government Information System. At present, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture and the State Statistics Committee are fully connected to the ASAN bridge system.</p> <p>The Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Azerbaijan have also carried out number of measures in this framework.</p> <p>Currently, 42 state body provides more than 454 e-services through Electronic Government Information System. The process will continue in the upcoming years.</p>		
4.8	Taking measures to enhance the functionality of the "Electronic Court" information system, ensuring the application of the system in courts throughout the country	2020-2022
<p>The Statute of the "Electronic Court" Information System was approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 01.06.2020 forms a legal basis for digitalization of judicial system in Azerbaijan.</p> <p>Practical measures have been taken to cover the entire territory of the country and ensure the harmonious operation of the system, to increase its functionality, as well as to guarantee immediate access to information "Mobile Court" application has been developed and launched in early 2020.</p> <p>In addition, a "Loan Agreement (Additional Financing for the Advanced Justice Services and Modern Judicial Infrastructure Project) was signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to ensure the continuation of the necessary infrastructure for the expansion of the e-Court information system throughout the country. and this document was approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers dated 13.07.2020.</p>		

In the reporting year, a "Hotline" was established to identify difficulties faced by users and participants of the "Electronic Court" information system and to carry out the necessary instructional work.

Also, 21 types of information are made available to get online from the "Electronic Court" information system by integrating the information systems of 12 organizations.

In addition, in order to ensure the integration of the "Electronic Court" information system with the electronic resource used in the Prosecutor General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the scope of information to be transmitted during the exchange of information has been determined. At the initial stage, a "specialized e-cabinet" was formed in the information system for the Anti-Corruption Directorate with the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Department for Non-prosecutorial proceedings, and work is underway to establish a "specialized e-cabinet" for the Department of Public Prosecution of the Prosecutor General's Office.

Also, the amendments to the criminal procedural legislation of 25.06.2020 made it possible to review criminal cases via video conference, as well as to participate in the proceedings from a distance without having to appear before the court and the investigating authority. Immediate organizational and logistical measures were taken in connection with the entry into force of the provisions of the law, and criminal proceedings could have been held in video conference format since July 16.

In order to enhance digital connection with courts the number of special rooms provided with the necessary tools in penitentiaries, especially pre-trial detention facilities, has been increased.

4.9

Increasing the number of electronic services provided to individuals and legal entities through the "Electronic Notary" and "Electronic Execution" information systems

2020-2021

In order to increase the efficiency of notarial activities and make notarial services more accessible, a relevant function has been added to the "Mobile Notary" application program to issue power of attorney and to delegate the right to dispose of the vehicle online. The integration between the "Electronic Notary" and "Electronic Court" information systems allowed to provide the courts with same information.

In order to improve the access of banks to notarial services, "Electronic notary cabinets" have been launched in banks that enabled the provision of remote notarial services as a pilot project.

In order to increase the efficiency of the operations with notary's deposit in case of alienation of real estate, as well as to prevent citizens from wasting additional time by visiting banks, the functionality of payment terminals installed in several notary offices in Baku was expanded.

During the reporting period, measures were continued to expand the use of the "Electronic Execution" information system, together with the State Agency for Public Services

and Social Innovations. Now court fees, penalties, alimonies and other payments on court decisions can be made through ASAN payment and E-government portals, as well as their mobile applications.		
4.10	Creation of an electronic public service that allows the person to verify the data related to him and stored in the information resources of state bodies	2021-2022
Implementation of this item is foreseen for 2022		
4.11	Research on the implementation of the "smart city" concept and identification of opportunities for pilot project implementation	2020-2021
<p>During the videoconference meeting of CISCO on May 15, 2020, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed the Smart City project, the implementation phase of the Smart City project and the prospects for cooperation with Quantelo on the project. In this regard, the "RACI" matrix containing the implementation plan and implementation commitments of the "Smart City" project was developed, the implementation stages were identified, the evaluation stage report, the desired (aspirational) "Smart City Experiences Review and Comparative Analysis Report" were prepared, a priority for Azerbaijan For this purpose, a working group consisting of representatives of the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture and 28 other government agencies was established. In addition, on November 23-27, 2020 "Smart Nation" The Smart Government course was attended by representatives from our country, Azerbaijan's Smart City initiatives were presented, and Singapore's government structure and Smart City experience on Smart Nation initiatives were studied. The Ministry of Technology is working on the development of the Smart City Strategy and related documents for the third phase of the Smart City project and the signing of a memorandum of understanding with CISCO.</p> <p>Moreover, the implementation of "smart village" and "smart city" projects have already been started to be implemented in the territories liberated from Armenian occupation as a result of Patriotic War.</p>		
4.12	Establishment of an electronic portal and relevant mobile application for submission of complaints on public utilities, roads, transport problems, current repairs, improvement and cleaning of infrastructure to the relevant government agencies on an electronic map, implementation in Baku as a pilot Project.	2021-2022
Implementation of this item is foreseen for 2021.		
5.Expanding the activities of civil society members, increasing public participation and civilian oversight		

