

INTERIM ALTERNATIVE MONITORING
REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM (PAR)
ACTION PLAN FOR 2019 2020

**DIRECTION 3:
ACCOUNTABILITY**

First Half of 2020



2020

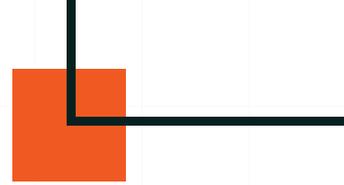


ევროკავშირი
საქართველოსთვის
The European Union for Georgia



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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM (PAR)
ACTION PLAN FOR 2019-2020

DIRECTION 3: ACCOUNTABILITY



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MAIN FINDINGS OF THE MONITORING

Main Findings of the Monitoring

In some cases, indicators and targets defined for the confirmation of the implementation of the objectives under the Accountability direction of the PAR Action Plan for 2019 – 2020 undermine the significance of objectives and/or make it impossible to measure their implementation.

Although the PAR Action Plan for 2019-2020 has been significantly improved in comparison to the previous plan, the challenges revealed through monitoring of the Accountability direction show that current objectives and indicators still require refinement according to the S.M.A.R.T. criteria. In addition, defining more activities and setting realistic deadlines for their implementation is necessary in order to achieve the objectives.

The two-year Action Plan of the Public Administration Reform, outlines an activity for the first six months of 2020 only for one out of five objectives set out under the Accountability direction. Such an approach unacceptably delays the process of achieving objectives.

For the majority of the objectives the data could not be obtained for the interim monitoring purposes, since most of the activities required for their implementation are planned for the end of 2020.

For the first six months of 2020, two out of the five objectives under the Accountability direction set out in the Action Plan are partly implemented and three are unimplemented. Out of six outcome indicators (including additional indicator), one is fully implemented and five are not.

As for the activities, only one activity was outlined for the first six months of 2020, which is unimplemented. Out of two output indicators, one is partly implemented and one is unimplemented.



INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The Government of Georgia recognized the importance of Public Administration Reform along with signing the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union. The Agreement emphasizes commitment to good governance, including cooperation in the directions of public administration and public service reforms. According to the Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union, the country has to implement in-depth reforms in the direction of public administration and public service.¹ In order to comply with the mentioned commitment, the Government of Georgia approved the Public Administration Reform Roadmap 2020 in 2015. The Document is meant to create a comprehensive conceptual framework and mechanisms “aimed at transparent, predictable, accountable and effective public governance, meeting European standards and satisfying public needs”.²

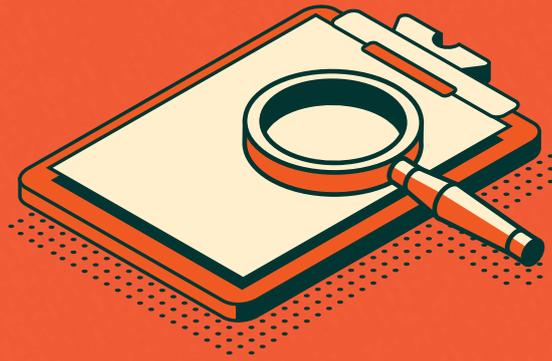
In order to implement the Public Administration Reform, the Government of Georgia, once in every two years approves the Public Administration Reform Action Plan. The most recent **Action Plan for 2019-2020** approved by the Government of Georgia in June 2019 aims at the implementation of goals defined by the Public Administration Reform Roadmap 2020.

The Public Administration Reform Roadmap and the Action Plan feature six directions: policy planning and coordination, public service and human resource management, accountability, public service delivery, public finance management and local self-governance. This document addresses the third direction of the Action Plan – the accountability direction and the implementation of the activities and objectives envisaged by the Action Plan for this direction for the first six months of 2020.

Monitoring the implementation of policy documents, identifying gaps and challenges and setting measures for responding to these challenges are crucial for the successful implementation of any policy. It is noteworthy that unlike previous years the Administration of the Government has started monitoring the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan and has made monitoring results public for the first time in 2019. This document represents an alternative monitoring report and may not be in full compliance with the monitoring results published by the Administration of the Government.

¹ **Association Agreement** between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States, of the one part, and Georgia, of the other part (“Association Agreement between Georgia and the European Union”), Article 4.

