

Annex

to Decision of the Government
of the Republic of Armenia
N 1568-L of October 6th 2022

ACTION PLAN OF OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA FOR 2022-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Government of the Republic of Armenia joined the [“Open Government Partnership” \(OGP\) initiative in 2011](#) and has implemented [four national action plans](#) to date.

The action plans were aimed at improving the agenda of reforms assumed by the Government, making them more transparent, accountable, participatory and innovative.

[The report of OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism \(IRM\)](#) assessed [the Fourth Action Plan of “OGP-Armenia” for 2018-2020](#) as more reformative. The Fourth Action Plan stood out for its successful implementation of commitments despite the challenges of the pandemic and the war. The Fourth Action Plan was quite ambitious as it included legislative amendments and at least 6 of the 11 commitments were proposed by civil society organizations (CSOs). A number of processes were introduced, such as the institution of actual beneficiaries and petitions; corruption risks present in the fields of education and healthcare were reduced; the transparency of public funds was improved by defining the tender procedure for state budget grants; the scope of declarations by

public officials was clarified and expanded; the uniformity of providing information for websites of communities and the opportunity to provide services were improved; the mechanism for providing feedback on state services was introduced, etc. OGP commitments became targeted and timely, especially during the pandemic and the war. Awareness raising on the implementation and progress of the commitments was conditioned by the issues having arisen due to the pandemic and the war. However, the Government, together with CSO organizations, organized on-line and community meetings observing the pandemic rules.

STEPS UNDERTAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA TOWARDS OPEN GOVERNMENT

Since its membership to the Open Government Partnership initiative, Armenia has improved its processes for elaboration and implementation of its Action Plan, those for assuming the commitments, and assuming more targeted and ambitious commitments. The Government of the Republic of Armenia has implemented four national action plans, which have been expressed in the following:

- In 2015, Armenia was granted the title [of OGP Champion of the Asia-Pacific region](#) under the participation tool "[Smart Municipality](#)" at the local level;
- Through the OGP process, Armenia met the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative ([EITI](#)) requirements and became a member of the initiative;
- The "[E-draft](#)" portal of legal acts was created within the framework of the OGP. This is a tool for direct participation in decision-making process for all citizens, without discrimination on the basis of age, professional or other grounds;
- The [Crowdsourcing](#) tool was applied within the OGP framework. In the global OGP process, this tool became a good example for other participating governments and local authorities. Every citizen can participate and contribute in the development of the OGP actions, in line with the requirements set by the OGP;
- Direct democracy mechanisms at the local level were improved. Broadcasting mechanism of the Council of Elders' sittings with the possibility of feedback and access to community services, etc., were introduced;
- Publication [of reports of officials seconded](#) at the expense of the State Budget;

- An [Interactive Budget](#) in Open Data format was established;
- Armenia became a member of the “[Beneficial Ownership Leadership Group](#)”. An institution of [revealing the Beneficial Owners](#) (BO) was introduced within the framework of the State Registry. Starting from 2023, all the organizations registered in Armenia shall reveal their real beneficiaries. The Government of the Republic of Armenia signed a [Memorandum of co-operation with the "Open Ownership"](#). Armenia was one of the [first countries to apply the BO standards](#) developed by the "Open Ownership";
- Sanjay Pradhan, Chief Executive Officer of the OGP, visited Armenia and had meetings with [the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, the President of the National Assembly, the OGP MSE](#), other high-ranking officials and CSOs representatives. The visit was covered by the [Public Television company: interview with the OGP CEO](#);
- A [system for submitting ePetitions](#) was introduced in Armenia;
- A system of feedback by citizens of state services was introduced: <https://gnahatir.am/am/>;
- Within the framework of the Action Plan of OGP-Armenia 2018-2020, the Government of the Republic of Armenia implemented:
 - More than [24 face-to-face and town hall meetings in all the marzes](#) of the Republic of Armenia. The meetings were held with the support of civil society (CS) partners;
 - More than 10 thematic public discussions and meetings with CS organizations and media representatives;
 - Awareness raising campaigns on the commitments on Public Television company: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#)

- Thematic [TV programmes](#) jointly with CSO partners: television programme “Open Governance” on the process of [revealing] Real Beneficiaries with the "Freedom of Information Center" NGO;
- **11 commitments, 6 of which - upon recommendation of civil society;**
- **5 legislative initiatives and amendments**
- High-level participation of the Government of the Republic of Armenia at the [OGP Summit held in Canada](#);
- **Co-operation with the "[International Budget Initiative](#)".** As a result of the co-operation, the [Open Budget Survey Armenia](#) was developed for the first time;
- [Corruption Perception Index](#) improvement;
- In 2020, [Gyumri and Vanadzor municipalities](#) joined the Local OGP, and [Yerevan](#) and [Armavir](#) municipalities became new members of the OGP in 2022;
- A close co-operation with [the Council of Europe Office](#) was established for implementing the local democracy and open governance principles;
- The Armenia participated in the OGP’s, USAID’s and partner Summit for Democracy organizations [joint meeting](#) to contribute to better and inclusive implementation of the [commitments of Armenia within Summit for Democracy](#) ;
- Expanding co-operation with international organizations (USAID, UNDP, UN, ADB, GIZ, WB, EU, EC, UK Embassy);
- The official website OGP Armenia was developed: <https://ogp.gov.am/hy/>
- On May 18, 2022, the [“SHE” faces of OGP](#)” event was held during the “OpenGovWeek”.

ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Despite the challenges, the scope of co-operation with international partners, both in Armenia and outside Armenia, was expanded. Pursuant to the rules of the OGP, the Government of the Republic of Armenia was supposed to develop the next Action Plan in 2020, however the pandemic, the war and the extraordinary parliamentary elections hindered the process of developing and approving the plan.

The Government launched the development phase of the new program [in November 2021](#).

For development of the Fifth OGP Armenia Action Plan, the Government of the Republic of Armenia set its priority directions which follow the logic of the [Government Programme 2021-2026](#), the political directions set by the OGP (Washington) and the recommendations submitted to Armenia, [the OGP's independent reporting mechanism](#), the proposals and recommendations presented to Armenia by Council of Europe and OECD within the framework of GRECO, and [the CSO partners' proposals made during the OGP-Armenia working group session](#):

1. Economy

- *Development of small and medium-sized business*
- *Foreign economic policy and export promotion*
- *Sustainable development and green economy*
- *High technologies — digitization*

2. Public Services

- *Education*
- *Healthcare*
- *Labor and social protection*
- *Natural resources management (environmental protection, subsoil and water sector)*
- *Services provided by the State to the public*
- *Effective state property management*

3. Law and justice

- *Judicial reforms*
- *Police reforms*
- *Fight against corruption — measures aimed at the prevention of corruption*
- *Public expenditures — public procurement, revision and implementation of participatory mechanisms in the budgeting process*
- *Process/reforms of open contracts*
- *Open data policy*

4. Institutional development of public administration

- *Strategic planning and development of policies*

- *Youth*
- *National spatial data infrastructure*
- *Territorial administration and local self-governance; strengthening the democracy, migration*
- *Participation in legislative field*

In parallel to the launch, the Government of the Republic of Armenia, jointly with partner organizations, organized public discussions and meetings aimed at calling for more targeted proposals and ideas.

On December 3rd 2021, with the support of the UNDP office, a [meeting was held with the participation of Civil Society Organizations](#)' representatives having the main goal as generating new ideas for the OGP Armenia 2022-2024 programme, aimed at developing new actions: <https://cutt.ly/8Klff31>.

On 7th and 10th December, the Secretariat of the OGP Armenia, together with the "Armavir Development Center" NGO, carried out an extended regional awareness campaign. The meetings were held in an [on-line format](#): municipality and civil servants from Armavir, Aragatsotn, Ararat, Kotayk, Tavush, Gegharkunik, Syunik, Vayots Dzor marzes, civil society and educational institutions representatives discussed the reforms implemented through the OGP national programmes, and citizens raised issues and areas which need reforms.

During the meeting, the participants were informed about the priorities set by the Government for the OGP process from those in charge for the programme, formed proposals on-line and submitted them to the OGP Secretariat.

During the discussion of the proposal classification process, the CS representatives suggested to the Government to select proposals that are more in line with the OGP principles and the priorities of the Government, as well as those that contribute to the

fulfilment of obligations of the Republic of Armenia in other international processes. As a result, 64 proposals were received some of which complied with the established priorities and the OGP principles, some did not comply or partially complied with the OGP principles, or they had to be combined with other proposals. Among the proposals, the proposals and ideas being in line with the OGP principles and those partially complying with the requirements and needing additional discussion with those in charge for the field and those having submitted the proposals were considered for public discussion.

In March 2022, public discussions were jointly organized with the OGP Secretariat and the CS partners with the participation of representatives of the state administration system, bodies established by law, CS organizations and international organizations:

on March 7, the proposal to introduce a digital system for employment contracts was discussed: <https://cutt.ly/qKlblAf>

on March 9, proposals on procurement, local and state budget processes and non-financial indicators in the education system were discussed: <https://cutt.ly/eKlmpPy>

on March 10, proposals on e-justice, the establishment of an integrity system, gifts received by public officials, and strategic communication were discussed: <https://cutt.ly/2KIYpfg>

on March 14, proposals regarding data policy, national spatial data, open information databases, open contracts for alienation and lease of public property, unified electronic platform for auctions and information provided by the State Registry were discussed: <https://cutt.ly/vKIYQQK>.

Following the discussions, it was decided to implement a unified approach to the proposals on public access to data and databases, and it was accepted that it is appropriate to talk about them after the development of the concept document of the unified data

policy in the Republic of Armenia only. The concept will regulate the citizen-state relations, define the data available in the Republic of Armenia, the principles and standards of public access to data and those of state tax, etc..

On May 19, [an OGP-Armenia expanded working session](#) was held, which, in addition to the main members of the working group, was attended by the delegation of the OGP Supporting Centre and partners of international organizations. At the meeting, the OPG-Armenia Secretariat presented the commitments included in the new draft Action Plan and the logic of selection thereof. Commitments that will be conceptual and address gaps and shortcomings in these areas have been included in the Action Plan. Such commitments include the concept of public communication architecture, data policy, and labor law relations, transparency of judicial system and public resource processes, actions for fighting against corruption or those preventing the corruption.

OGP COMMITMENTS

1. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Country	Republic of Armenia		
Number and Name of the Commitment	1. Formation of legislative framework defining Data policy		
Brief Description of the Commitment	<p>In the context of modern technological developments, data and data and information systems management are of key importance for the effective establishment of a society, economy and state. Accordingly, the strategic agendas of the Republic of Armenia for digitalization and public administration reforms have considered the formation of institutional mechanisms of data management in the country as an agenda priority, emphasizing first of all the formation of the legislative framework defining the general policy regarding data.</p> <p>Under the mentioned strategic agendas, the ideology of considering the data as public wealth underlies the state policy. The establishment of a complete institutional and legislative system of data management is of the utmost importance not only for the effective state system and the effective provision of state services, but also for increasing the productivity and competitiveness of the private sector.</p> <p>The formation of institutional and legislative foundations of data management is an opportunity to create the framework of a law-based and citizen-centred formation and operation of administrative information systems, introduction of data access mechanisms with the logic of open data policy, introduction of systems for citizen inquiries and traceability regarding his/her personal data, interoperability of administrative information systems, data management standards, the scope of data-related rights and responsibilities, etc..</p> <p>Currently, the policy and institutional regulations regarding data and information systems in Armenia are fragmented and partial; they do not fully correspond with the developments of the time and the needs of the development of digital and virtual economy, public service provision and management systems.</p> <p>Therefore, it is necessary to develop and implement unified and comprehensive legal regulations, which will mark the entire framework of relations regarding data and enforcement mechanisms.</p>		
Lead Body	Ministry of High-Tech Industry		
Other Supporting Stakeholders	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors (Parliament, Private Sector, etc)

	Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Justice Ministry of Foreign Affairs Office of the Security Council National Security Service	"Digital Armenia" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	Central Bank, the National Assembly, "EKENG" CJSC, Private Sector
Period Covered	2022-2024, June		
Problem Definition			
1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?			
Elaboration of the legislation defining the data policy is aimed at the regulation of relations regarding the formation and use of data in Armenia and the formation of institutional frameworks with the adoption of the open data doctrine. The legislation of the Republic of Armenia will enable to clarify the rights and responsibilities of data market participants, the regulatory authorities and other institutional mechanisms with the best available solutions, with the aim to establish legal grounds necessary for providing safe and citizen-centred services, increasing the efficiency of the public administration system, promoting the competitiveness and efficiency of the economy, and developing the digital economy and digital society.			
2. What are the causes of the problem?			
Currently, the principles and approaches of data policy, the system of rights and responsibilities related to data generation, processing, storage, exchange, use and distribution, security issues are regulated in a fragmented manner. Currently, in the context of the increasing volumes of the digital economy, the modernization and digitization processes of public administration and public services, there is an inevitable need for ensuring full regulation. The fragmentation of legal regulations defining the data policy hinders the implementation of the commitments declared by the State, aimed at ensuring the more effective, open, transparent and accountable management system.			
Commitment Description			
1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?			
There is a legislation on personal data protection and freedom of information in place, which, however, does not provide the full and up-to-date legislative framework on the data policy. A working team has been formed within the Information Systems Management Council for the elaboration of legislation aimed at the introduction of data policy.			
2. What are the solutions we propose?			