5.1	Taking measures to enhance and improve the activities of civil society institutions, increasing support to their projects and initiatives in accordance with the principles of Open Government	2020-2022
<p>In order to improve operating environment for civil society organizations, refine and further develop interaction between state bodies and NGOs, increase the level of civil control over the activities of the government and initiate a process of new reforms in this sphere number of meetings have been organized with participation of high-ranking public officials (including Presidential aide), leading NGOs and civil society activists. More than 6 hundred civil society representatives participated in these meetings. The collected proposals and feedbacks were thoroughly analyzed. Based on these proposals legislative and practical steps were determined, the other proposals were sent to the relevant state organizations for consideration and improvement of their activities.</p> <p>Taking into account the need to further increase government's assistance to civil society institutions and better use the potential of civil participation, it was suggested to create a new entity that would benefit from interaction of state and non-government actors and provide support to NGOs. On April 19, 2021 Agency for State Support to NGOs was established by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.</p> <p>The Agency is governed by an Advisory Board composed of 8 prominent NGOs and 3 public officials. According to its statute the Agency provides necessary assistance for the development of non-governmental organizations, offer grants to NGOs from the state budget and solicits funding to NGOs from other sources, develops cooperation mechanisms between the state, private sector and NGOs, ensures capacity building for civil society organizations.</p> <p>Since the day of its establishment the Agency started active dialog with civil society activists in order to determine major problems in this area and main directions of future activities. More than 20 meetings with almost 9 hundred representatives of civil society have been organized in less than four months. The Agency collects and analyzes the information, sets priority areas where the reforms are considered to be the most important.</p> <p>Some of constraints that hinder the further development of civil society institutions require legislative input. Therefore, on the last meeting of the Agency's Advisory Board it was decided to prepare and forward new proposals to the relevant state bodies in order to initiate a legislative process.</p>		
5.2	Preparing and adopting of proposals on simplification, digitalization and improvement of state registration of non-governmental organizations, including branches or representations of non-governmental organizations of foreign countries.	2020-2021
<p>In order to simplify registration process for NGOs on June 30, 2020 number of amendments made to the Law on "Non-governmental organizations (public unions and foundations)" and the Law on "State registration and state registry of legal entities". According to those changes, NGOs enabled to amend registration documents online, through e-service platform.</p>		