² Public Administration Reform **Roadmap** of Georgia 2020, p.6.



METHODOLOGY

Methodology

The subject of the monitoring was the progress of the implementation of the objectives and activities envisaged by the Public Administration Reform Action Plan for 2019-2020 as of the first six months of 2020.

The implementation of the objectives and the activities defined by the Action Plan are described by one of the following four statuses:

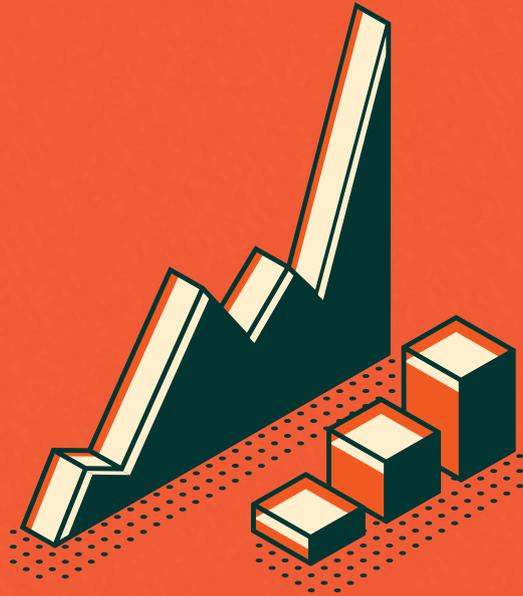
01 Fully implemented – an activity/objective is fully or almost fully implemented or only a minor part of it has not been completed;

02 Mostly implemented – a major part of an activity/objective was implemented, while part of it has not been completed;

03 Partly implemented – a part of an objective/activity was implemented while a major part remains incomplete;

04 Unimplemented – an objective/activity was not implemented at all or a minor part is implemented and it is impossible to observe progress.

The monitoring was based on public information – the primary source of information when conducting the monitoring was the Administration of the Government of Georgia and responsible agencies defined by the Public Administration Reform Action Plan. Therefore, at the beginning of the monitoring process, the information about the implementation of each objective and activity was requested from the Government Administration of Georgia. The draft monitoring report was submitted to responsible agencies for comments and their position, to the possible extent, was considered in the final version of the document.



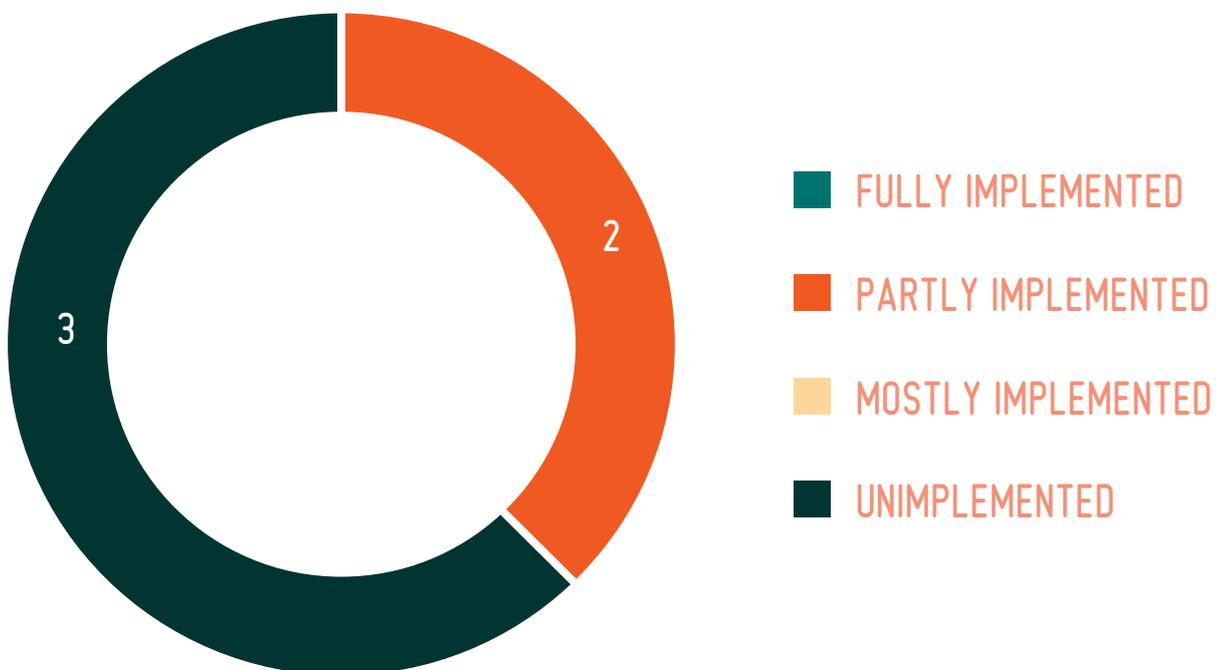
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Implementation of the Objectives and Activities