With the aim to address the problem, the Ministry of High-Tech Industry, in co-operation with interested institutions, has undertaken the implementation of the measure "Formation of legislation defining the data policy", which is also one of the goals declared by the [2021-2026 RA Government Programme](#) and the strategy of [Public Administration reforms](#).

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

The elaboration and adoption of data policy legislation will enable to fully regulate the field of relations for the digital economy, digital society and digital state and services, which will, in its turn, improve the quality of data, access and their safe management. The quality of services being provided to the public, the public confidence in state data and information systems, and the usage of digital services will significantly increase. As a final result, it is expected to create complete legal grounds critical for development of citizen-centred and data-based policy, and development of economy and digital society.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	The legislation defining the data policy will include regulations on the rights and responsibilities of those carrying out actions regarding the data, their receipt, processing, storage, transmission and other actions; the system of rules related to data access and transparency will also be formed based on the doctrine of open data; legal grounds and standards for data catalogues and on ensuring public access to meta data will be provided.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	The standards of data classification, usage, quality assessment, identification, data protection and accurate distribution, risk management principles, responsibility and accountability, and other legal relations will be defined and specified by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	The elaboration and actual implementation of data legislation based on the open data policy will also contribute to the development of citizen-state communication and participatory management systems through the implementation of more intelligent and mutually reliable solutions and platforms. At the same time, the data legislation will also ensure a sufficient legal infrastructure, which will enable to introduce systems for public service quality monitoring, control and management, to encourage the practices of designing and provision of citizen-centred public services and those based on the experience of a citizen.

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders
Action 1. Study of international practice with the participation of	Selection of the best applicable practice for Armenia, revealing legislative	2nd half of 2022	Lead: Ministry of High-Tech Industry
			Supporting Stakeholders

international experts and interested public sector representatives.	gaps based on international benchmarking and identification of necessary regulations		Government Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan	CSOs "Digital Armenia" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	Other Central Bank "EKENG" CJSC International and local professional companies, private experts
Action 2. Drafting of a legislative package based on international practice and local context	Formation of a legislative infrastructure	1st semester of 2023	Lead: Ministry of High-Tech Industry		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Office of the Security Council Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Justice National Security Service	CSOs "Digital Armenia" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	Other Central Bank "EKENG" CJSC International and local professional companies, private experts
Action 3. International and local expert discussions on the draft legislative package	Applying as much as possible the available expertise and collecting feedback during the elaboration stage of the initial version of the package	1st half of 2023	Lead: Ministry of High-Tech Industry		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Office of the Security Council Ministry of Foreign	CSOs "Digital Armenia" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	Other Central Bank "EKENG" CJSC International and local professional companies, private

			Affairs Ministry of Justice National Security Service		experts
Action 4. Public discussions on the draft legislative package through recognized official channels and in more interactive and participatory formats	Public awareness raising measures on legislative solutions, formation of perceptions, opinions and public consensus	1st half of 2023	Lead: Ministry of High-Tech Industry		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Justice National Security Service		Central Bank "EKENG" CJSC
Action 5. Circulation of the final document between the state administration bodies. Adoption of relevant legal act	The basic concept document will be accompanied by manuals for the application and use of the concept.	1st half of 2024	Lead: Ministry of High-Tech Industry		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan National Security Service	Other NGOs and organizations	
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Section "6. Institutional Development" of the 2021-2026 Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia	Public Administration Reform Strategy	2021-2025 RA Digitalization Strategy		

Country	Republic of Armenia
Number and Name of the	2. Formation of the strategic communication architecture of the State

Commitment			
Brief Description of the Commitment	<p>Develop the conceptual foundations of strategic communication and information policy of the State, modernize the functional system of institutional management and introduce innovative models to the policies pursued by the State, communication with the public, public awareness policy, information delivering processes through the planning and implementation of strategic communication.</p> <p>Expected outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ proactive and clearly planned awareness mechanisms regarding state activities and public policies will be approved ✓ formation of procedures /protocols/ for strategic communication management and process co-ordination in various emergency situations will be approved ✓ appropriate state response mechanisms to the spread of manipulative information, misinformation and false information will be established and introduced ✓ the functional and institutional system of strategic communication of the Government of the Republic of Armenia will be updated. 		
Lead Body	Office of the Prime Minister		
Other Co-Implementers	<p>Government</p> <p>Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan</p> <p>State administration bodies</p> <p>Local Self-Government Bodies</p>	<p>Civil Society</p> <p>Freedom of Information Center</p> <p>"Public Journalism Club"</p> <p>"K.E.T." NGO</p> <p>Other NGOs and organizations</p>	<p>Other Actors</p> <p>National Assembly</p>
Period Covered	December 2022-November 2023		
Problem Definition			
1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?			
<p>1. There are numerous structural and content-specific problems in the field of information and public communication policy of the State, which leads to an insufficient and improper level of awareness of State policies pursued, emergence of communication gaps and vacuum with different layers of society. Modern opportunities for communication management and information dissemination also pose significant risks in terms of state communication security, particularly</p>			

when the open virtual domain is full of information noise and almost uncontrollable volume and dynamics of manipulative information.

This problem became particularly apparent during the pandemic (Covid-19) and the war and afterwards. Due to the circumstances arising during crises, the quick response requires an early thought-out and developed communication strategy, and a high level of awareness and preparedness by the population. The untimely and incomplete information gave rise to provocations, increase in misinformation, and decrease in confidence in the State.

As a result of taking into account the above-mentioned:

1. An importance was attached to the effective and inclusive communication which will enable the public and interested parties to understand the situation in crisis situations, respond correctly to manipulative speculations, quickly identify fake information on social networks and recognize the official sources. The mechanisms, responsibilities and framework of accountability of high-ranking officials, state administration and local self-government bodies are not defined in the Republic of Armenia as well.
2. On the other hand, for ensuring the transparency and accessibility of the processes, as well as for increasing confidence in the Government, quick spread of coordinated information to target groups and to wide ranges of the public is important for the State.
3. In this case, it is important to form an institutional public communication mechanism, which implies coordinated public discussions, meetings, quick access to target groups, development of CSO capacities and ensuring inclusiveness.

These issues and challenges exist both in relations between executive bodies and citizens, and in relations between local self-government bodies and citizens.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

Substantive issues in the field of communication and information management are mainly connected to the lack of unified policies and innovative approaches. Currently, the information policy of the Government and state bodies is not elaborated. Due to the absence of it, the Government does not act unanimously when communicating with the public and the media, the main problems and goals of communication are not specified, which, apparently, should be directly related to the current agenda and priorities of development and reforms.

The processes implemented by the Government and local self-government bodies are not guided by any strategic document or a concept.

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

In the Republic of Armenia, the provision of information about the obligations of the executive body and local self-government bodies is regulated by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On freedom of information" and the legal regulations of the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia "On establishing the procedure for recording, classification and storage of information by those possessing the information or of information delivered to him or her, as well as for providing information or the copy thereof by the state and local self-governing bodies, state institutions and organizations".

However, these legal regulations do not define and co-ordinate the role of the state or local self-government bodies to ensure proper communication and monitoring.

<p>2. What solution are you proposing?</p> <p>(1) Formation of a concept of strategic communication based on the analysis and evaluation of the information and communication system.</p> <p>(2) Elaboration and introduction of an institutional model of the unified information policy of the Government.</p>
<p>3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?</p> <p>Upon carrying out the commitment:</p> <p>(1) Determination of public strategic communication architecture will be followed by the definition of strategic and conceptual principles of information policy. Definition of communication goals, directions, and powers for the Government and individual bodies will become primary.</p> <p>(2) The core of the architecture is the identification and formation of a central body ensuring co-ordination between different institutions, as well as the definition of horizontal co-ordination mechanisms between institutions.</p> <p>(3) The goal of communication policy and institutional architecture should be proactively informing the public and not responding.</p> <p>(4) It is necessary to develop unified approaches and guidelines for work and communication with mass media, including those for rules of conduct and protocol.</p> <p>(5) Introduction of an innovative model of public communication in the central government system (defining the venue, methodology and mechanism).</p> <p>As a final result, it is expected to introduce a strategic public communication implementation strategy at all levels of the public administration system which will make the connection with the public stronger, feedback mechanisms, effective channels for delivering messages to the public, quick response tools and digital solutions will be established, that will work synchronously and will transform the communication into an automated institutional system.</p>

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	The implementation of the commitment will contribute to the increase of transparency by delivering sufficient and proper, timely information about the State and through the elimination of communication gaps between the public and different layers.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	The communication document will contribute to the increase of the accountability of State authorities, including high-ranking officials, by providing periodic and comprehensive information.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	Determination of communication architecture will form a new culture of public communication and awareness. Citizens and different public segments carrying out activities will be informed in a timely and appropriate manner about the information regarding individual policies, reforms, and services envisaged for them. Besides, they will be provided with proper information and training on the rules of conduct in emergency situations. The regulation of the field of public communication will contribute to the formation of a public position based on official

information, the development of the capacities of professional organizations and CSOs, the creation of a State-citizen strong connection, as well as it will contribute to the increase of media literacy.

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Studying the international practice	Establish a professional co-operation with international organizations, civil societies and other sector specialists operating in the Republic of Armenia and other countries. Study the best models.	December 2022	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan State administration bodies Local Self-Government Bodies	Freedom of Information Center "Public Journalism Club" NGO "K.E.T." NGO Other NGOs	International professional and donor organizations
Action 2. Formation of the foundations of the strategic communication policy concept	Formation of conceptual foundations of the unified public communication policy based on the analysis and evaluation of the information and communication system	June 2023	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan State administration bodies Local Self-Government Bodies	"Freedom of Information Center" "Public Journalism Club" "K.E.T." NGO Other NGOs	International professional and donor organizations
Action 3. Development of an institutional model for the	Map and develop the institutional model of the unified information policy of	November 2023	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		

unified strategic communication information policy of the Government and that for the implementation thereof	the Government. Establish a unified communication institutional mechanism for public communication through the, application of the methodology, practice and capabilities of the OGP process. Establish the mechanism within the Office of the Prime Minister, which will allow ensuring direct contacts with the public, discussions, meetings in closed format, alternative communication formats, meetings and access to target groups regarding the documents submitted for public discussion.		Government Office of the Prime Minister Office of Deputy Prime Minister <i>Mher Grigoryan</i> State administration bodies Local Self-Government Bodies	CSOs "Freedom of Information Center" "Public Journalism Club" "K.E.T." NGO Other NGOs	Other International professional and donor organizations
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Public Administration Reform Strategy	2021-2026 Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia: "6. Institutional Development"	OECD recommendation: to improve the access to information and public communication in the Republic of Armenia.	Sustainable development goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.	

Country	Republic of Armenia
Number and Name of the Commitment	3. Self-Assessment System in the field of freedom of information
Brief Description of the	For the purpose of fulfilling legal obligations in the field of freedom of information, as well as for collecting systematic and evidence-based data on their efficiency, forming and publicizing an information database, it is proposed to develop and

Commitment	introduce a unified system for self-assessment and statistics maintenance/publicizing of the field of freedom of information, which will be used by the state authorized body every year for evaluating the process of execution of the right to freedom of information within the state administration system. The results of self-assessment will be combined with the external assessment results, enabling to make the problem mapping more targeted, comprehensive, and the proposed solutions — more effective. This is also a tool for introduction and development of a unified and combined evaluation culture for freedom of information, which will bring field analyses and reforms aimed at the development of the field to a new level.		
Lead	Office of the Prime Minister		
Other Co-Implementers	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors
	Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Personal Data Protection Agency of the Ministry of Justice National Security Service	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	State administration bodies
Period Covered	November 2022-July 2023		

Problem Definition
<p>1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?</p> <p>Promote the publicity, accountability and freedom of information (FoI) of the state administration system by introducing a (pilot) public and transparent evaluation system.</p>
<p>2. What are the causes of the problem?</p> <p>Currently, the system, mechanisms and tools for evaluation, statistics maintenance and publicity of the field of FoI is missing. In this context, it is not possible to receive substantiated and reliable data about the general state of application of the law on FoI by state institutions of the Republic of Armenia, and the objectivity and purposefulness of existing data processing process is questioned both by the public and CSOs, as well as by state institutions/experts working with these data. The absence of an evaluation system deprives the expert community and the State of having the overall picture of various components of FoI, such as, for example, information availability/accessibility, coverage of subjects, received requests, rejections and appeals, quantitative and substantive data, etc.</p>
Commitment Description