<p>Ministry of Justice has already finished all necessary technical improvements to the “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform. Since July 15, 2021 NGOs can use this additional service.</p> <p>It’s worth mentioning that this one stop-shop digital platform also enables NGOs to apply for and receive different e-services, to download and print necessary copies, extracts and notifications from the system, to interact with state bodies - participants of the platform, to review the information collected in the state registry on them.</p> <p>The Commission notes that the work on simplification, digitalization and improvement of procedures for registration of NGOs will continue in the coming years.</p>		
5.3	Preparing and adopting of proposals on simplification, digitalization and improvement of procedures for registration of grant contracts (decisions)	2020-2021
<p>According to the amendments made to the Law on Grants on June 30, 2020 financial operations for NGOs simplified. New changes increased the number of e-services rendered to NGOs in this sphere.</p> <p>It enabled NGOs to register grants online via “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform. Moreover, the law eliminated the necessity for NGOs to apply and receive the hard copy of notifications and other information on registered grants in order to present it to financial institutions. NGOs are enabled to get all necessary financial information online via “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform.</p> <p>According to the information received from the Ministry of Justice these additional e-services are operational since July 15, 2021.</p> <p>The Commission notes that the work on simplification, digitalization and improvement of procedures for registration of grant agreements (decisions) will continue in the coming years.</p>		
5.4	Proposals on enhancing representation and participation of civil society institutions, including non-governmental organizations in collegial decision-making procedures in government agencies, including state commissions and working groups.	2020-2022
<p>Regarding the implementation of this item, it should be noted that the participation of civil society institutions, including non-governmental organizations, was partially ensured by the state bodies in making collegial decisions, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to fully implement the item by all executors. The Commission notes that work on the implementation of the item should be continued in the coming reporting years.</p>		
5.5	Increasing the importance of public councils, increasing the number of public councils created in state bodies, expanding the scope of issues discussed by the councils, raising public awareness and promoting activities of public councils, and reflecting on government agencies' official internet resources information on the activities of public councils	2020-2022

<p>In many local and central executive bodies, significant work has been done on the activities of public councils, for example, commissions have been set up to conduct elections to public councils, and sections on public councils have been established on the official websites of government agencies. Despite the work done, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, it was not possible to fully implement the item. The Commission notes that work on the implementation of the item should be continued in the coming reporting years.</p>		
5.6	<p>Conducting regular discussions and supporting the activities of the Open Government Initiative Government – Civil Society Dialogue Platform</p>	<p>2020-2022</p>
<p>In connection with the implementation of this item, the Council of State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the President held regular discussions within the Government-Civil Society Dialogue Platform for the Promotion of Open Government in 2020 and fully supported the Platform's activities. Thus, the activity of the Platform's website ww.ogp.az in Azerbaijani, Russian and English languages was provided, as well as a booklet on the activity of the Platform was published in Azerbaijani, Russian and English languages. 10 educational articles on the goals, mission and activities of the platform were published in the media, 8 live broadcasts on open government reforms, 5 debates, 3 interviews were broadcast and a webinar on "Monitoring tools and methods" was organized for the members of the platform. A conference was held with the participation of NGOs that are members of the platform to discuss the "National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022." The conference discussed the participation of civil society in the implementation of the Action Plan, public participation, monitoring of the Plan.</p> <p>Although some measures have been taken also by other government agencies to support the Platform, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some central and local executive authorities have not been able to implement the item.</p>		
<p>6. Measures to ensure access to information</p>		
6.1	<p>Preparing of proposals on amendments to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On access to information" and other legislative acts aiming at improvement of information disclosure procedures, as well as the mechanisms and conditions that create necessary environment to the access to open data</p>	<p>2020-2021</p>
<p>Numerous proposals of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), as well as the analysis of national legislation and international experience were reviewed by the Ministry of Justice to improve information disclosure procedures. The work on the draft law on amendments to the Law on Access to Information is nearing completion.</p>		
6.2	<p>Determining the rules for formation of data sets in accordance with</p>	<p>2020-</p>

	international standards for the disclosure of information	2021
<p>In connection with the implementation of this article, it is needed to note that the Ministry of Justice has furnished proposals to the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations, the Commissioner for Human Rights to submit proposals for the development of rules for the formation of data sets in accordance with international standards. The analysis of proposals received from these agencies and the preparation of the project is underway.</p>		
6.3	Creating of "Open data" section on the official internet information resources of state agencies	2021-2022
<p>Although the implementation of this article is scheduled for 2021, several central and local executive authorities have already implemented the measure. The Commission notes that work on the implementation of the item will continue in the coming reporting years.</p>		
6.4	Supporting NGOs to carry out awareness raising activities on information disclosure requirements, as well as the benefits of expanding access to information	2020-2022
<p>For the purpose of implementation of the measure the Council of State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations under the President has monitored official web-sites of The Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, the State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy in accordance with the Law "On Access to Information". Moreover, observance to the requirements of the legislation while receipt of inquiries and preparation of responses by the mentioned bodies was also monitored. Furthermore, the state of accountability and public participation in the implementation of the state budget was analyzed and the results of the analysis were compared with the experience of Georgia, Ukraine and Turkey. Furthermore, the official websites of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, TABIB, Azerenergy OJSC, as well as the state of disclosure of information by those bodies were monitored. At the same time, awareness raising activities were carried out on topics "Citizens' access to open data", "Where can I get information about public services?", "Useful open information for citizens." The support provided to NGOs in participating in all abovementioned activities.</p>		
<p>7. Measures to ensure accountability, transparency and public participation in local self-governance</p>		
7.1	Establishment of a permanent public council with the participation of national associations of municipalities and the civil society members	2020
<p>In connection with the implementation of the article, it is needed to note that a draft document reflecting the relevant measures for the establishment of the public council, including its activities, basic principles, rules of organization and other issues was prepared by the Ministry of Justice, but due to the difficulties posed by COVID-19 infection, it was not possible to hold</p>		