Accountability is the third direction of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan and it includes five objectives. Implementation of each objective is assessed based on outcome indicators defined for them by the Action Plan. For the cases where the indicator does not comply with the S.M.A.R.T. criteria,³ making it impossible to assess the implementation of the objective, additional indicators are defined. The Public Administration Reform Action Plan does not provide for interim indicators. Herewith, most of the activities required to achieve the vast majority of objectives are scheduled for the end of 2020, making interim monitoring even more difficult. Finally, the objectives for which no information on the implementation was provided by the responsible agency, which despite the shortcomings of the action plan would confirm the progress of the objective implementation, were considered unimplemented.

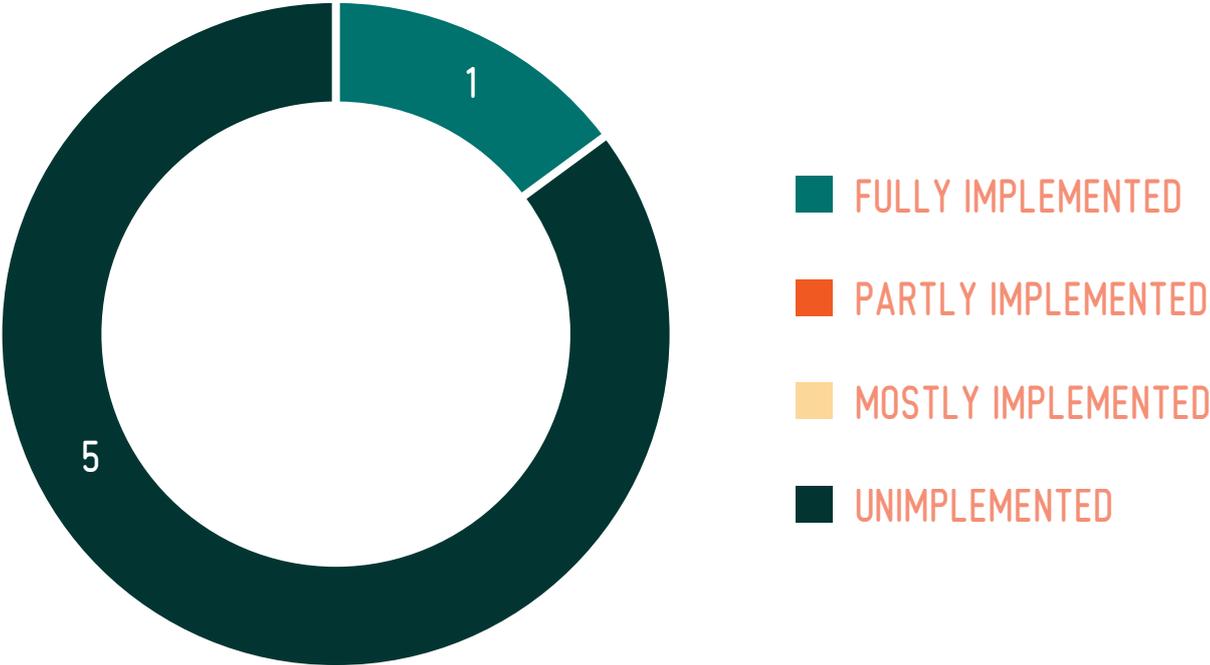
Out of the five objectives envisaged in the third direction, as of the first six months of 2020, two are partly implemented and three are unimplemented. Out of the six outcome indicators defined for the objectives, one is fully implemented and five – are not.