<p>1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?</p> <p>Currently, unified evaluation systems of FoI are missing. Due to the commitment, all actors in the field of FoI will have evidence-based, complete and accessible information about the exercise of the right to FoI, which is an important prerequisite for public control, as well as for effective decisions and reforms related to the field.</p>	
<p>2. What are the solution proposed by us?</p> <p>For the purpose of fulfilling legal obligations in the field of FoI, as well as for collecting systematic and evidence-based information database on their efficiency and publicizing it, it is proposed to develop and introduce a system for self-assessment of the field of FoI, which the state authorized body will be able to use every year for evaluating the process of execution of the right to FoI by the state administration system.</p> <p>Within the framework of elaboration of the evaluation system, not only the international and local standards regulating the process will be taken into account, but also the observations of the main actors of the field — those in charge for the FoI of the state administration system bodies, public servants coordinating the secretariat, representatives of the organization managing the electronic document circulation, as well as specialized civil society institutions.</p>	
<p>3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?</p> <p>The system will also include a unified format for maintaining and publicizing statistics, which will enable to apply, at least in an identical and comparable manner, the norms established by the law with regard to statistics. At the same time, this is an excellent way to form a unified practice of developing and publicizing statistics, ensuring their combination and effective use by all actors in the field.</p> <p>Within the framework of the commitment it is envisaged to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop self-assessment standards for the field of FoI; ● develop unified mechanisms for maintaining statistics and accountability on FoI by state bodies; ● introduce a unified evaluation system and provide the conditions necessary for its application. 	
<p>Commitment Analysis</p>	
<p>Questions</p>	<p>Answer</p>
<p>1. How will the commitment promote transparency?</p>	<p>FoI self-assessment standards will enable the state institutions (if desired, not only state institutions) to reveal the FoI proactive and reactive problems and develop specific targeted solutions. This process will directly and indirectly improve the access to information and data.</p>
<p>2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?</p>	<p>FoI self-assessment standards, contributing to proactive transparency, also promote the accountability of state agencies. Within the framework of development of self-assessment standards, such components are taken into account that their application would also reveal the problems of the monitoring and evaluation systems for further development and implementation of solutions aimed at them.</p>

3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	The publication of self-assessment results can be an excellent opportunity for CSOs and citizens in terms of verification of these results, as well as submitting their own observations and opinions. In the long term, this also provides a platform for systemic dialogue in the field; the State raises the problems detected thereby, CSOs compare them with the results of external evaluation, and in this case, both the mapped problems and the solutions proposed for them will become more targeted and realistic, which will make the State-CSO co-operation more effective.
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Commitment Planning

(This is an initial planning process largely looking at milestones and expected outputs, as well as key stakeholders involved.)

Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Elaborate the FoI concept of self-assessment and the system of indicators	Introduction of modern mechanisms for monitoring the state of FoI in line with international best practice	November 2022	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Justice	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	State administration bodies
Action 2. Develop a methodology for assessment of indicators within the framework of FoI self-assessment	Setting unified methodological bases for ensuring the monitoring of the state of FoI, clarification of information sources and ways of obtaining indicators, determination of those in charge	December 2022	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister M. Grigoryan Ministry of Justice	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the commitment	State administration bodies

Action 3. Ensure pilot introduction of self-assessment system of freedom of information in selected bodies	Improvement of the system based on the test results of the system for monitoring of the state of freedom of information and ensuring universal introduction	July 2023	Lead: Office of the Prime Minister		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Justice	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	State administration bodies
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Public Administration Reform Strategy	Sustainable development goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.	OECD recommendation: to improve access to information and public communication in the Republic of Armenia.		

Country	Republic of Armenia		
Number and Name of the Commitment	4. Revision and introduction of participatory mechanisms in the budgeting process		
Brief Description of the Commitment	Ensuring of participatory processes carried out by state bodies, automating, simplifying and unifying the budget formation processes for the public as much as possible, contributing to the increase of CSOs' participation in the budgeting process		
Lead Body	Ministry of Finance		
Other Co-Implementers	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors (Parliament, Private Sector etc.)
	Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan State administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia	Non-governmental organizations	" International budget initiative " organization, German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ), Private sector, other organizations
Period Covered	March 2023-December 2023		

Problem Definition

1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?

Revision and introduction of participatory mechanisms of budget formation, implementation and monitoring in the budgeting process.

Increase of participatory capacities and skills within the state administration bodies, local administration bodies and within the circles of civil society partners.

Promotion of transparency, accountability and integrity in budgeting processes.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

Point 24 of the Schedule approved by Decision of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia N 35-A of 18 January 2021 prescribes that within the framework of MTEF drafting activities, public authorities and territorial administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia (applicant bodies) should conduct discussions — in the areas under their jurisdiction — with interested civil society organizations on budget requests and present the results of the discussions (including the summary on accepting or rejecting submitted remarks and recommendations) to the Ministry of Finance.

In accordance with the requirements of point 24, 8 of the 46 applicant bodies submitted the above-mentioned information to the Ministry of Finance, and only 2 of which conducted the above-mentioned discussions.

Recently, the "[International Budget Initiative](#)" drew up [the first report on budgetary processes in Armenia](#), where the low public participation index emphasized once again the need to improve the participation process.

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

In order to avoid such problems within the framework of the budgeting process of 2023 and to demonstrate the necessary consistency, there was a need to be guided by the methodological instructions for ensuring public participation in the process of developing budget programmes of state bodies within the framework of development of State Medium-Term Expenditure Plan of the Republic of Armenia for 2023-2025 developed by the Ministry of Finance and draft State Budgets of the Republic of Armenia for 2023, as well as to submit — to the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Armenia within the specified period — complete information on public participation in the programmes, recommendations and their progress.

2. What is the solution proposed by us?

Ensure the accessibility and availability of budgetary and other information for the public by creating necessary conditions for equal participation by all beneficiaries in the participatory processes and for consistent dissemination of these processes among wide circles of the public and the establishment of participatory culture.

Should support and serve the implementation of the following functions related to participatory processes:

- provision of public awareness/notifications regarding participatory processes;
- publication/publicizing of information on the State budget and budget programmes, including on Simplified (and/or Interactive) Budget, Citizen's Budget, Budget Requests, Reports on the Implementation of the Budget, other reports (Audit Opinions, Monitoring Reports, Budget Programme Evaluations), Research and Analysis, Accepted Proposals (status), etc., presentation of public remarks and proposals;
- conducting public discussions, including in an on-line format (discussions can be organized on different topics. It should be an open platform for constructive dialogue and for presenting users' remarks, proposals and opinions on the topic. There are no restrictions in terms of consideration, posting and using of information. Only users registered on the platform can make remarks and proposals and vote in the discussions).
- respond (feedback) by state bodies regarding the proposals, remarks and discussions;
- furnishing information on the process of accepted proposals;
- evaluation of participatory processes.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

Public discussions will contribute to the participation of beneficiaries (NGOs, private sector, other organizations) in the processes of elaboration and implementation of budget programmes, the improvement of awareness of budget programmes and the provision of feedback.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	Ensure the accessibility and availability of budgetary and other information for the public, creating necessary conditions for equal participation by all beneficiaries in the participatory processes and for consistent dissemination of these processes among wide circles of the public and the establishment of participatory culture.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	Should support and serve through public awareness raising measures/notifications regarding participatory processes, publication/publicizing of information on the State budget and budget programmes, presentation of public remarks and proposals, conducting public discussions, presentation of state bodies respond (feedback) regarding the presented proposals, remarks and discussions, provision of information on the process of accepted proposals.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen	Through presentation of public remarks and proposals, conducting public discussions, presentation of state

participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	bodies respond (feedback) regarding the presented proposals, remarks and discussions, and provision of information on the process of accepted proposals.
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Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Identification of a digital platform for ensuring the participatory budgeting process.	Setting the platform structure and design, ensuring public awareness raising measures/notification s regarding participatory processes, publication/publicizing of information on the State budget for 2024 and budget programmes.	March 2023	Lead: Ministry of Finance		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			State administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia Local self-government bodies	"Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	"International budget initiative" organization German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) Private sector, other organizations
Action 2. Establishment and finalization of the public discussions component	Establishment of the public awareness tool and the component of public discussions with CSOs on budget requests, development and finalization of the platform for participatory processes	December 2023	Lead:		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			State administration bodies of the Republic of Armenia Local self-government bodies	"Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	"International budget initiative" organization German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) Private sector, other organizations

Relation of the Commitment strategic documents and other international processes	Public Administration Reform Strategy	2021-2026 Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia: "6. Institutional Development"	Public Finance Management System Reform Strategy for 2019-2023 (Target 21).	OECD recommendation: to improve the access to information and public communication in the Republic of Armenia	Sustainable development goal 10: Reduced inequality Reduce inequality within and among countries Sustainable development goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.
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Country	Republic of Armenia
Number and Name of the Commitment	5. Introduction of "participatory budgeting" at local level
Brief Description of the Commitment	<p>Ensuring the participation of residents in the governance of the community is one of the necessary prerequisites for effective local self-government. Residents of the communities are the direct beneficiaries of the public decisions adopted at the local level, thus the task of local self-government bodies has to be being as close as possible to the residents of the given community, providing opportunities for the residents of the community to participate in local self-governance and involving them in the process of decision-making by local self-government bodies.</p> <p>Fulfilment of the mentioned obligation implies the creation of operational opportunities of "Participatory budgeting" envisaged on community websites for the residents, for the purpose of promoting the citizen participation in the community budgeting process.</p> <p>Participatory budgeting has a clear goal of developing social justice and democracy, which is achieved by encouraging active participation by citizens.</p> <p>Currently, residents have an opportunity to get familiarised with draft community budgets, performance and reports on the official electronic websites of municipalities, participate on-line in public hearings, submit proposals and opinions on the draft budget, as well as follow the implementation and management of the budget on-line. Through the mentioned commitment, it is planned to develop and expand the participatory opportunities of community websites, provide citizens with the appropriate toolkit to present ideas to be financed by the community budget, participate in their selection, and monitor their implementation.</p>

	<p>Through the mentioned tool, the residents of the community will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - submit ideas/projects to be financed and implemented by the community budget; - vote for a proposed idea/programme; - follow-up the implementation of selected programmes. <p>For implementation of the ideas, it is envisaged to propose to local self-government bodies to earmark a budget for financing and implementing the programmes proposed by the citizens having received the maximum number of votes. The exact size of the budget will be determined by the decision of the Council of Elders. In parallel with the introduction of the relevant toolkit on the websites of municipalities, it is planned to develop a guide for the implementation of participatory budgeting.</p> <p>It is envisaged to include both citizens (including various groups) and civil society representatives in the process of development of the toolkit for the purpose of developing a citizen-centred, accessible and convenient tool.</p> <p>In addition, it is envisaged to carry out public awareness activities to increase citizens' awareness of the possibilities of participatory budgeting.</p> <p>The residents of communities will have an opportunity to improve their community together with the municipality; besides, this platform of proposals will provide an opportunity for municipalities to collect the problems posing a concern for the residents and find solutions.</p>		
Lead Body	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure		
Other Co-Implementers	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors
	Ministry of Finance Marzpetarans of the Republic of Armenia	"Information system development and training center " Non-Governmental Organization	Local self-government bodies (upon consent)
Period Covered	December 2022-June 2024		

Problem definition

1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?

The confidence of citizens in the representatives they have elected in that the latter will address their concerns aimed at the improvement of community life underlies the democratic development. This is especially important at the community administration level where the effectiveness and quality of provision of

services are felt directly, and rendering of transparent and accountable decisions enhances the probability of social and economic development. The analysis of the current situation shows that a low level of citizen participation exists in Armenia at the local level despite the fact that the pre-conditions necessary for participation are ensured from the legal perspective.

As community budget relates to any resident of the community, decisions regarding the budget provide a great opportunity to engage residents in participatory democracy. Citizen participation in the process of local budgeting will help community authorities to be more informed and render more effective decisions, as well as will allow residents to see and understand that importance is attached to their voice and viewpoints, ideas and programs proposed by them are discussed, viewed and receive an opportunity to be implemented by the local self-government.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On local self-governance" prescribes guarantees and forms of community participation of citizens, and enshrines provisions relating to the discussion of the concerns the citizens have in the process of budgeting. The Law also prescribes liabilities on publicity and accountability of the budget. At the same time, many municipalities do not have relevant capacities, approaches and experience in engaging their citizens in the complex process of budgeting. Moreover, the practical experience in developing and enforcing participatory processes is also missing at all. That is why the commitment aims at providing local self-government bodies with a tool kit for introduction of an active and citizen-oriented participatory budgeting parallel to the full enforcement of the current legal framework, as well as public awareness-raising on the participatory opportunities and advantages.

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has prescribed guarantees and forms of community participation of citizens, and enshrined provisions relating to the discussion of the concerns the citizens have in the process of budgeting in the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On local self-governance". A number of e-participation tools have been introduced in the official community electronic websites, such as online discussion of draft budgets, online broadcast of sessions of the council of elders, holding public hearing, etc. The mentioned commitment will allow providing municipalities with an additional tool kit to improve the current processes and contribute to the full enforcement of the legal framework, by concurrently raising the citizen awareness.