elections to the Council.		
7.2	Ensuring accountability of the local budget using the mass media and internet information resources.	2020-2022
<p>In order to strengthen budget discipline in municipalities, to prepare budget execution reports in accordance with the requirements of the legislation, in a more accurate, understandable and unified form, and to provide methodological assistance in drafting local budgets, a sample form of the draft local budget was prepared and sent to all municipalities for use. At the same time, the Ministry of Justice gave recommendations to municipalities on the requirements of the legislation on the preparation of the local budget, the preparation of reports on the implementation of the local budget, informing the local population about these reports and ensuring full transparency in this area.</p>		
7.3	Increasing municipalities' access to the Internet, establishment of web pages of municipalities and ensuring their active functioning.	2020-2022
<p>As a result of measures taken to adapt the work of local self-government bodies to new requirements, to expand the use of modern technologies, the number of municipalities provided with computer equipment increased to 66%, and the number of municipalities with Internet access to 62%. In order to facilitate the opening of municipal websites, it was initially recommended to establish Facebook pages of the Coordinating Councils of mayors to ensure the joint use of the websites of several municipalities operating in one district or city, and such municipal pages have now been established in 16 districts. At the same time, the Ministry of Justice together with the national associations of municipalities held an online seminar on "Application of information and communication technologies in municipalities" and the event was attended by chairmen of 40 cities, settlements and rural municipalities and other relevant representatives.</p>		
7.4	Elaboration of a portal for work with municipalities	2020-2022
<p>In order to increase the efficiency and transparency of local self-government, the initial version of the "Portal for Work with Municipalities" was created and launched in August 2020 through the "Municipal Activities" section on the website of the Ministry of Justice (justice.gov.az). At the initial stage, individual cabinets of municipalities were formed in the new information resource. Electronic document exchange was organized between municipalities and relevant bodies of the ministry through the personal cabinets. The portal created functional opportunities such as dissemination of minutes of municipal meetings and all types of municipal acts adopted at those meetings, their search, as well as compiling statistical reports in automated mode. Authorized employees of the Ministry of Justice, as well as all municipalities with necessary equipment and access to the Internet were provided with usernames and passwords. The video instructions on how to use the portal were prepared and sent to the relevant authorities.</p>		