Objective Implementation Results



³S.M.A.R.T.: S - specific, significant, stretching; M - measurable, meaningful, motivational; A - agreed upon, attainable, achievable, acceptable, action-oriented; R - realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented; T - time-based, time-bound, timely, tangible, trackable. Information available at: <https://www.projects-smart.co.uk/smart-goals.php>.

Outcome Indicators



One activity outlined for the first six months of 2020 in the accountability direction is unimplemented. Out of the two output indicators, one is partly implemented and one - unimplemented.

Implementation of the Objective 3.1.

Objective 3.1. of the PAR Action Plan implies suggestion of institutional set up to the Legal Entities of Public Law covered by the Law of Georgia on Civil Service in order to strengthen the principles of economy, effectiveness and efficiency. The outcome indicator is the share of the Legal Entities of Public Law covered by the Law on Civil Service that have implemented recommendations issued by the Civil Service Bureau (“the Bureau”) on institutional set-up of the LEPLs.

Objective 3.1. Suggest institutional set-up to the LEPLs covered by the CSL in order to strengthen the principles of economy, effectiveness and efficiency

Outcome indicator(s): Share of LEPLs covered by the CSL that have implemented recommendations issued by the Civil Service Bureau on institutional set-up of the LEPLs

Baseline 2018: 0%

Target 2020: 10%

Objective implementation status: unimplemented

Civil Service Bureau did not provide updated information on the implementation of the objective for the first six months of 2020. According to information provided by the Bureau in the framework of the 2019 alternative monitoring report on the implementation of the PAR Action Plan for 2019-2020, development of recommendations on institutional set-up of LEPLs considered as public services was planned in the fourth quarter of 2020 after adoption of draft amendment to the Law of Georgia on “Legal Entity of Public Law”. According to the position of the responsible agency, which derives from the PAR Action Plan, the indicator envisages measuring the implementation of the Bureau's recommendations after the draft law enters into force.

Even though the PAR Action Plan sets 2020 as a target for implementing the objective and does not define mid-term target, specific actions should still have been taken within 1.5 year for the implementation of the objective defined by the two-year Action Plan. According to the 2019 Alternative Monitoring Report, none of the two activities planned for the objective were implemented, and the activity is not envisaged at all for the first half of 2020. It should also be noted that in order to successfully implement an objective envisaged by the Action Plan the responsible agency can define interim target indicators on its own in case the specific sectoral Action Plan does not provide for such. Since at this stage the indicator for the implementation of recommendations of the Bureau by the Legal Entities of Public Law cannot be tracked, as such recommendations have not been elaborated, **the objective should be considered unimplemented.**

Implementation of the Objective 3.2.

Objective 3.2. of the PAR Action Plan implies improvement of access to open data. The outcome indicator is the number of open data published on the data.gov.ge.

Objective 3.2. Improve access to open data by strengthening existing mechanisms

Outcome indicator(s): Number of open data published on the Data.gov.ge

Baseline 2018: 3

Target 2020: 30

Additional outcome indicator: Number of public institutions publishing open data on data.gov.ge

Baseline 2018: 30

Target 2020: 50

Objective implementation status: partly implemented

Although the implementation of objective 3.2., similarly to objective 3.1. is planned for the end of 2020 according to the Action Plan, LEPL Digital Governance Agency presented interim data, based on which 719 open data entries were placed on the open data portal and the number of public institutions publishing open data was 30 as of the first half of 2020.

The number of data published on the open portal already exceeds the final target set for 2020, indicating that, according to the indicator defined by the Action Plan, the objective has been fully implemented. However, the mentioned indicator does not comply with the S.M.A.R.T. criteria, it is not sufficiently important and cannot measure the implementation of the objective as it only aims for the publication of 27 data entries on <http://data.gov.ge> within the two-year period. Although the interim data already exceeds by 24 times the target indicator defined by the Action Plan, the amount of the open data presented on the portal is quite small. Almost twice as much data entries (up to 1262) are posted on the portal created by the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI) - <https://datalab.ge> - compared to the portal created by the Government.