2. What solution are you proposing?

In order to promote citizen participation in decision-making at the local level, it is proposed to:

- introduce a "participatory budgeting" electronic subsystem in the community management information system;
- develop a guide on participatory budgeting introduction and provide it to municipalities;
- introduce and apply the "participatory budgeting" subsystem in three communities of the Republic of Armenia;
- conduct public awareness on participatory budgeting.

The implementation of the mentioned measures will allow introducing and testing the "participatory budgeting" tool kit in the Republic of Armenia for the purpose of further dissemination and application in the remaining communities.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

The introduction of participatory budgeting will allow promoting the direct participation of residents in community decision-making, community budget planning and management, increasing confidence in local self-government bodies and civil responsibility of residents. At the same time, communities will be ensured provided with relevant tool kit and knowledge to promote citizen participation.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	The introduction of participatory budgeting will allow shifting from "isolated" forms of local self-governance to more open, transparent and participatory approaches, and making the process of community budget formation more transparent.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	Participatory budgeting will create an opportunity for local self-government bodies (LSGBs) to be more accountable as it will lead to a more transparent administrative work style. LSGBs will become more responsive to people's needs and expectations. The society, by participating in the budget process, will be more informed about drawing up the budget, the components thereof, and various stages of the process. Besides, upon being informed, citizens may carry out contextual discussions with stakeholders.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	The introduction of participatory budgeting will allow increasing citizen participation in decision-making at the local level; will create favorable conditions for residents to participate in community budget development and further implementation thus promoting the formation of participatory local self-governance and democracy. Citizens will have the opportunity to propose programs to local self-government bodies, participate in voting and selection of programs on community websites, as well as follow up and monitor the further implementation of the programs.

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders
Action 1. Development of a guide on participatory	Development of a guide on participatory budgeting introduction and	December 2022	Lead: Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
			Supporting Stakeholders

budgeting introduction	public awareness		Government CSOs		Other (Parliament, Private Sector etc.)
			Local self-government bodies	"Information System Development and Training Center" Non-Governmental Organization	German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)
Action 2. Development of a participatory budgeting electronic subsystem	Development of "participatory budgeting electronic subsystem in the community management information system	December 2022	Lead		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Others (Parliament, Private Sector etc.)
			Local self-government bodies	"Information System Development and Training Center" Non-Governmental Organization	German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)
Action 3. Implementation of participatory budgeting in three communities	Presentation of the developed electronic component to stakeholder communities; pilot testing of the component in three communities — Abovyan community of Kotayk Marz, Ashtarak community of Aragatsotn Marz and Armavir community of Armavir Marz of the Republic of Armenia	October 2023	Lead		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Others (Parliament, Private Sector etc.)
			Local self-government bodies	"Information System Development and Training Center" Non-Governmental Organization	German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)
Action 4. Public awareness on	Citizen awareness-raising and improvement of	June 2024	Lead		
			Supporting Stakeholders		

participatory budgeting	skills on participatory budgeting		Government	CSOs	Others (Parliament, Private Sector etc.)
			Local self-government bodies	"Information System Development and Training Center" Non-Governmental Organization	German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ)
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Public Administration Reform Strategy : public communication and formation of the institutional system of participation.	2021-2026 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia : to 6. Institutional Development — Section "6.8 Fiscal Policy", in which importance is particularly attached to increasing public resources management and targeting.	Public Finance Management System Reform Strategy for 2019-2023 .(Target 21).	OECD's suggestion: to improve access to information and public communication in the Republic of Armenia.	Sustainable Development Goal 11 Sustainable cities and communities Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions : Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies. Sustainable Development Goal 17 Partnerships for goals Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.
Country	Republic of Armenia				
Number and name of the commitment	6. Access to cartographic spatial data and metadata				
Brief Description of the Commitment	To ensure the access of basic cartographic spatial data and metadata to the public via a national geodesy portal with search functionality, by ensuring the personal data protection mode. The creation of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) will provide a portal updated continuously and online (block, land parcel, building, land fund, type of ownership cadastral layers are updated automatically) for users. The geoportal will provide the opportunity to view, search, analyze and process spatial data received from various sources on one platform. Conversion of spatial data will be ensured based on the principle of interoperability between various state bodies.				
Responsible body	Cadastre Committee				
Other Supporting Stakeholders	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors		
	Bureau of Deputy Prime	Other NGOs and	Police Yerevan Municipality "EKENG" CJSC		

	Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations Ministry of Defense National Security Service Urban Development Committee	organizations	"Hayantar" SNCO Infrastructure management organizations "Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO
Time period	December 2022-December 2024		
Problem definition			
<p>1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?</p> <p>The functions of maintaining the cadastres (registers) of objects, property and resources under the management of a number of bodies of economic management the Republic of Armenia have mainly not been exercised or have been exercised incompletely, operate independently of each other, the data are repeated, sometimes contradictory, which essentially complicates the process of providing the administration bodies with the necessary information, and sometimes make it impossible to use the information available in different information databases or information systems for the efficiency of governance, development of effective programs, or effective implementation of programs of state importance.</p> <p>The solutions to the above-mentioned problems relate both to bodies of the state administration system and those established by law and to natural persons. The comprehensive geoportal will provide an opportunity to analyze processes of public significance, such as declarations of officials, measures aimed at the</p>			

prevention of corruption, etc.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

The cause is the non-uniqueness of information, as the institutions which are mainly spatial data collectors and/or creators, as well as spatial data users, use vector, raster (e.g., DTM, aerospace images), hard copy maps (e.g., topographic maps, atlases), and Internet maps (openstreetmap, yandex map, google maps, google earth).

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

Upon the Order of the Head of the Cadastre Committee (No 149-L of 18 June 2021), a consultative body (working group) of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) of the Integrated Cadastre adjunct to the Head of the Cadastre Committee was established. The consultative body has already organized working sessions and launched cooperation with "LX Korea" having arrived in Armenia for the purpose of supporting the establishment of the standardized national spatial data infrastructure of the Committee implemented with the support of the Asian Development Bank. The NSDI-Spatial Data Group includes the following cartographic layers:

1. A cadastral spatial datum includes the cartographic layer groups of administrative boundaries (marz, community, settlement, administrative district), immovable property (building-construction, land parcel, cadastral block), appraisal (spatial appraisal zoning, appraisal area, appraisal group), right (ownership right entity, servitude, lease (sublease)), designated and functional use of land parcel (land type) and address.
2. A topographic spatial datum includes the cartographic layer groups of terrain (horizontals, digital terrain model, mountain peaks), surface waters (river network, lakes, water reservoirs), transport network (motor roads, railways), planning and elevation basis (pickets, planning basis, elevation basis) and geographical name.
3. An aerospace photography spatial datum includes the cartographic layers of orthophoto layout (orthophotographs) coverage, and mosaic element.
4. The thematic spatial data group is comprised of specially protected areas, natural disasters, agriculture, climate, infrastructures, environmental pollution and monitoring, forests, geology, production, spread of flora and fauna species, historical and cultural monuments, hydrography, transport network, and land geography.

Metadata of more than 600 spatial data have been processed and imported into the National Spatial Data Infrastructure geoportal.

Law HO-431-N "On making amendments and supplements to the Law 'On geodesy and cartography'" was elaborated and adopted on 10 December, 2021. Upon the mentioned amendment, relations pertaining to spatial data, including spatial data infrastructure have been regulated at the level of law. This legislative amendment provides for a number of legal regulations (Laws — "On geodetic and cartographic activities", "On spatial data", drafts "On making supplements to the Administrative Offences Code of the Republic of Armenia"). For that purpose, engagement of the Government, the National Assembly and other professional institutions is important.

2. What solution are you proposing?

It is recommended upon this Commitment to ensure the access of the public to basic cartographic spatial data and metadata via establishing a national geodesy portal. The NSDI will provide a portal updated continuously and online (block, land parcel, building, land fund, type of ownership cadastral layers are updated automatically) for users. The geoportal will provide the opportunity to view, analyze and process spatial data received from various sources on one platform.

The draft Law "On spatial data" will prescribe approaches to updating spatial data — currency and objectiveness of data. State bodies collecting, creating and disposing of spatial data, which provide the spatial data collections and services, must create, provide and disseminate relevant metadata, as well as maintain and update them in accordance with spatial data collections and services. The rules of creating, maintaining and updating spatial data and services metadata will be prescribed by the authorized body coordinating the sectors.

Pursuant to the requirements of Article 75 of the Law "On state registration of rights to property", natural persons shall be exempt from the fee for provision of information for the information prescribed by points 11.1-12 and 15 of part 1 of Article 73 of the Law (with respect to documents photocopied for up to 10 pages) requested on their property or property rights.

Information on the data of the State Unified Real Estate Cadastre, except for unified information, shall be provided to the Staff to the President of the Republic of Armenia, Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, Staff and Deputies of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, bodies of the state administration system of the Republic of Armenia, Marzpetarans, courts of the Republic of Armenia, Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Armenia and other criminal prosecution bodies, the Central Bank of the Republic of Armenia, the Audit Chamber of the Republic of Armenia, autonomous bodies and independent state bodies, the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia, and the Head of the Office of Public Defender free-of-charge, for exercising the powers vested therein by the law of the Republic of Armenia.

Information provided to the bodies of the state administration system as prescribed, as well as cadastral, topographic or land management maps may be transferred by the latter to other persons only based on a decision of the Government, for which a relevant compensation shall be allocated to the State Registry of Real Estate

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

The introduction of the NSDI will enable to coordinate the geospatial data available in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and to create a single unified automated information resource based on interconnected data that are updated regularly and online. As a result, we will have a fast and effective management of territories, economy, natural resources, environmental, urban development and other processes, saving of financial means and labor resources, public awareness raising, the service for obtaining comprehensive information will be improved, as well as an opportunity to carry out public monitoring and other analytical works.

Commitment analysis					
Questions		Answer			
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?		<p>Works performed by state administration bodies will be available to citizen via spatial data.</p> <p>Natural persons or the local self-government bodies of the Republic of Armenia will be exempt from the fee for provision of information for information requested on their property, except for the fees prescribed for access to the National Geoportal.</p> <p>The access to the National Geoportal, with search and view functionality, will be ensured free-of-charge. Search of metadata via the Geoportal will be free-of-charge, and the functionality of viewing and searching certain spatial data — free-of-charge partially.</p>			
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?		Works performed by state bodies will be reflected in the National Geoportal, which will provide the opportunity to public supervision, as a result of which the accountability of the bodies of the state administration system and the LSGBs will improve.			
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?		Citizens will be provided with the opportunity to receive free-of-charge information on spatial data and metadata (except for certain regulations), as well as respond — in the form of messages — to the information found in the National Geoportal.			
Commitment Planning					
<i>(This is an initial planning process largely looking at milestones and expected outputs, as well as key stakeholders involved.)</i>					
Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Training of specialists of Spatial Data Management (GIS)	Engagement of qualified specialists in the spatial data management for carrying out the maintenance of basic and sectoral components of the Integrated Cadastre	1st ten-day period of December 2022 (ongoing)	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Urban Development Committee	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations

Action 2. Ensuring legal regulations	This Action envisages elaborating amendments and supplements to a number of laws and submitting them to the National Assembly for approval.	December 2023	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations Urban Development Committee	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	National Assembly Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations
Action 3. Adjustment, modernization, optimization and standardization of the basic spatial database, modernization and update of the information system of real estate of the Republic of Armenia	Creating a modern unified geospatial database and bringing it in line with international standards	2024 (non-full)	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations

			<p>Infrastructure</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport</p> <p>Ministry of High-Tech Industry</p> <p>Ministry of Emergency Situations</p>			
<p>Action 4.</p> <p>Ensuring access to the basic components of the Integrated Cadastre in real time mode</p>	<p>Ensuring access to spatial data available in real time mode to state bodies having powers vested by law</p>	<p>December 2023</p>	<p>Lead: Cadastre Committee</p>			
			<p>Supporting Stakeholders</p>			
			<p>Government</p>	<p>CSOs</p>	<p>Other</p>	
			<p>Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan</p> <p>Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Ministry of Economy</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport</p> <p>Ministry of High-Tech Industry</p> <p>Ministry of Emergency Situations</p> <p>Urban Development Committee</p> <p>"EKENG" CJSC</p>	<p>"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO</p> <p>Other NGOs and organizations</p>	<p>Police</p> <p>National Security Service</p> <p>Yerevan Municipality</p> <p>Infrastructure management organizations</p>	

Action 5. Introduction of a security system in accordance with the international ISO standards in the Integrated Cadastre, integration with the "EKENG" CJSC's Interoperability Management Platform, where necessary.	Introduction of a security system in accordance with international standards	3 rd ten-day period of December 2022	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations Urban Development Committee "EKENG" CJSC	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations
Action 6. Establishment and introduction of a pilot sectoral cadastre	Establishment and implementation of a single-sector cadastre which will enable identifying practical problems of integration and, where necessary, editing legal acts elaborated by the previous steps and other	3 rd ten-day period of December 2023	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police, National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management

	operational documents.		Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations Urban Development Committee "EKENG" CJSC		organizations
Action 7. Introduction and full re-launch of the Geoportals and metadata database	Introduction of accessible NSDI Geoportals and online metadata database	3rd ten-day period of March 2023	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations

			Urban Development Committee "EKENG" CJSC		
Action 8. Unified address register database	Reflection of any change in name, numbering of the real estate address made in the address register on online and cadastral maps	2 nd ten-day period of December 2024	Lead: Cadastre Committee		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Environment Ministry of Economy Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Emergency Situations Urban Development Committee "EKENG" CJSC	"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	Police National Security Service Yerevan Municipality Infrastructure management organizations
Action 9. Creation of sectoral components of the Integrated Cadastre, introduction of relevant hardware and software	1. Creation of a single unified automated information resource with spatial data reference, based on interconnected	December 2024	Lead: <i>Cadastre Committee</i>		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other

<p>and full launch of the system according to the readiness of the sectors</p>	<p>information documents, b combining branch cadastres and registers having geographical dimensions.</p> <p>2. Fast and effective management of territories, economy, natural resources, environmental, urban development and other processes.</p> <p>3. Saving financial means and labor resources.</p> <p>4. Public awareness raising.</p> <p>5. Ensuring the speed and efficiency of introduction of information technologies and technical means.</p>		<p>Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan</p> <p>Ministry of Environment</p> <p>Ministry of Economy</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport</p> <p>Ministry of High-Tech Industry</p> <p>Ministry of Emergency Situations</p> <p>Urban Development Committee</p> <p>"EKENG" CJSC</p>	<p>"Pan-Armenian Union of Geodesists and Land Managers" NGO</p> <p>Other NGOs and organizations</p>	<p>Police</p> <p>National Security Service</p> <p>Yerevan Municipality</p> <p>"Hayantar" SNCO</p> <p>Infrastructure management organizations</p>
<p>Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes</p>	<p>"6. Institutional Development" of the 2021-2026 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia:</p>	<p>Armenia Digitalization Strategy for 2021-2025</p>	<p>Public Administration Reform Strategy</p>	<p>Strategic Program for Establishing an Integrated Cadastre</p>	

2. FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

Country	Republic of Armenia		
Number and name of the Commitment	7. Register of gifts related to the exercise of official duties of persons holding public positions and of public servants		
Brief Description of the Commitment	For the purpose of regulating the institute of gifts that are a component of integrity, definition of a body responsible for observing the prohibition on acceptance of gifts by public servants, as well as provision for necessary regulations in regard to the procedure for registering and transferring gifts, in particular establishment of a digitalized register of declaration of gifts which will ensure automated solutions for declaration of gifts, their evaluation, as well as publication of information.		
Lead body	Commission for the Prevention of Corruption; Ministry of Justice		
Other Supporting Stakeholders	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors
	Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Bureau of Civil Service	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "Union of Informed Citizens" NGO "Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will	National Assembly

	Bodies of the state administration system	join the Commitment	
Time period	September 2022-September 2024		
Problem definition			
1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?			
<p>Article 29 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On public service" prescribed the prohibition on acceptance of gifts by public servants; Article 30 of the same Law prescribed that registration and transfer of gifts shall be carried out as prescribed by the Government, but which does not have effect, as a result of which registration and transfer of gifts received by public servants during the exercise of official powers in the sector of public service is almost not carried out; in other words, no supervisory function is exercised over this institute. Taking into account the reforms made in the sector of public service, it is necessary to refine the institute of prohibition on acceptance of gifts, define a body observing the prohibition on acceptance of gifts, as well as defining necessary regulations in relation to the procedure for registration and transfer of gifts, which will make the sector more controllable and transparent.</p>			
2. What are the causes of the problem?			
<p>Processes of registration and transfer of gifts received by public servants during the exercise of official powers have mainly not been implemented properly due to the legislative gaps, and absence of a supervisory body and implementation of a unified policy in the sector of public service. The terms "Gift", "Hospitality", "Permissible gift" have not been properly defined, and the procedure prescribed by the Government, serving as a ground for registration and transfer of gifts, enshrined by Article 30 of the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On public service", did not have effect. At the same time, regulations of supervision over compliance with the requirement on the prohibition on acceptance of gifts, the requirements on acceptance of permissible gifts and their registration and the authorized body exercising that function were not defined. In such conditions, a differentiated approach was shown for various types of public service, as a result of which the implementation of the unified policy was distorted. Besides, there is no register of gifts.</p>			
Commitment Description			
1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?			
<p>In 2018, the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On public service" was adopted, Chapter 7 of which is fully devoted to the integrity system. The prohibition on acceptance of gifts by public servants was included in the integrity system and, as a component of the integrity system, was one of the tools for ensuring the transparency and managing corruption risks in public service. Nevertheless, the existing legislative gaps did not provide the opportunity to prescribe procedures for registration and transfer of gifts that are applicable in practice and effective. That is why in 2021 the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia and the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption conducted a comprehensive study and analysis of legislation with the support of the Council of Europe Office in Yerevan, identifying all the gaps existing in the regulations. Within the scope of the mentioned, the draft laws on making amendments and supplements to the Law "On public service" and related laws (hereinafter referred to as "drafts") were elaborated by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. The drafts were put to public discussion in May 2022 (as it was in OGP new draft) and submitted to interested bodies for opinion. The</p>			

Government gave [approval](#) to the drafts on August 18, 2022, and they were submitted to the National Assembly.

2. What solution are you proposing?

The Commission for the Prevention of Corruption has elaborated a concept paper on and an action plan for the improvement of the mechanisms for the prohibition on acceptance of gifts by persons holding a public position and by public servants, which has found its reflection in the Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. Within the scope of the mentioned, as already mentioned, a relevant package of drafts has been elaborated whereby it is recommended to make the following main amendments:

(1) to group the regulations providing for restrictions on receipt of gifts by persons holding a public position and by public servants in one legal act — in the Law "On public service", by making relevant amendments to the Law "On public service", "On Commission for the prevention of Corruption", "On civil service", "On the prosecutor's office" and a number of other related laws. Thus, the unity of the regulations on the restrictions on acceptance of gifts by persons holding a public position and by public servants will be ensured and the existence of various regulations in various laws will be precluded. At the same time, it is recommended to prescribe administrative liability for persons holding a public position and public servants instead of the disciplinary liability in case of violation of the restrictions on acceptance of gifts;

(2) to prescribe an obligation for persons holding a public position and public servants to register gifts in the register of gifts. It has been prescribed that the procedures for registration, transfer and evaluation of gifts, the procedure for maintaining the register, the list of data subject to completion and publication in the register, the procedure for making changes in the data submitted, provision of advisory opinion, and provision of information on cases of violation of the restrictions on acceptance of gifts shall be prescribed by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. It has been envisaged that the register will be maintained by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption;

(3) the drafts recommend to clarify the scope of permissible gifts, prescribed a minimum monetary threshold (i.e. AMD 20 thousand) for registration of gifts, review the concept of gifts based on the opinions and recommendations issued within the scope of international obligations;

(4) the drafts also recommend to prescribe clear regulations with regard to the restrictions on acceptance of gifts by family members and related persons of persons holding a public position and public servants;

(5) the drafts recommend to prescribe clear mechanisms on the actions carried out by persons holding a public position and public servants and authorized state bodies within the scope of the gifts received, etc.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

Upon the adoption of the draft Law "On making amendments and supplements to the Law of the Republic of Armenia 'On public service' and related laws" by the National Assembly, it will be possible to exercise supervision over gifts received by public servants and persons holding a public position during the exercise of official powers, as well as define a central body which will implement a proper and unified policy in the sector of application of the legal norms on the prohibition of acceptance of gifts, ensure a unity of legal regulations providing for a restriction on the prohibition of acceptance of gifts by persons holding a public position and by public servants by inserting them only in the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On public service" and extending on all sectors and types of public service, prescribe clearer and more targeted legislative regulations which will allow carrying out proper restraint of corruption risks, creation of the digitized register of gifts which will ensure automatic solutions for declaration of gifts, evaluation thereof, and publication of information, as well as will ensure the interoperability of the system with the digital system of declarations.

A person holding a public position and a public servant will be obliged to register gifts received thereby in the register of gifts. Pursuant to the draft, the

procedures for registration, transfer and evaluation of gifts, the procedure for maintaining the register, the list of data subject to completion and publication in the register, the procedure for making changes in the data submitted, provision of advisory opinion, and provision of information on cases of violation of the restrictions on acceptance of gifts shall be prescribed by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption.

The Commission will, as prescribed by the draft Law, maintain the registers of gifts of persons holding a public position and public servants, and, in addition, examine and dispose of cases on violations regarding the restrictions on acceptance of gifts.

The procedures for making changes in the data, provision of advisory opinion, and provision of information on cases of violation of the restrictions on acceptance of gifts shall be prescribed by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption pursuant to the draft. At the same time, in case of failure to observe the requirements of the legislative acts related to gifts, the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption will impose measures of liability.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	Upon the implementation of the obligation, it is expected to define more comprehensively the prohibition on acceptance of gifts, by precluding possible misconceptions and opportunities to bypass them, ensure the publicity of declared gifts, introduce a system for publication of reports, as well as create an opportunity for downloading open data.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	Creation of a digitized register of gifts is a most important condition which will ensure automatic solutions for mandatory declaration of gifts, evaluation thereof, and publication of information. The register of gifts will be accessibly for the public from the perspective of both use and receipt of information, such as the system for declaration of property and incomes. Introduction of the supervisory mechanism by the public is key; any person will have the opportunity to submit a report to the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption on <i>prima facie</i> violations of declaration and registration of gifts.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	Inclusiveness is one of the most important components of the commitment. Increasing the possessiveness of the public over the processes being implemented. Proper public supervision and exigence over persons responsible for the implementation of the action and the resources allocated.

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected results	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders
Action 1. Elaboration of draft	1. Elaboration of a draft concept paper on	September 2022-April 2023	Lead: Commission for the Prevention of Corruption

legislative regulations	<p>the prohibition of acceptance of gifts by public servants.</p> <p>2. Elaboration of draft legislative amendments. To vest the definition of the competence to follow the observance of the prohibition on acceptance of gifts, the function of defining the procedures for registration and in the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, registration and record-registration of gifts have been reserved for the Corruption Prevention Commission.</p>		Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Bureau of Civil Service Ministry of Justice National Security Service	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "Union of Informed Citizens" NGO "Freedom of Information Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the Commitment	National Assembly
Action 2. Establishment and introduction of electronic register	<p>1. Development of technical specifications of the electronic register of gifts and holding of a tender for electronic platform.</p> <p>2. Introduction and operation of the electronic register (for the state administration system).</p>	September 2024	Lead: Commission for the Prevention of Corruption		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of the Deputy Prime Minister Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Bureau of Civil Service Ministry of Justice National Security	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "Union of Informed Citizens" NGO "Freedom of Information	National Assembly

			Service	Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations that will join the Commitment		
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Decision of the Government No 1902-L of 18 November, 2021 "On approving the 2021-2026 Action Plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia"	Anti-Corruption Strategy of the Republic of Armenia and the 2019-2022 Action Plan for implementation thereof	Fourth Evaluation Round Second Interim Compliance Report adopted by the Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO)	Pilot 5th round of monitoring of the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan of the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development	Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Armenia within the scope of the Summit for Democracy	Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.

Country	Republic of Armenia		
Commitment number and name	8. Comprehensive system of electronic procurement: Improving the institute of real beneficiaries		
Brief Description of the Commitment	To elaborate a new system for electronic procurement complying with the modern requirements, which will be integrated with the other electronic systems interrelated with procurement, including with the State Register in terms of automatic receipt and publication of data on real beneficiaries of bidders of the procurement procedure, including the bidder selected at the stage of execution of the contract. The new system will provide the opportunity to also expand the scope of clients using it. The system will have the functionality of free-of-charge and full automatic publication, generation and conduct of analysis of information on the Internet regarding the organization of procurement procedures and management of contracts based on open data.		
Responsible body	Ministry of Finance		
Other Co-Actors	Government Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Justice	CSOs Other Actors "Freedom of Information Center" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center"	

	Commission for the Prevention of Corruption "EKENG" CJSC (upon consent) Commission for the Protection of Competition (upon consent)	NGO "NGO Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	
Time period	March 2023-June 2024		

Problem definition	
1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?	
<p>Increasing the level of transparency and effectiveness of the procurement system, use of the system by all clients, existence of a new modern, full national system of electronic procurement integrated with other systems relating to the procurements system and including all business processes.</p> <p>The Republic of Armenia has undertaken the commitment to carry out the introduction of the institute of real beneficiaries; hence, in order to ensure comprehensiveness, it is necessary to ensure the interoperability for identifying data.</p>	
2. What are the causes of the problem?	
<p>The current system does not ensure the opportunity to include all clients, it is impossible to fully ensure receipt of information based on both all business processes and open data.</p> <p>Despite this fact, the process of revealing real beneficiaries has been introduced in the Republic of Armenia, but the steps made are not sufficient for fully achieving reduction of corruption processes. A need arises to ensure interoperability with other systems and registers operating in the Republic of Armenia.</p>	

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

Activities for developing the terms of reference of the new electronic procurements system have been undertaken.