8. Measures to enhance transparency and accountability in the private sector		
8.1.	Elaboration of proposals on elimination of shadow economy, strengthening transparency, anti-corruption and accountability requirements in business entities	2020-2021
Proposals on draft legislation prepared by the Prosecutor General's Office and the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to reduce the level of the shadow economy, ensure transparency and equity, and prevent tax evasion were submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers.		
8.2	Conducting trainings on anti-corruption and ethical behavior for commercial and non-profit organizations	2020-2022
<p>In December 2020, in the framework of the Civil Society Project for Transparency, implemented by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the International Center for Non-Commercial Law and MG Consulting, a video format for representatives of non-governmental organizations entitled "Rules of Ethics", "Fight against Corruption" and "Risk-based approach to money laundering" trainings were held.</p> <p>Moreover, the Ministry of Economy on May 29-30 and July 11-12, 2020 at the Khachmaz SME Development Center of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency raised awareness on the application of the international standard "Anti-corruption management system" for micro, small and medium enterprises in the private sector trainings on measures, anti-corruption and ethical conduct. During the trainings, SMEs operating in the Guba-Khachmaz economic region were informed about corruption offenses and methods of combating them.</p>		
8.3	Implementation of awareness-raising and support activities related to the implementation of the international standard "AntiCorruption Management System" (ISO 37001 "Anti-Bribery Management Systems") in the private sector	2020-2022
<p>On 07.10.2020, Khachmaz SME Development Center conducted trainings for women entrepreneurs and on 13.11.2020, Sumgayit SME Development Center conducted trainings for disabled entrepreneurs on the application of the international standard "Anti-corruption management system" in the private sector. During the trainings, the participants were provided with detailed information on the concept and forms of corruption, methods of combating corruption and its prevention, corruption offenses, answered their questions and exchanged views on the topic.</p>		
9. Measures to improve transparency, accountability and customer satisfaction in public utility service		
9.1	Preparing of proposals for electronation of communal services and taking relevant measures	2020-2022

<p>It is noted that the current state of e-utilities was analyzed together with the relevant agencies and it was determined that 4 services of “Azerishig” OJSC, 2 services of “Azersu” OJSC, 14 services of “Azerigas” PU, 9 services of “Azeristiliktehchizat” can be wholly digitalized. Moreover, proposals to create the possibility of paying utility bills via E-GOV, to reflect all utility e-services in the relevant section of asan.gov.az portal were prepared and addressed to the Cabinet of Ministers.</p>		
9.2	<p>Improving of the legislation related to technical requirements for the provision of services by natural gas, water and electricity suppliers, as well as improvement of other technical norms and requirements in accordance with modern standards; calculation of payments for reconstruction of relevant infrastructure and determination of the total cost of doing works.</p>	2020
<p>Relevant steps have been taken in connection with the implementation of the assignment, including the preparation and approval of relevant draft regulations in the field of natural gas and electricity supply by the Ministry of Energy, which was sent to the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry Justice, the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations, the State Oil Company, Azerenergy OJSC and Azerishig OJSC. At the same time, Azersu OJSC was requested to submit relevant proposals in the field of water supply, including draft normative legal acts. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the task could not be fully completed in the required time.</p>		
9.3	<p>Establishment of a unit for receiving complaints, feedback and suggestions about utility services in the Unified Information System of Utilities</p>	2020
<p>Current measures are taken to establish a section for receiving feedback, suggestions and complaints on utilities in the Unified Information System of Utilities and to establish a single Call Center for Utilities.</p>		
9.4	<p>Establishing of a unified call center for utility services</p>	2020-2022
<p>The Ministry of Energy established a working group and held three meetings. During the meetings, representatives of the relevant executive bodies provided information on the existing call centers, including 108 Call Center. In order to fulfill the task, the Ministry of Energy prepared a concept document and submitted it to the State Agency for Public Services and Social Innovations. 108 Call Center was selected as a sample model for the new unified call center and a concept based on it was sent to the Cabinet of Ministers.</p>		

Annex 2.

The summary of implemented measures related to the recommendations of Criteria and Standard Subcommittee

General measures made to improve operating environment for civil society organizations

In order to improve operating environment for civil society organizations, refine and further develop interaction between state bodies and NGOs, increase the level of civil control over the activities of the government and initiate a process of new reforms in this sphere number of meetings have been organized with participation of high-ranking public officials (including Presidential aide), leading NGOs and civil society activists. More than 6 hundred civil society representatives participated in these meetings. The collected proposals and feedbacks were thoroughly analyzed. Based on these proposals legislative and practical steps were determined, the other proposals were sent to the relevant state organizations for consideration and improvement of their activities.

Taking into account the need to further increase government's assistance to civil society institutions and better use the potential of civil participation, it was suggested to create a new entity that would benefit from interaction of state and non-government actors and provide support to NGOs. On April 19, 2021 Agency for State Support to NGOs was established by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Agency is governed by an Advisory Board composed of 8 prominent NGOs and 3 public officials. According to its statute the Agency provides necessary assistance for the development of non-governmental organizations, offer grants to NGOs from the state budget and solicits funding to NGOs from other sources, develops cooperation mechanisms between the state, private sector and NGOs, ensures capacity building for civil society organizations.