Therefore, for the purposes of the monitoring, the number of public agencies publishing data on <https://data.gov.ge> has been defined as additional indicator for objective 3.2. According to LEPL Digital Governance Agency the number of public institutions publishing open data is 30 as of the first half of 2020. This indicates that the baseline in this regard has not improved in a year and a half, since 30 agencies had posted open data on <https://data.gov.ge> as of 2018 as well. Thus, this indicator is unimplemented. Considering the abovementioned the **Objective 3.2. should be considered partly implemented.**

Implementation of the Objective 3.3.

Objective 3.3. of the PAR Action Plan implies introduction of electronic monitoring tool on recommendations issued by the State Audit Office in order to improve the feedback mechanism. The Outcome indicator is the percentage of the recommendations issued by the State Audit Office with a “No Response” status.

Objective 3.3. Implement electronic monitoring tool on recommendations issued by the State Audit Office in order to improve the feedback mechanism

Outcome indicator(s): Share of the State Audit Office recommendations with a "No Response" status

Baseline 2018: 12%

Target 2020: 8%

Objective implementation status: partly implemented

The State Audit Office did not provide information regarding implementation of the objective as of the first six months of 2020. According to the information provided by the State Audit Office in the framework of the 2019 alternative monitoring report on the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan for 2019-2020, the development of electronic monitoring system for the implementation of recommendations was complete and was being tested. The percentage of the State Audit Office recommendations with a "No Response" status will be measured by the end of 2020.

Regardless of the position of the agency, the implementation of the recommendations by the State Audit is monitored independently of the electronic platform. Accordingly, the Audit Office may provide interim information on recommendations left without response. However, according to the agency, the purpose of the indicator is to measure the benefits of implementing an electronic system right after the system is introduced. In addition, despite the fact that the action plan did not specify activities in the first half of 2020, the agency began to implement the activities planned for the fourth quarter of 2020. In particular, the State Audit Office in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice has launched introduction of a pilot monitoring system for the implementation of recommendations. At the same time, the process of functional updating of the Budget Monitor platform is underway, as a result of which information about the status of implementation of the recommendations issued by the State Audit Office will be added to the platform. Considering the fact that the Action Plan does not outline the interim target and the agency made significant steps to implement the objective and to meet its indicators, **objective 3.3. can be considered partly implemented.**

Implementation of the Objective 3.4.

Objective 3.4. of the PAR Action Plan implies awareness raising of civil servants of central government bodies on the Open Government agenda in order to enhance implementation of the Open Government policy principles. The outcome indicator is the share of civil servants of central government bodies representing policy planning and analysis units, who claim that they are familiar with the OGP Georgia Action Plan and participate in the elaboration process of open government policy for 2020-2022.

Objective 3.4. Raise awareness of civil servants of central government bodies on the Open Government agenda in order to enhance implementation of the Open Government policy principles

Outcome indicator(s): Share of civil servants of central government bodies representing policy planning and analysis units, who claim that they are familiar with the OGP Georgia Action Plan and participate in the elaboration process of open government policy for 2020-2022

Baseline 2018: 0

Target 2020: 51%

Objective implementation status: unimplemented

The Administration of the Government of Georgia did not provide information regarding implementation of the objective as of the first six months of 2020. According to the information provided by the Government Administration in the framework of the 2019 alternative monitoring report on the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan for 2019-2020, the indicator of objective 3.4. will be measured after the approval and implementation of OGP strategy, since the latter should be followed by the outcome defined by the indicator. According to the same information, matters related to communication shall be almost fully implemented by 2020.

Basic outcome indicator for objective 3.4. of the Action Plan was defined as zero in 2018. It is necessary to carry out specific actions for increasing this figure and this, according to the information provided by the Administration of the Government, is almost fully planned for the second half of 2020. Considering the abovementioned, some steps should already have been taken during the first six months of 2020 to implement the objective, information on which was not provided. One activity outlined for the objective during the reporting period is only partly implemented. Consequently, at this stage **objective 3.4. should be considered unimplemented.**

Implementation of the Activity of Objective 3.4.

Objective 3.4. of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan includes three activities. Only one activity (3.4.2.) out of them is outlined for the reporting period for which two indicators are defined. According to the indicators, the activity is not implemented.

Activity 3.4.2.