All organizations that are legal persons are obliged to declare their real beneficiaries in the Republic of Armenia from 2023. But in order to ensure a full process, it is necessary to ensure confirmation/verification of data and interoperability with necessary registers or electronic platforms to ensure a comprehensive process of revealing real beneficiaries.

2. What solution are you proposing?

To introduce a new electronic procurement system complying with the modern requirements, which will be integrated with other electronic systems related with procurement. The new system will provide the opportunity to also expand the scope of clients using it. The system will have the functionality of free-of-charge and full automatic publication, generation and conduct of analysis of information on the Internet regarding the organization of procurement procedures and management of contracts based on open data.

For the purpose of building the new electronic system of declaration of 2021, a contract has been concluded with "Synergy International Systems", which provides for introducing the new system. 2021-2022 As a result of the amendments made to the Law "On public service" and "On Commission for the Prevention of Corruption", the list of data subject to declaration and the scope of declarants have been expanded. It is envisaged to have the new system in 2023.

It is proposed to interconnect the new electronic procurement system, the system of real beneficiaries and declarations of high-ranking officials.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

To have a new electronic procurement system complying with the modern requirements, which will be possible to integrate with other electronic systems via the interoperability platform of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The new system will allow expanding the scope of clients using it. The system will ensure the functionality of free-of-charge and full automatic publication, generation and conduct of analysis of information on the Internet regarding the organization of procurement procedures and management of contracts based on open data.

As a result of implementation of the Commitment, it is expected to ensure the receipt of complete and accurate information on real beneficiaries of all organizations participating in the procurement process, and exclusion of conflict of interests at the stage of rendering decisions. This means that resident organizations of the Republic of Armenia may register in the electronic procurement system but may participate in the very process of procurement only in case of submitting (electronically) information on their real beneficiaries. This requirement will serve as an additional means for ensuring the submission — by resident organizations of the Republic of Armenia participating in the process of electronic procurement — of the declaration of real beneficiary in the State Register of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia.

Besides submitting a declaration of real beneficiary, the client (member and secretary of the evaluation commission) signs and publishes a statement on absence of conflict of interests of bidders of the procedure following the opening of bids. It is envisaged that these statements will be automatically transferred

to the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. In case of ensuring a comprehensive scope, it will be possible to prevent potential corruption risks, including prevent money laundering risks, reveal related persons, conflict of interests, etc.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	The electronic procurement system based on open data will provide the opportunity to make complete information on the organization of procurement procedures and management of contracts available on the Internet free-of-charge and automatically.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	Public availability of information on organizations participating in procurement, submission of declaration on real beneficiary and provision of information on the winning organization will improve accountability and transparency of decision-making.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	Representatives of CSOs, the media and other organizations have the opportunity to regularly study and analyze the procurement process and implementation of obligations by the winning organizations as a result thereof. As a result, it will be possible to exercise public supervision over all bidders and decision-makers related to procurement.

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Announcement of tender for selection of contractor for the new procurement system.	Drawing up terms of reference by the selected advisor and announcing a tender for selection of contractor for the purpose of developing a software based thereon	First quarter of 2023	Lead: Ministry of Finance		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Justice Commission for the	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO	

			Prevention of Corruption "EKENG" CJSC (upon consent)	"NGO Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	
Action 2. Launch of testing activities	Development of software by the selected contractor and launch of testing activities	June 2024	Lead: Ministry of Finance		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of High-Tech Industry Ministry of Justice Commission for the Prevention of Corruption "EKENG" CJSC	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "NGO Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	
Action 3. Integration of the register of real beneficiaries	Integration of the new system of electronic procurement with the software of the Register of Real Beneficiaries of the State Register of Legal Entities of the Ministry of Justice — automatic receipt of information on real beneficiaries of resident bidders of the Republic of Armenia having submitted bids for participation in the procurement procedures prescribed	June 2024	Lead: Ministry of Justice		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Ministry of Finance Ministry of Justice Commission for the Prevention of Corruption "EKENG" CJSC	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "NGO Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	"VX Soft" LLC

	by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, publications thereof on the Internet, and data exchange via the interoperability platform of the Government, where necessary.				
Action 5. Transfer of data (including the declaration of real beneficiary) of organizations having participated in the procurement process.	Integration of complete information (including the declaration of real beneficiary) of organizations that are bidders of the procurement process. With the new system of declarations developed by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption for the purpose of prevention of conflict of interests, relation, and corruption risks.	June 2024	Lead: Commission for the Prevention of Corruption		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Ministry of Finance Ministry of Justice Commission for the Prevention of Corruption "EKENG" CJSC	"Freedom of Information Center" NGO "Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center" NGO "NGO Center" NGO Other NGOs and organizations	
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Section "Public expenditures" of the 2021-2026 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia	Of the Public Finance Management System Reform Strategy for 2019-2023 (Target 14).	Reports of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Anti-Corruption Report 2022: https://cutt.ly/HKmhP Rs	U.S. 2021 Investment Climate Statements: https://cutt.ly/rKmcY3C	Anti-Corruption Strategy of the Republic of Armenia
					and the 2019-2022 Action Plan for implementation thereof

<p>Public Administration Reform Strategy: completion of the horizontal and vertical scope of public service, ensuring the unity of services</p>	<p>Commitments undertaken by the Republic of Armenia within the scope of the Summit for Democracy</p>	<p>Sustainable Development Goal 10 Reduced inequality Reduce inequality within and among countries</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal 16 <u>Peace, justice and strong institutions</u> Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal 17 <u>Partnerships for the goals</u> Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.</p>	
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3. OPEN AND TRANSPARENT JUSTICE

Country	Republic of Armenia		
Number and Name of the Commitment	9. "eCourt-statistics" statistical analytical tool		
Brief Description of the Commitment	<p>To introduce the "eCourt-statistics" statistical analytical tool of the e-Justice system, which will be aimed at raising the analysis of processes related to pre-trial proceedings in criminal cases and examination of court cases, raising the accountability and transparency of the judicial system in order to ensure the application of "open data" format. The unified electronic system will ensure the conduct of electronic document circulation, contribute to the development of a unified policy for maintaining the systems operating within the bodies of the sector of justice, collection of comprehensive statistic data, saving of time and material resources, and simplification of administration.</p> <p>The introduction of the "e-Justice" unified system is aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) establishing an electronic document circulation system between the judicial, law enforcement authorities (inquest and preliminary investigation bodies, Prosecutor's Office) and law enforcement bodies (Compulsory Enforcement Service, Penitentiary Service, Probation Service) and other bodies, and organizations; (b) modernizing the current electronic management systems of courts and other bodies of the sector of justice; (d) creating and introducing a unified judicial electronic management system that will ensure the transfer of cases from one court instance to another and between the seats of the same court instances, as well as putting into operation of party-to-party, party-to-court efficient notification system, as a result of which the electronic submission of evidence to the court, filing motions and carrying out other procedural actions will become possible; (e) creating an electronic platform, by ensuring the official on-line correspondence, the electronic document circulation between all participants of the case, as well as by creating an opportunity for natural and legal persons to contact state bodies on-line, submit applications, complaints and other documents thereto, and in addition, provide an opportunity to follow the progress of the case on-line; (f) ensure collection of statistic data via the system during the entire course of proceedings; (g) unify all the electronic systems and databases operating within the bodies of justice; (h) ensure creation of digital archives. 		
Lead Body	Ministry of Justice		
Other Co-Implementers	Government/	Civil Society	Other Actors (Parliament, Private Sector, etc.)

	Other State Bodies		
	Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan (Information Systems Management Board) Bodies of the law enforcement system: Police, National Security Service, SJC, Prosecutor General's Office, Investigative Committee Commission for the Prevention of Corruption Anti-Corruption Committee "EKENG" CJSC Ministry of High-Tech Industry	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Digital Armenia" NGO	Council of Europe Office in Yerevan, "Macy's Information Systems" INC UNDP USAID
<i>Period Covered</i>	November 2022-June 2024		

Problem Definition

1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?

In Armenia, the justice and the judicial and legal reforms are among the primary directions of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. Nevertheless, for years, the reforms have not achieved the goals and targets set before them, in some cases not having relevant effective mechanisms and a toolkit for implementation.

In July 2022, the Government of the Republic of Armenia approved the 2022-2026 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reforms and the Action Plans deriving therefrom. The Action Plan provides for introducing the e-Justice system and tools, as a result of which:

- (1) an electronic document circulation system between the judicial, law enforcement authorities (inquest and preliminary investigation bodies, Prosecutor's Office), law enforcement bodies (Compulsory Enforcement Service, Penitentiary Service, Probation Service) and other bodies, and organizations will be established;

- (2) the current electronic management systems of courts and other bodies of the sector of justice will be modernized;
- (3) a unified judicial electronic management system will be created and introduced, that will ensure the transfer of cases from one court instance to another and between the seats of the same court instances, as well as putting into operation of party-to-party, party-to-court efficient notification system, as a result of which the electronic submission of evidence to the court, filing motions and carrying out other procedural actions will become possible;
- (4) the official on-line correspondence, the electronic document circulation between all participants of the case will be ensured, as well as creating an opportunity for natural and legal persons to contact state bodies on-line, submit applications, complaints and other documents thereto, and in addition, provide an opportunity to follow the progress of the case on-line;
- (5) collection of statistic data via the system during the entire course of proceedings will be ensured;
- (6) all the electronic systems and databases operating within the bodies of justice will be unified, and creation of digital archives will be ensured.

Upon the introduction of the unified e-justice system, citizens' electronic communication with the justice system will be ensured. Through the unified e-justice system, it will be possible to ensure the organization of collection, alignment and harmonization of statistic data during the entire course of proceedings, combination of electronic systems existing in law enforcement bodies (inquest bodies, preliminary investigation bodies, Prosecutor's Office), judicial and law enforcement authorities (Compulsory Enforcement Service, Penitentiary Service, Probation Service), and unified electronic communication between the bodies of the sector of justice.

Development of such a platform has an important significance from the point of view of organizing the law enforcement processes more clearly and transparently; at the same time, it will allow to avoid undue delays of processes and provide an opportunity to maintain relevant statistics for the purpose of revealing the risks, and developing policy correctly.

With the OGP-Armenia National Action Plan, the Government of the Republic of Armenia undertakes the introduction of the "eCourt-statistics" statistical tool deemed to be a component of the e-justice system, which will allow analyzing the processes related to the examination of pre-trial and judicial cases (contextual and formal) according to pre-determined statistical indicators (statistic data) and by applying the "open data" format. The analysis of the processes related to the examination of judicial cases will provide an opportunity to the members of the civil society to exercise public supervision of over the administration of justice. The statistics will be available free-of-charge to the stakeholders (legal community, citizens, researchers, international institutions and sectoral state bodies).

In the context of the mentioned statistical indicators, a quantity of judicial cases in specific trials, a total quantity of rendered judicial acts, a percentage ratio in certain types of cases, etc. will be available.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

Currently, the judicial system of the Republic of Armenia does not have a unified electronic system within the framework of which all the judicial proceedings are carried out.

There are several separate electronic tools that cannot ensure the full digitization of trial, in which conditions the "e-Justice" unified management system cannot be introduced and function effectively.

At the moment, the development and introduction of the "eCourt" unified management system are a primary necessity, the fulfillment whereof will provide the court and the parties with the opportunity to perform the judicial functions and procedural actions — carried out within the scope of proceedings — electronically.

It is envisaged that the system will contain the electronic toolkit for civil, administrative, bankruptcy and criminal court cases, each in a separate module, combined with the electronic databases of all the bodies and organizations that are engaged in the trial or are processors/controllers or recipients of information necessary for the court.

Referring to the information systems of electronic assignment, distribution of judicial cases and official publication of judicial acts, it should be emphasized that in the conditions of the current procedure, the procedure for distribution of cases does not take into account the workload of the judge and the complexity of the case, which leads to a disproportionate workload for some judges.

Currently, distribution of cases by sectoral specialization is an urgent issue, especially among judges with civil law specialization. The current model of general distribution does not ensure effective examination of cases. Thus, the procedures for electronic assignment and distribution of judicial cases need a fundamental reform.

Apart from that, it is also necessary to improve the information system of official publication of judicial acts, and expand its technical capabilities.

The existing limited system, currently operating <http://www.datalex.am/>, does not contain complete pre-trial and judicial statistical information, is not user friendly and does not enable a separate or systematized search for the beneficiary of the judicial process (State bodies and judicial system, citizen of the Republic of Armenia, journalist, researcher, etc.) regarding the indicator (statistic data, indicator) he or she is interested in.

At the same time, the Judicial Department collects and maintains judicial statistics, which, however, provides statistical information according to articles and judges, by including information of limited volume. Moreover, detailed information in the mentioned terms is available only for courts of first instance.

In addition, no separated statistics on corruption crimes and corruption-related civil cases is maintained, which does not provide an opportunity not only to get a complete picture of the entire chain of examination of corruption cases, but the lack of relevant statistics has been considered problematic as well within the scope of the Pilot 5th Round of monitoring of the Istanbul Anti-corruption Action Plan of the Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (hereinafter referred to as "the OECD") in 2021, leading to the evaluation of obligations in a number of performance fields as not performed. The absence of the above-mentioned statistic data does not provide an opportunity to make relevant legislative amendments as a result of the analysis and to wage an effective fight against corruption crimes.