Since the day of its establishment the Agency started active dialog with the civil society activists in order to determine major problems in this area and main directions of future activities. More than 20 meetings with almost 9 hundred representatives of civil society have been organized in less than four months. The Agency collects and analyzes the information, sets priority areas where the reforms are considered to be the most important.

Some of the constraints that hinder the further development of civil society institutions require legislative input. Therefore, on the last meeting of the Agency's Advisory Board it was decided to prepare and forward new proposals to the relevant state bodies in order to initiate a legislative process.

Implemented measures on 1st Recommendation

In order to further simplify registration process for NGOs on June 30, 2020 number of amendments made to the Law on Non-governmental organizations (public unions and foundations) and the Law on State registration and state registry of legal entities. According to those changes, NGOs enabled to amend registration documents online, through e-service platform.

Ministry of Justice has already finished all necessary technical improvements to the “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform. Since July 15, 2021 NGOs can use this additional service. It’s worth mentioning that this one stop-shop digital platform also enables NGOs to apply for and receive different e-services, to download and print necessary copies, extracts and notifications from the system, to interact with state bodies - participants of the platform, to review the information collected in the state registry on them.

The statistics show that there is a positive dynamic in the registration of NGOs, as the number of NGOs registered in the first half of 2021 is by 24% more than those registered in the first half of 2020.

Regarding the Recommendation 1.2, it should be noted that NGOs are not required to register every two years. Whenever the composition or members of board of an NGO is changed according to their Statute, they have to submit the copy of their decision to the relevant authority in order to keep the latest information on current composition of an NGO. And it does not imply that NGOs have to re-register their organization every two year. In practice, “extract” has been issued to every applicant within set time enshrined in the legislation. “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform enables NGOs to amend registration documents through sending their decision in electronic form and receive extract through it online.

Regarding the Recommendation 1.3, it should be mentioned that the articles of the Code of Administrative Offences only nominally established responsibility for the breaches of law by NGOs. To our inquiry on this matter the Ministry of Justice reiterated that it had never applied any administrative penalty to NGOs. The preference is given to individual consultations and explanation of rights and duties to NGOs according to national legislation. The Ministry of Justice has carried out several hundreds of such individual consultations with NGOs.

Implemented measures on 2nd Recommendation

According to the amendments made to the Law on Grants on June 30, 2020 financial operations for NGOs simplified. New changes increased the number of e-services rendered to NGOs in this sphere.

It enabled NGOs to register grants online via “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform. Moreover, the law eliminated the necessity for NGOs to apply and receive the hard copy of notifications and other information on registered grants in order to present it

to financial institutions. NGOs are enabled to get all necessary financial information online via “Single electronic window for NGOs” platform.

According to the information received from the Ministry of Justice these additional e-services are operational since July 15, 2021.

The statistics show that there is a steady increase in the amount of registered grants. Thus, the amount of grants registered in 6 months of 2021 is by 23% more than those registered in the same period of 2020 and by 40% more than those registered in the same period of 2019.

Moreover, according to the statistics the considerable amount of foreign grants was registered and there were no special concerns raised by donors and recipients of grants in this process.

The activities of OGP Azerbaijan Platform during 2020-2021

OGP Azerbaijan Platform, being one of the best dialogue platforms between government and civil society in Azerbaijan, continued its activity in contributing to the process of reforms in Azerbaijan.

During 2020-2021, the Government-Civil Society Dialogue Platform held 8 online meetings to promote Open Government. During the meetings, the issues of Open Government Reforms, current issues of public importance, adoption and implementation of the National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022 were discussed.

During that period, cooperation with government agencies has expanded. Azerbaijan State Advertising Agency has applied for membership in the platform.

The platform provided anti-corruption trainings to the staff of the State Statistics Committee, State Advertising Agency of Azerbaijan, State Agency for Compulsory Medical Insurance, State Tourism Agency, State Committee for Family, Women and Children. The trainings were held on two topics (sessions) on "Corruption offenses and the fight against them", "Rules of Ethical behavior".

