

Support to the Republic of Armenia in strengthening institutional and civil society capacity in the fight against corruption

Project title	Support to the Republic of Armenia in strengthening institutional and civil society capacity in the fight against corruption
Country	Armenia. The project will be implemented in Yerevan and will have impact in all regions of the country
Project Purpose	Support to the Government of Armenia in implementation of the 2015-2018 Anticorruption Strategy and build capacity of independent Ethics Commission for High Ranking Officials in promoting anti-corruption reforms implementation to result in reduction in the level and impact of corruption according to public perception.
Direct beneficiaries	Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration Academy
Indirect beneficiaries	Public at large
Duration	1 year (May 2017- end of March 2018)
Background	<p>The current political leadership in Armenia has regularly expressed its readiness to fight corruption, including in public statements, various programmes, strategic documents and through carrying out some legal reforms. The fight against corruption is a priority for the Republic of Armenia and a central element in ensuring sustainable growth, building society and a democratic political system. The Government of Armenia has developed strategies and action plans for the fight against corruption and established a number of institutions to control corruption, but these have not yet been translated into effective actions to reduce corruption. Different international organisations continue to support Armenia in tackling corruption and the implementation of anti-corruption reforms.</p> <p>The perception of corruption remains high in Armenia. Proper and effective implementation of policies and laws remains a major challenge. The main problem underpinning the issue has been the ineffectiveness of the relevant institutions to implement practical steps to improve the situation. More specifically, follow up, verification and transparency arrangements for income declarations submitted by high-ranking officials have been very weak, due to the lack of relevant well-functioning mechanisms, absence of the overall checks and balances in the system and limited capacity, mandate and independence of the relevant institutions. The legislative package has been drafted to create an independent preventive anti-corruption authority based on the terms of reference of the State Commission for the Ethics of High-Ranking Officials.</p> <p>The overall goal of the project is to increase the role of Armenia's government and build capacity of an independent anti-corruption authority, the Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials, in terms of prevention, identification and follow-up of corruption cases, and to enhance the influence of civil society in the fight against corruption by increasing their capacities to engage in anticorruption activities, by developing cross-sector partnerships for promoting government transparency, and by promoting policy reforms.</p>
Illustrative activities /	The proposed activities should be developed in response to the request:

<p>interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support with the development and promotion of legal and regulatory framework in the area of anti-corruption; • Detailed research on international best practice and the development of concept papers which set out the policy options; • Training needs assessment for the Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials to enable effective prevention, identification and follow up of cases of corruption, breach of ethics, illicit enrichment and conflict of interest; • Support with capacity building for the staff of Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials, including development and implementation of capacity building strategy and plan; • Visit to UK institutions networking events for selected members of the Commission, CSOs representatives, media, academia; • Training, awareness raising, mentoring and networking with the relevant UK institutions for CSOs, media and students in the area of anti-corruption covering ethics, illicit enrichment, conflict of interest, whistle blowers protection system, arrangements for public oversight and accountability of public officials; • Review and development of curricula, training modules and tools of the Public Administration Academy and selected higher educational institutions; training of faculty; • Extensive consultations with CSOs, providing them with examples of best practice and developing coalitions around agreed policy issues; • Training of media and specialized CSOs on the tools and mechanisms for monitoring of the implementation of anti-corruption strategy and action plan; • Provision of information on monitoring and evaluation arrangements in UK in implementing specific policies, strategies and plans.
<p>Project Level Outcomes</p>	<p>In achieving the project goal, the following outputs should be delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced capacity and accountability of the transformed Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials in terms of prevention, identification and follow-up of corruption cases; • Concept papers and draft legislative packages, based on international best practice, developed and agreed with government stakeholders; • Government commitment to significant reforms in the justice and business sectors, with clear policies outlined in concept papers and roadmaps; • Enhanced capacity of civil society to implement effective oversight of public officials' activities and hold them to account for unethical/corrupt behaviour; • Enhanced arrangements for monitoring the implementation of the anti-corruption strategy; • Improved understanding in the government institutions and relevant CSOs and organizations of UK mechanisms for participatory decision making to support enhanced public and private sector dialogue in governance;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced legislative and regulatory framework to support an effective implementation of anti-corruption strategy; • Enhanced awareness of the non-state actors (businesses, CSOs, media, activists, students) on the new public procurement law and secondary legislation and their practical implications; • A stronger, more informed and more united civil society in the justice and anti-corruption sectors; • Monitoring reports concerning current practice and the implementation of reforms in the relevant priority issue areas.
<p>Illustrative indicators to measure success</p>	<p>Progress toward the project should be measured by the following illustrative indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission on Ethics of High Ranking Officials has a mandate and skills to initiate investigations in matters relating to breach of ethics, conflict of interest and illicit enrichment; • An updated code of ethics for public officials reflecting the principles of good practice has been adopted; • Secondary legislation meeting good practice principles and standards developed • Declarations submitted by public officials are available online and include information on business ownership, connected persons and other data that enable the public to carry out effective scrutiny and oversight of the activities of high ranking public officials; • Number of cases of corruption identified and transmitted to the prosecution authorities that have been upheld; • Cases where the public has played a crucial role in the identification, prevention and follow-up on corruption risks and corrupt practices; • Public perception of Commission’s role and activities (verified through relevant surveys); • Public perception of effectiveness of public and private sector dialogue in governance (including the views of specialized NGOs, business associations); • Public perception of the effectiveness of participatory monitoring in the area of public procurement (including the views of specialized NGOs, business associations); • A monitoring and evaluation mechanism in place. <p>Project will measure behaviour change at four important junctures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the immediate reaction to the capacity-building activity; • learning gained as a result of the project interventions; • transfer of new knowledge, skills, and abilities and their use in the workplace; and • impact or results demonstrated and performance directly attributable to project assistance.
<p>Project Budget</p>	<p>Up to £ 150,000 aimed to complete 85% of annual funding allocation by the end of November 2017.</p>