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

The DataLex portal has an infographic section that provides the beneficiaries with information with limited indicators in a non-user friendly format.

At the same time, for the purpose of ensuring the effectiveness, transparency of activities of courts and the accountability thereof before the public, the Judicial Department collects and maintains judicial statistics under the procedure established by the Government. Relations pertaining to the maintenance of judicial statistics have been prescribed by Article 19 of the Constitutional Law "Judicial Code". According to the types of cases, the following data on each

court of first instance and judge are published in judicial statistics:

- (1) number of judges;
- (2) total number of cases transferred from the previous reporting period at the beginning of the reporting period;
- (3) total number of cases received during the reporting period;
- (4) total number of cases completed during the reporting period;
- (5) total number of cases with proceedings suspended as of the last day of the reporting period;
- (6) average duration of examination of cases completed during the reporting period, according to the number of sessions;
- (7) average duration of examination of cases completed during the reporting period, according to time (an hour being the unit of calculation) (including according to the average duration of the stages of preparation of the trial, conduct of the trial and rendering of a judicial act);
- (8) cases of pre-trial criminal proceedings completed during the reporting period, according to the types;
- (9) total number of incomplete cases as of the last day of the reporting period;
- (10) number of judicial acts appealed during the reporting period, according to the types;
- (11) number of judicial acts quashed during the reporting period, according to the types.

For the purpose of solving the raised problems, a trilateral contract has been signed between the Supreme Judicial Council, the Ministry of Justice and the organization servicing the DataLex portal.

2. What solution are you proposing?

It is recommended to develop and introduce a tool of judicial system within the framework of e-Justice, which will provide an opportunity to carry out statistical and analytical works on judicial processes, starting from the pre-trial stage.

This can be achieved by combining the current electronic systems, and introducing unified electronic communication between the bodies of the sector of justice.

At the same time, it is necessary to improve the current statistical lines and statistical cards.

In addition, in accordance with international obligations, it is necessary to provide for statistics separated for corruption cases, including statistical information according to positions, according to the distinction between the public and private sectors, and information on corruption crimes committed by legal persons.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

As a result of implementation of the above-mentioned processes, the unified electronic system will ensure carrying out electronic circulation of documents,

contribute to the development of a unified policy for maintaining the systems operating within the bodies of the sector of justice, collection of comprehensive statistic data, saving of time and material resources and simplification of administration.

Continuous reforms of the judicial system, inter alia, should aim to:

- guarantee the ensuring of increase of effectiveness of justice and unity of judicial practice, as well as set a higher bar of legal certainty in the field of administration of justice, ensure realization of the goal of a more complete observance of reasonable time limits for examination of judicial cases and effective implementation of the principle of saving judicial and legal terms;
- continue the ensuring of realization of the goal of enhancing the perception of the role of the judiciary among the public and the confidence therein.

The introduction of this tool will provide clear information on the progress of judicial cases, increase the transparency of and public supervision over judicial cases and processes, allow conducting periodic analyses through pre-defined statistical indicators.

The tool will make the processes simpler and more transparent and at the same time it will allow to avoid undue delays of processes.

The improvement of statistics will also make it possible to obtain comprehensive information on the entire chain of examination of corruption cases, which will help in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the fight against corruption.

In addition to the mentioned, the introduction of the digital judicial statistics tool and the improvement of judicial statistics will help to reveal the problems and legislative gaps arisen in the law enforcement practice, the causes, main types of crime, carry out long-term monitoring of the practice, which will make it possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures applied and, as a result, to develop evidence-based and targeted sectoral policy.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	Through the introduction of statistical indicators defined on the basis of international practice and consultation, the processes (simplification of the paperwork process, technical notifications), logic and final outputs of the judicial system will be available; in addition, citizens will have the opportunity to follow the progress of the case on-line. This will increase the transparency of and public supervision over the law enforcement system.
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	Within the framework of the system, tools and mechanisms will be introduced that will make available all processes related to the examination of judicial cases, including time limits. All the electronic systems and databases operating within the bodies of justice and state bodies will be unified. The tool will greatly improve the accountability of the judicial system and create wide opportunities for carrying out public supervision.
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining,	The introduction of a digital statistical tool will give open public access to examination of judicial cases (at all stages). As a result, it will be possible to exercise public supervision over judicial cases and processes, and

implementing, and monitoring solutions?	conduct periodic analyses through pre-defined statistical indicators. At the same time, undue delays of judicial processes will be reduced.				
Commitment Planning					
Milestones	Expected Outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Study of International Practice	The international practice has been studied.	November 2022-April 2023	Lead: Ministry of Justice		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan (Information Systems Management Board) Bodies of the law-enforcement system: Police, National Security Service, SJC, Prosecutor General's Office, Investigative Committee Commission for the Prevention of Corruption Anti-Corruption Committee "EKENG" CJSC Ministry of High-Tech Industry	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Digital Armenia" NGO NGOs and organizations of the judicial and legal sector	Council of Europe Office in Yerevan "Macy's Information Systems" INC UNDP USAID
Action 2.	1. Inventory-taking and	June 2023	Lead: Ministry of Justice		

<p>1. Inventory-taking and separation of business processes</p> <p>2. Expert works</p>	<p>separation of business processes have been conducted.</p> <p>2. Relevant expert works have been conducted.</p>		Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			<p>Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan</p> <p>(Information Systems Management Board)</p> <p>Bodies of the law-enforcement system:</p> <p>Police,</p> <p>National Security Service, SJC,</p> <p>Prosecutor General's Office,</p> <p>Investigative Committee</p> <p>Commission for the Prevention of Corruption</p> <p>Anti-Corruption Committee</p> <p>"EKENG" CJSC</p> <p>Ministry of High-Tech Industry</p>	<p>"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO</p> <p>"Digital Armenia" NGO</p> <p>NGOs and organizations of the judicial and legal sector</p>	<p>Council of Europe Office in Yerevan</p> <p>"Macy's Information Systems" INC</p> <p>UNDP</p> <p>USAID</p>
<p>Action 3.</p> <p>Alignment of legal bases</p>	<p>Alignment of legal bases in line with the Digitalization Agenda of the Republic of Armenia</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	Lead: Ministry of Justice		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			<p>Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan</p> <p>(Information Systems Management Board)</p>	<p>"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO</p> <p>"Digital Armenia" NGO</p> <p>NGOs and organizations of</p>	<p>Council of Europe Office in Yerevan</p> <p>"Macy's Information Systems" INC</p>

			<p>Bodies of the law-enforcement system: Police, National Security Service, SJC, Prosecutor General's Office, Investigative Committee Commission for the Prevention of Corruption Anti-Corruption Committee "EKENG" CJSC Ministry of High-Tech Industry Statistical Committee</p>	the judicial and legal sector	UNDP USAID
<p>Action 4. Development of software solution.</p>	<p>Development of a software solution based on the analysis conducted Ensuring cross-reading of software solutions with various systems</p>	May 2024	Lead: Ministry of Justice		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			<p>Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan (Information Systems Management Board) Bodies of the law-enforcement system: Police, National Security Service, SJC,</p>	<p>"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Digital Armenia" NGO NGOs of judicial and sectoral NGOs involved in the reform processes implemented by the Ministry</p>	<p>Council of Europe Office in Yerevan "Macy's Information Systems" INC UNDP USAID</p>

			Prosecutor General's Office, Investigative Committee Commission for the Prevention of Corruption Anti-Corruption Committee "EKENG" CJSC Ministry of High-Tech Industry Statistical Committee		
Action 5.		June 2024	Lead: Ministry of Justice		
Pilot Operation	Put the tool into pilot operation and reveal the problems for the purpose of conducting revision	<u>Supporting Stakeholders</u>			
		Government	CSOs	Other	
		Bureau of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan (Information Systems Management Board) Bodies of the law-enforcement system: Police, National Security Service, SJC, Prosecutor General's Office, Investigative Committee Commission for the	"Armenian Lawyers' Association" NGO "Digital Armenia" NGO NGOs and organizations of the judicial and legal sector	Council of Europe Office in Yerevan "Macy's Information Systems" INC UNDP USAID	

			Prevention of Corruption Anti-Corruption Committee "EKENG" CJSC Ministry of High-Tech Industry Statistical Committee		
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Section "Judicial and Legal Reforms" of the 2021-2026 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia	The Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reforms of the Republic of Armenia and the Action Plan deriving therefrom for 2022-2026	Armenia Digitalization Strategy for 2021-2025	International obligations: 1. Recommendations given by GRECO in 2021	
Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.	Public Administration Reform Strategy				

1. SOCIAL RIGHTS AND PROTECTION

Country	Republic of Armenia
Number and Name of the Commitment	10. Introduction of an electronic system of employment contracts for the public and private sector
Brief Description of the Commitment	<p>To digitalize employment contracts (individual legal acts on employment) concluded both in the public and private sectors of the Republic of Armenia through the introduction of an electronic system (platform) of record-registration of employment contracts in the Republic of Armenia for the purpose of improving the system for free choice of job by employees and protection of labor rights.</p> <p>The electronic management platform will provide an opportunity for employees to have employment contracts meeting the requirements prescribed by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia, and for the inspection body — to have a toolkit to exercise a more transparent, accountable, controllable and right-based protection.</p> <p>In particular, it is envisaged to post sample forms of employment contracts (individual legal acts on employment) in the electronic system (platform) in accordance with the requirements of labor legislation, which will give employees the opportunity to be informed about in what parts the employment contracts concluded with them (or individual legal acts on their employment) do not meet the requirements of legislation, and provide employers with the opportunity to conclude employment contracts (adopt individual legal acts on employment) in compliance with the requirements prescribed by legislation. Moreover, employees will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the content of their contracts, and — in case of violation of the terms of the contract — file a complaint to both the employer and the inspection body by making a reference to the specific point of the contract. Whereas the inspection body will have the opportunity to exercise effective supervision based on both monitoring and the complaints filed, by identifying violations of labor legislation, including the terms of the employment contract, and improve the rights and protection of employees. At the same time, based on the results of the analysis of the problems revealed, the inspection body will have the opportunity to evaluate and determine more effectively the employers with a high level of risk for the purpose of involving them in the annual inspection program. <i>In addition, the availability of the platform will preclude the established practice in the private sector of concluding ex post facto contracts, not registering the actual work performed with the tax authority (illegal work) or specifying in the contract an amount less than the actual salary provided. At the same time, the access to the content of the contract published on the platform will provide an opportunity to exclude cases of concluding contacts on service provision by employers in the private sector instead of concluding employment contracts with their employees.</i></p> <p>Moreover, it is envisaged to publish on the platform statistic data about the main (frequently) repeated violations revealed by the inspection body during the supervision over the field of labor reserved thereto and about cases of restoration of the rights of stakeholders through appropriate administrative enforcement measures, as a result of which the level of awareness of both employees and their representatives, as well as employers in the field of protection of labor law will increase significantly; for example, the parties to the contract will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the mainly repeated violations in the field of labor law and avoid them, and where similar violations have already been</p>

	<p>committed — correct them.</p> <p>In the future, it is also envisaged to give employees the opportunity to publish (make public) their employment contracts containing personal data on the same platform, as needed and desired, by requesting legal assistance via the platform on issues arisen with the employer, which will already cover not only the scope of the powers of the inspection body, but also the entire public and private sector carrying out activities in the field of labor.</p>		
Lead Body	Health and Labor Inspection Body (hereinafter also referred to as "HLIB)		
Other Co-Implementers	Government	Civil Society	Other Actors (Parliament, Private Sector, etc.)
	Bureau for Co-ordination of Activities of Inspection Bodies of the Office of the Prime Minister Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of High-Tech Industry National Security Service "EKENG" CJSC	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Other supporting organizations — NGOs, private sector, other organizations	Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs of the National Assembly Social partners of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, Republican Union of Employers of Armenia), NGOs, private sector
Period Covered	December 2022-2024		

Problem Definition

1. What problem does the commitment aim to address?

The commitment aims to raise the level of protection of free choice of job by employees of the Republic of Armenia and the labor law, as well as to manage the risks in the field of labor law. Employers, especially in the private sector, very often do not conclude employment contracts with newly hired employees or do not provide the individual legal act on employment, job description or employment contract to the employees, which later makes the implementation of protection of employment rights of employees difficult, and sometimes even impossible. It turns out that, in the course of inspection and supervision activities, the cases when employers register an employee's employment application via the taxservice.am system but the very contract or employment order is not drawn up and ratified by the employer and the employee in order to avoid fines imposed by the tax body, are often. And already during the inspection, an ex post facto employment contract is drawn up in hard copy, signed by the employee and submitted as a previously signed document. A related problem is also when the employee is recruited for such a position (staff position unit) in the case of which preliminary and therefore periodic medical examination is mandatory. Moreover, the cases when private sector employers specify the amount of salary in employment contracts in the amount of the minimum monthly salary provided for by law, for the purpose of avoiding tax and other state payments prescribed by legislation, about which the employee often does not have any information due to not having the opportunity to familiarize himself or herself with the contract, are often. Another problem is when a person is employed performing work required by the employer, corresponding to his or her profession, but due to not concluding an employment contract or due to the fact that referral tasks that differ from the actual work performed are prescribed in the contract concluded for another position (staff position unit) instead of the work actually performed, he or she is further unable to justify that he or she has performed professional work, and does not receive both the increments and other social guarantees provided for by law. For example, a person, by actually performing professional work which is at the same time provided for by the legislation of the Republic of Armenia in the list of particularly difficult, particularly harmful jobs, professions and positions, is registered by the employer for another position (staff position) in the relevant company, in order to not pay the supplements provided for by law, not provide other social guarantees envisaged for the mentioned jobs, and later the person having performed the mentioned work is deprived of both the opportunity to calculate the professional work performed by him or her in the professional work record and the supplements available to him or her and other social guarantees provided for by the state. In the public sector, we often come across cases when the employee is provided with the individual legal act on employment, but the job description is not provided attached to the order, as a result of which the state servant carries out the instructions issued by his or her direct superior, without having a clear idea of his or her main work duties.