Activity 3.4.2. of the PAR Action Plan implied engagement of a wide public and all ministries in the Open Government policy elaboration process by the Government Administration in the second quarter of 2020. According to the output indicators envisaged by the Action Plan the activity is unimplemented.

Activity 3.4.2. Ensure engagement of a wide public and all ministries in the Open Government policy elaboration process

Output indicator(s):

- 3.4.2.1. Consultations are carried out with the representatives of policy planning and analysis units of the line Ministries, as well as with other units, if necessary, during elaboration of the OGP Georgia's Action Plan 2020-2022
- 3.4.2.2. Public consultations are held during the elaboration of the OGP Georgia Action Plan 2020-2022 in at least 7 regions of Georgia

Activity implementation status: unimplemented

According to the information provided by the Government Administration, the activity was delayed due to the situation created as a result of the new coronavirus pandemic. According to the information provided, no consultation meetings were held during the reporting period and the necessary preparatory work for online consultation meetings is underway. As for the second indicator, according to the Government Administration, its implementation depends on the development of a draft OGP Georgia Action Plan for 2020-2021. At this stage, initiatives submitted by local and international organizations and public agencies are being discussed. Once the draft action plan has been developed arrangement of public consultations online will be discussed with the forum.

According to the submitted information, preparatory works are underway for consultative meetings in the ministries, which allows us to consider the indicator partly completed. The second indicator is unimplemented at this stage, as work on planning public consultations has not yet begun. Thus **activity 3.4.2. should be considered unimplemented.**

Implementation of the Objective 3.5.

Objective 3.5. of the PAR Action Plan implies improving existing legislation on access to information and ensuring its consistent use in practice. The outcome indicator for this objective has been defined as the percentage of refusals to provide public information within their competence by the public agencies (central offices of Ministries and LEPLs).

Objective 3.5. Improve existing legislation on the access to information in order to enhance openness, transparency and accountability of the public institutions and ensure its consistent application in practice

Outcome indicator(s): Percentage of decisions to refuse to disclose public information by public institutions (ministries and LEPLs) within their competence

Baseline 2018: 15%

Target 2020: 10%

Objective implementation status: unimplemented

The Administration of the Government of Georgia did not provide information regarding implementation of the objective as of the first six months of 2020. According to the information provided by the Government Administration in the framework of the 2019 alternative monitoring report on the implementation of the Public Administration Reform Action Plan for 2019-2020, the implementation of the objective 3.5. depends on measuring results caused by the adoption of Public Information Act. The mentioned law has not yet been adopted. Therefore, according to the opinion of the agency it is not feasible to measure the implementation of the objective based on given indicator.

Similar to objective 3.4. of the Action Plan, in this case it is also necessary to implement specific measures in order to improve baseline and this, according to the information provided by the Administration of the Government will happen after the Adoption of the new law. Accordingly, an increase in the baseline in the first six months of 2020 is unlikely and at this stage **objective 3.5. should be considered unimplemented.**



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion and Recommendations

In some cases, indicators and targets defined for the confirmation of the implementation of the objectives under the Accountability direction of the PAR Action Plan for 2019 – 2020 undermine the significance of objectives and/or make it impossible to measure their implementation.

Although the PAR Action Plan for 2019-2020 has been significantly improved in comparison to the previous plan, the challenges revealed through monitoring of the Accountability direction show that current objectives and indicators still require refinement according to the S.M.A.R.T. criteria. In addition, defining more activities and setting realistic deadlines for their implementation is necessary in order to achieve the objectives.

For the majority of the objectives envisaged by the Action Plan for the Accountability direction, interim monitoring was impossible, due to lack of relevant data, as the Action Plan does not actually provide interim targets.

In order to eliminate the aforementioned gaps and challenges, the following recommendations need to be considered:

01

Include S.M.A.R.T. objectives and indicators in the Accountability direction of the Action Plan;

02

Define targets and indicators necessary for the actual implementation of objectives under the Accountability direction;

03

Envisage activities necessary for the implementation of objectives under the Accountability direction and set deadlines correctly for their implementation;

04

Define interim indicators along with baseline and target indicators, in order to simplify monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan.



20 T. SHEVCHENKO STR., 0180, TBILISI



(+ 995) 32 292 15 14



WWW.IDFI.GE



info@idfi.ge