The platform advised the State Service for Mobilization and Conscription of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the National Action Plan for 2020-2022. Moreover, the platform advised the State Customs Committee, the State Agency for Housing of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies on public participation and the establishment of public councils.

The platform trained employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Small and Medium Business Development Agency, the Ministry of Energy, and the Baku Transport Agency on “Corruption offenses and the fight against them” and “Rules of Ethical Conduct”.

The Council of State Support to NGOs under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan has twice provided institutional and program support to the Platform. The platform's

website is functioning and it is available in Azerbaijani and English. The Platform's Open Government TV continued its activities. 8 live broadcasts, 5 debates and 3 interviews on Open Government Reforms were broadcast on the basis of projects of member organizations of the platform (Information Analysis and Planning PU, Civic Initiatives for Public Interest PU). 5 enlightening articles were published. A webinar on "Monitoring tools and methods" was organized for the members of the platform.

An online conference on "National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022 and public participation in its implementation" was held for civil society NGOs. The conference was open and opportunities were created for the participation of any interested NGO.

The platform continued business contacts and discussions with the International Open Government Partnership Initiative. The Secretariat of the Initiative twice discussed the National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022 and its implementation.

The platform continued cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Recommendations were made for the formation of the Commission's Working Groups. Proposals have been made on the topics of the Grant competitions to be announced by the Commission for 2021. Proposals were also submitted to increase public participation in the implementation of the National Action Plan for 2020-2022 to promote open government.

For the first time in the national practice, the platform supported the development of "Anti-Corruption Research - A Guide for Civil Society" by the Center for Socio-Economic Research PU with the support of the Council for State Support to NGOs under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The guide is published as a book.

Members of the platform met with members of the Supervisory Board of the Agency for State Support to Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Members of the platform presented proposals on the development of civil society, improvement of legislation governing the activities of NGOs.

Members of the platform attended a meeting with government officials organized by the Anti-Corruption Commission and the General Directorate for Combating Corruption under the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Members of the platform presented their proposals for a new national anti-corruption plan.

Members of the platform took part in discussions on the OECD's 4th round monitoring assessment of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan. Two member organizations of the platform submitted their written notes.

The platform participated in the "Open Government Week" held on May 18-19, 2021 with the participation of representatives of the EU Eastern Partnership countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine), Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia. The Secretary of the Platform made a presentation at the discussion seminar and presented the Platform's proposals at the Strategic Session.

The platform is a key partner in the USAID-funded Civil Society for Transparency (CSR) project in Azerbaijan (ECSOFT). Many important activities were carried out within the project with the participation of the Platform.

The www.enezaret.az platform has been created within the ECSOFT project. The purpose of this platform is to receive information from citizens with video and photo evidence on certain issues of public concern (roads, infrastructure, landscaping, etc.) and to achieve their solution in the relevant government agencies.

An information campaign on "Fighting Corruption" was held with the support of the Anti-Corruption Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Open Government Platform and the Azerbaijan State Advertising Agency.

Training on "Transparency, anti-corruption, accountability standards and monitoring skills" was held on June 29, 2021. The event was attended by a total of 26 NGO representatives from Baku and the regions.

On June 11, 2021, an online training on "Fighting Corruption" was held for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with the participation of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan. In total, 26 NGO representatives registered in the last 3 years participated in the training.

The platform, with the support of the Anti-Corruption Commission, monitored the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022 and prepared a monitoring report. According to the monitoring, the average implementation rate of the activities envisaged to be implemented in 21 paragraphs in the National Action Plan was 72.22%. Activities on ten paragraphs were fully implemented, activities on 2 paragraphs were implemented under 50%.

Dear Members of OGP Steering Committee,

We hope abovementioned measures, the efficient activity of OGP Azerbaijan Platform and successful implementation of OGP National Action Plan for 2020-2022 will be taken into consideration by OGP Steering Committee, and it will positively affect the membership status of Azerbaijan.

It should be noted that, irrespective of the adopted decision, Azerbaijan will remain committed to the principles of transparency, good governance and open government.

**The Secretariat of the Commission
on Combating Corruption**