The above-stated problems are especially common in marzes and small communities, but similar problems are regularly revealed during inspections in the city of Yerevan as well. Among the affected groups, we can single out persons who are socially disadvantaged, have a low level of legal consciousness, have no opportunity to be employed in a job other than the proposed conditions, and who hold low level positions (staff position units) in the public sector. The absence of an electronic system for record-registration of employment contracts enables employers to demonstrate a bad faith approach to employees by not providing the terms of the contract and distorting them, deprives employees of effective remedies for the protection of their rights, and the inspection body — of an effective toolkit for supervision. Effective inspection supervision in the field of labor — of which the electronic system for record-registration of employment contracts will become an integral part and a supervision toolkit — will create an opportunity to minimize similar cases.

2. What are the causes of the problem?

Employers have considered the mandatory existence of an employment contract or its provision to employees as unimportant. Besides, even if an

employment contract is concluded, the next problem is its content or the reflection of the minimum conditions prescribed by the labor legislation of the Republic of Armenia (for example, the year, month, day of starting work, the validity period of the employment contract, the type (minimum, additional, extended) and duration of annual leave, remuneration, etc.). According to the current legislation, the employment contract clearly provides for the job functions, the amount of the basic salary and/or the manner of determining it, the supplements, increments, additional payments given to employees in the manner prescribed, the duration of the work time and the rest time, etc., but in practice the employees are actually required to perform functions not provided for by the employment contract for an amount other than the amount of salary specified in the contract, the supplements, increments, additional payments are not provided, the duration of the work time and rest time is not observed, etc. At the same time, the employment contract is not provided to the employees in order not to register their work activities with the tax authority (illegal work) or to register an amount of salary less than that actually provided, as well as in order to avoid applications-complaints addressed by the employee to the employer or the inspection body in case of violation of the terms of the contracts.

Moreover, often employers conclude contracts on service provision with employees instead of employment contracts for the purpose of circumventing the basic principles and guarantees of the labor legislation.

These problems became more apparent during the pandemic (Covid-19) and the war. Unregulated labor law and relations led to the lack of protection of employee's rights, and the lack of sufficient toolkit for the inspection body to conduct regulation and supervision.

Commitment Description

1. What has been done so far to solve the problem?

As a result of the changes made within the framework of inspection reforms, starting from September 2013, the authorized body exercising state supervision over labor legislation was — according to the regulations in force until July 2020 — vested with powers to exercise supervision only over the relations pertaining to the health care and safety of employees and supervision over ensuring the guarantees prescribed by the labor legislation for persons under the age of 18, as well as pregnant and breast-feeding women and employees taking care of a child.

Since July 1, 2021, the Health and Labor Inspection Body has been vested with the power to exercise full-scale supervision over labor legislation.

At the same time, until July 1, 2021 (before the entry into force of the above-mentioned legislative amendments), when a state of emergency and then quarantine was declared in the Republic of Armenia due to the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020, for the purpose of preventing violations of employees' rights to the extent possible in the current situation, amendments were made to the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia and the Administrative Offences Code of the Republic of Armenia.

The law enforcement practice shows that, very often, the procedure for concluding employment contracts is violated by employers due to the lack of knowledge of the labor legislation. The Health and Labor Inspection Body continuously holds labor law awareness raising events, which, however, do not yield satisfactory results.

2. What solution are you proposing?

For the purpose of improving and increasing the effectiveness of the toolkit for state supervision over labor legislation, it is recommended to introduce an electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts, which will contribute to the conclusion of employment contracts by employers in the manner prescribed by legislation, not artificially transferring activities presuming labor relations to the civil law field, and registering work activities in the tax field in the manner prescribed by legislation — the concluded employment contracts will be available at any time in a simultaneous mode. The procedure for concluding employment contracts is violated by employers due to the lack of knowledge of labor legislation, and it is envisaged to provide sample forms of employment contracts (individual legal acts on employment) in the electronic system (platform) for solving the problem. Statistic data on

the main (frequently) repeated violations revealed by the inspection body during the supervision and the cases of restoration of the rights of stakeholders through relevant administrative enforcement measures, and statistic data on the risk level of employers will be published on the platform, as well as employees will be given the opportunity to publish (make public) their employment contracts containing personal data on the same platform, as needed and desired.

The introduction of the electronic system for record-registration of employment contracts implies itself the definition of relevant legal regulations in accordance with law. In particular, the law (Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia) will define the duty of employers to enter the contracts or individual legal acts (with the relevant job description) into the platform after recruiting but no later than before the end of the day preceding the day of actually starting the work by the given employee, and in case of actually starting the work on the day of being employed — by 14:00 of the day of being recruited, and in case of contracts concluded via the platform — at the moment of signing thereof. For violating the mentioned duty, the law (Administrative Offences Code of the Republic of Armenia) will provide for imposition of an administrative penalty, as well as power to issue instructions (executive orders) to the economic entity (the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On inspections"). Moreover, in case of failure to exercise the mentioned duty, the inspection body will have the competence to initiate administrative proceedings based on both the complaints filed by employees and the cases revealed by it during the supervision exercised thereby or based on the information received during the work activities, by applying relevant enforcement measures against the economic entities. Integration of the system of employment contracts to the <https://e-citizen.am/> platform. With this action, citizens can find their employment contracts along with data regarding their passport, registration, driver's license, movable property, family status, Compulsory Enforcement Service, notary, education and other data, as well as be informed about which bodies have made requests for those data.

3. What results do we want to achieve by implementing this commitment?

As a result of the introduction of the electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts, the inspection body will have the opportunity to ensure proper supervision with more optimal resources, the transparency of the labor market will be improved, the role of human factor and the risk of corruption in the process of supervision over employment rights will be reduced, it will provide an opportunity to exercise state supervision without visiting economic entities, reveal cases of violation of employment rights through monitoring (for example, where a person is employed in such a profession (miner, builder, food industry employee, etc.) for which it is mandatory for the employer to ensure preliminary and periodic medical examination, the system notifies the inspection body about this, in respect of which (availability of necessary documents, validity periods, etc.) control is established), exercise effective state supervision based on applications/complaints received regarding cases of violation of the labor law.

The system will contribute to the accountability of employer-employee relations and the improvement and modernization of the system for protection of the rights of employees; the employee will receive his or her copy of the employment contract already digitally via the system (platform), and the employer will not be able to change it or refuse to perform it during the state supervision.

At the same time, as already mentioned above, it is envisaged to post sample forms of employment contracts (individual legal act on employment) in the electronic system (platform) in accordance with the requirements of the labor legislation. The existence of the mentioned sample forms will give employees the opportunity to be informed about in what parts the employment contracts concluded with them (individual legal acts on their employment) do not meet the requirements of legislation. Within the framework of the introduction of the electronic system (platform) for conclusion and record-registration of employment contracts, it is necessary to also provide for solutions for cases when labor relations arise upon an individual legal act on employment.

Commitment Analysis

Questions	Answer
1. How will the commitment promote transparency?	<p>On the one hand, as a result of ensuring access for each employee to data related thereto in the electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts, employees will be provided with the opportunity and right to track their work activities and dispose of the necessary information, as well as the possibility of its realization, in particular, to submit an application-complaint to the employer or inspection body, and on the other hand, the transparency of state supervision over the labor market and the fulfillment of the requirements of the labor legislation will be ensured, by way of reducing the human factor and corruption risks.</p>
2. How will the commitment help foster accountability?	<p>As a result of the introduction of the electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts, the relevant inspection body exercising supervision and other public agencies with access to the platform will have clear data on the content of employment contracts (individual legal acts on employment) concluded in the labor market, the new toolkit will contribute to the increase of accountability, including the growth of both the content and result data of annual or quarterly reports of the authorized inspection body of the sector in the field of supervision over the fulfillment of the requirements of the labor legislation, which may be made subject of public supervision at any time, which, in its turn, will provide an opportunity to evaluate the activities of the Government of the Republic of Armenia in this field. At the same time, the option to provide an opportunity to each employee to have an access to the data related thereto in the system will contribute to increasing the level of accountability of employee-employer relations.</p> <p>Upon having access to the information related thereto, as well as to the standard forms of employment contracts (individual legal acts on employment) drawn up based on the requirements of the labor legislation, posted in the system, workers will also be able to independently enter into negotiations with employers to discuss the requirements of their employment contracts.</p>
3. How will the commitment improve citizen participation in defining, implementing, and monitoring solutions?	<p>A citizen will have the opportunity to report violations of employment rights and other issues by alerting the inspectorate thereon. Supervision by citizens will contribute to the regulation of labor relations, in particular, by alerting about material violations, about the failure by employers to properly fulfill the obligations, and increasing the protection of social guarantees.</p>

Commitment Planning

Milestones	Expected outputs	Expected Completion Date	Stakeholders		
Action 1. Implementation of legislative initiative	Elaboration of the draft Law of the Republic of Armenia "On making supplements to the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia", circulation and submission thereof to the Government for approval as prescribed	4 th quarter of 2022	Lead: HLIB		
			<u>Supporting Stakeholders</u>		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau for Co-ordination of Activities of Inspection Bodies of the Office of the Prime Minister Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of High-Tech Industry National Security Service "EKENG" CJSC	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Union of Employers of ICT Other NGOs and organizations	Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs of the National Assembly Social partners of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, Republican Union of Employers of Armenia), NGOs, private sector
Action 2. Establishment of a working group for the introduction of an electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts	Coordination of activities of introducing the electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts by the working group	4 th quarter of 2022	Lead: HLIB		
			<u>Supporting Stakeholders</u>		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau for Co-ordination of Activities of Inspection Bodies of the Office of the Prime Minister Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of High-Tech Industry	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Union of Employers of ICT Other NGOs and organizations	Standing Committee on Labor and Social Affairs of the National Assembly Social partners of the Government of the Republic of Armenia (Confederation of Trade Unions of Armenia, Republican Union of Employers of Armenia), NGOs, private sector

			National Security Service "EKENG" CJSC		
Action 3. Implementation of works for the creation of the electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts and technical works	Development of an electronic system: with combination of the https://e-citizen.am/ and taxservice.am platforms	1 st quarter of 2023	Lead: HLIB		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of High-Tech Industry National Security Service "EKENG" CJSC	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Union of Employers of ICT Other NGOs and organizations	
Action 4. Introduction of an electronic system (platform) for record-registration of employment contracts in the state system	Digitization of employment contracts and individual legal acts on employment in effect in the state system, July 2023	2 nd quarter of 2023	Lead: HLIB		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other
			Bureau for Co-ordination of Activities of Inspection Bodies of the Office of the Prime Minister Office of Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of High-Tech Industry National Security Service "EKENG" CJSC	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Union of Employers of ICT Other NGOs and organizations	
Action 5. Introduction of an electronic system (platform) for	Digitization of employment contracts and individual legal acts on employment in effect	2 nd quarter of 2024	Lead: HLIB		
			Supporting Stakeholders		
			Government	CSOs	Other

record-registration of employment contracts in the non-state system	in the non-state system		Bureau for Co-ordination of Activities of Inspection Bodies of the Office of the Prime Minister Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of High-Tech Industry National Security Service	"Armavir Development Center" NGO Union of Employers of ICT Other NGOs and organizations	
Relation of the Commitment to strategic documents and other international processes	Public Administration Reform Strategy	The 2021-2026 Program of the Government of the Republic of Armenia: Subsection 4.6 "Labor and social protection" of the Section "Development of human capital"	Armenia Digitalization Strategy for 2021-2025	OECD recommendation to improve access to information and public communication in the Republic of Armenia	Sustainable Development Goal 1 No poverty: End poverty in all its forms and manifestations everywhere: targets 1.3 and 1.4 Sustainable Development Goal 8 Decent work and economic growth: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions: Promote building fair, peaceful and inclusive societies.

CHIEF OF STAFF
TO THE PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

A. HARUTYUNYAN

7 October, 2022 CERTIFIED BY

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE