

## Annex B. USAID National Governance Program Overview with Results

**The USAID National Governance Program** (hereafter referred to as the Program), is a five-year contract (2022-2027) to increase government accountability and responsiveness to citizens by enhancing the effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of executive institutions of the Government of Georgia (GOG), the effectiveness and independence of the Parliament of Georgia (Parliament) and other independent oversight institutions, and empowering citizens to hold the government accountable.

The Program is working in partnership with the GOG to deliver citizen-responsive governance based on greater accountability, transparency, and institutional independence. It will strengthen accountability systems, procedures, and mechanisms within both governing and independent oversight institutions and enhance their ability to serve and communicate effectively with the public. This includes strengthening the “demand-side” of citizen responsive governance, supporting localization efforts, and empowering Georgian civil society and the private sector to demand accountability of Governance institutions. To achieve this goal, the Program will:

- Increase effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of governing institutions.
- Increase effectiveness and independence of oversight institutions and
- Increase citizen demand for government accountability.

**Development Challenge:** A weak system of checks and balances, which leads to insufficient political accountability to citizen needs and undermines citizen trust in government. Through the program, USAID is seeking to address the following specific problem set:

- Parliamentary oversight and evidence-based, inclusive law-making processes, including meaningful engagement with parliamentary opposition in the fulfillment of parliamentary functions;
- The effectiveness of independent oversight institutions;
- The ability and accountability of governing institutions to effectively implement reforms;
- Gaps in anti-corruption mechanisms, including poor coordination, implementation of needed reforms, and lack of transparency and accountability of some key actors;
- A worsening trend in transparency and access to public information, further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Weak private sector and citizen engagement in policy planning and oversight;
- A lack of quality research and data on governance and poor data communication capacities.
- Insufficient cybersecurity capabilities and effective use of technology to enable digital transformation.
- Insufficient inclusion of women and marginalized groups in policymaking and

The Program is seeking to:

- Support key institutions both within the **executive** and **legislative** branches.
- Engage **civil society, academia**, and the **private sector** - seeking to incentivize private sector to address governance challenges, and strengthening academia and research institutions to improve research, data, communication about good governance and corruption.
- Consider the needs of both **female and male** citizens and seek to foster **greater inclusion** and access for marginalized voices through approaches.
- Strengthen **cybersecurity** capabilities of key institutions and maximize opportunities for **digital transformation**.
- Prioritize support for **anti-corruption** initiatives.
- Enhance partners' ability to **communicate** more effectively with the public.
- Emphasize the understanding and leveraging of **local systems** - where feasible, adopt collaborative problem-based approaches to help stakeholders identify, co-create, iterate, and adapt **local solutions**, through which we attempt to identify and celebrate **champions** of reform and examples of **positive deviance**.

- Maintain an **adaptive, flexible, and iterative** approach able to identify and respond to opportunities of political will in key institutions, in order allocate resources to areas that have greatest potential to deliver results.

The Program activities are seeking to contribute to the following results:

### **Governing Institutions**

- 1.1.** Improved **policy planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation** practices of governing institutions through availability and use of public engagement mechanisms.
- 1.2.** Improved **financial management** and **internal control** systems of state institutions.
- 1.3.** Improved **access to public information** including through improved proactive disclosure of public information; availability of open data; improved capacity to collect, track, analyze, and use public service delivery data; and availability of innovative digital tools.
- 1.4.** Improved management and operation of **civil service** in line with the principles of merit-based, professional and free-of-political-influence civil service.
- 1.5.** Improved institutional capacity across national government bodies to **mitigate cybersecurity risks** including through training a new cadre of professionals with a unified, cutting-edge curriculum and facilitating public-private partnerships to ensure growth and stability in the sector.

### **Oversight Institutions**

- 2.1.** Strengthened Oversight and law-making capacities of the **parliament** to ensure effective oversight of government performance and evidence-based and inclusive law-making processes.
- 2.2.** Strengthened capacity of the **State Audit Office** to conduct impartial and quality audits of government performance and spending, and improve data communication and engagement with key stakeholders, including parliament and citizens.
- 2.3.** Increased **independence** and **capacity** of key **oversight institutions** including the Public Defender's Office, Personal Data Protection Service, Civil Service Bureau, State Procurement Agency, and Dispute Resolution Council.
- 2.4.** Increased **public engagement** in law making and oversight processes through the establishment of new and/or strengthening of existing public engagement platforms.

### **Non-governmental**

- 3.1.** Increased public engagement through strengthened capacity of **civil society and private sector coalitions** to impact policy making and demand accountability.
- 3.2.** Enhanced availability and improved quality of **research and data** on governance related topics including corruption.
- 3.3.** Enhanced **monitoring of government performance**, as well as of anti-corruption system actors.
- 3.4.** Increased public awareness of and engagement in existing **open government and social accountability** mechanisms and partnerships.

### **Additional cross-cutting Results**

**GESIa:** Increase the participation of women and other vulnerable groups in government and citizen participation measures, and the participation of women (including from partner institutions) in project implementation.

**GESI b:** Support policies addressing gender inequalities and measure the impacts of governance reforms on women and other vulnerable groups.

**Digital Transformation:** Partners better conceptualize, plan, and deploy digital systems and tools that enhance public sector accountability and transparency, through increasing open data and developing digital skills.

**Anti-Corruption:** Reduce impact of high-level corruption by helping to close gaps in anti-corruption mechanisms, improving coordination, supporting implementation of needed reforms, and improving transparency and accountability of key actors.

**Communications:** Magnify the impact of activities and foster a multiplier effect by celebrating partner achievements, champions of reform, and examples of positive deviance.

### **Most Relevant Program's Objectives, Results & Expected Outcomes**

The Program's Objectives, Results, and Outcomes, **most relevant to this RFA** include:

- **Program Objective 3:** Increasing citizen demand for government accountability by undertaking activities to address the issue of low citizen trust and low public participation in policy making and government oversight processes.
  - **Program Result 3.2:** Enhanced availability and improved quality of research and data on governance related topics including corruption.
  - **Program Results 1.4;** Improved management and operation of civil service in line with the principles of merit-based, professional and free-of-political-influence civil service.

#### **Activity 3.2.01 Outcomes:**

- Academia enriches Public Administration curriculum with cross-cutting issues, such as digitalization, cybersecurity, and open data.
- Lay the foundation of partnership critical to expanding academic research,
- Contribute to ensuring that the next generation of civil servants are equipped with practical, cross-sectoral knowledge and experiences.

#### **Outputs:**

- Number of initiatives by non-government actors supported through GUCs aimed at improving government transparency and accountability; (Crosscutting indicator 4CR.2:)
- Number of online or offline Courses developed.
- Number of professional training courses or academic courses on cybersecurity delivered.
- Number of initiatives supported through local and international partnerships with private sector, academic institutions, or NGOs that improve evidence-based decision making or demand accountability facilitated with substantial support of the activity.

Applicants are encouraged to identify in their application ways that their approach and activities may also contribute to achieving one or more of the program and cross-cutting results included in the tables above, as these synergies may serve to strengthen its technical evaluation.