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Sida Decentralised Evaluation

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Evaluation of Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia

Sida support to the Civil Agency of Georgia 2010-2012

Final Report

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Registry Agency of Georgia
2010-2012

**Final Report
June 2012**

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The views and interpretations expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AID	see USAID below
CEC	Central Election Commission
CRA	Civil Registry Agency
DEA	Data Exchange Agency
EU	European Union
GEL	Georgian Lari (GEL 1 = SEK 4)
MA	Monitoring Advisor
MoFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MinFin	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
Mol	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MSI	Management Systems International
MTR	Mid Term Review
NAPR	National Agency of Public Registry
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PFM	Public Finance Management
PM	Project Manager
PD	Project Document
PSH	Public Service Hall
RAF	Results Assessment Framework
TI	Transparency International
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
Unicef	United Nations Children's Fund

Preface

The Embassy of Sweden in Georgia commissioned this evaluation of the project *Promoting Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia* to assess the project's progress and potential. The project is implemented directly by the Civil Registry Agency with funding from Sida.

Indevelop undertook the evaluation through Sida's Framework Agreement for Reviews, Evaluations and Advisory services on Results Frameworks. Indevelop provided active support in the planning and execution of the evaluation as well as quality assurance.

The evaluation was conducted by a team consisting of Krister Eduards (Team Leader), Tinatin Kbilashvili (national consultant) with methodology support from Bernt H. Andersson.

Executive Summary

As of 1 July, 2010, Sida supports the continued public sector reform in Georgia through the Project “Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia” within the Civil Registry Agency (CRA) under the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The Grant Agreement covers a total Sida contribution of SEK 23,500,000 in direct support to the Agency during the period 1 July 2010 to 31 December 2012. This Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Project has taken place in May 2012.

In 2005, the government of Georgia identified the development of an appropriate civil registration system in the country as one of its top priorities. A new Law "On State Registry" assigned the responsibility for all civil registration to the newly established Civil Registry Agency (CRA) under MoJ. The reform was intended to contribute to rationalising the registration of the entire collection of civil acts such as births, deaths, marriages, divorces, affiliations, etc., and to help in administering ID cards and passports. Since then, the Agency has taken on additional functions concerning Population Register, Civil Acts Registration and Identification Documentation.

Advancement so-far within CRA constitutes a major step in terms of institutional development for the state sector of Georgia. A new Institutional Strategic Plan 2012-14 is being finalised, comprising IT-related development work at the service of the whole public sector.

CRA has received considerable foreign support. The main foreign donor to CRA has been the USAID through UNDP. In 2009 UNDP together with CRA prepared a new project proposal, which the USAID was then not able to fund. The present Project is based on that proposal. USAID both endorsed the Project to Sida and recommended CRA for direct support. Another major CRA donor, the EU Commission, considers CRA one of the few agencies in the country that could be eligible for direct support. At the same time, the EU sees risks in the undertaking, concluding that CRA capacity is a key to success.

The Development Objective of the Project, defined both in the Project Document and the Inception Report, is to promote the integrity of civil data at the national level. The Development Objective is intended to be reached through activities in four main, closely interlinked areas, namely the Voter List, Migration and Citizenship, Addressing and Training, plus through mandatory CRA tasks and an Awareness Campaign. Project Objectives are not formulated, but the Inception Report states the following six expected Project Results:

1. Improved efficiency of state institutions raised through access into the CRA's database completed with digitised and biometric data;
2. Improved public services with on-line access to the CRA's database, less time-consuming and preventing falsification;
3. One-Push Button voter list that implies access for updated voter list at any time that provides information on voters in each polling district;
4. Georgian consulates abroad will be connected on-line with CRA and would be able to register Georgian citizens in respective countries and in case of readmission cases to provide persons with necessary documents;
5. A single and integrated management infrastructure for addressing to be uniformly used on the entire country scale, and
6. Trained and qualified CRA and Georgian consulate staff (760 people) with improved knowledge and technical skills, widely using new IT programs and providing better services to citizens.

Being a case of direct Sida funding, this Project is fully implemented within the structures of CRA. The Head of CRA's International Department is also the Sida Project Manager. No specific structures have been created for continuous Project Monitoring or for Quality Control. The management team comprises female staff only, the IT component mainly being staffed with male specialists. In the other components of the project, the majority of staff is female.

As for the Project Results achieved so-far, the MTR finds that items 1 and 2 above have partly been reached already, while items 3 and 4 for different reasons might not be reached during the Project. Item 5 could possibly be attained during the Project, while item 6 has basically already been achieved.

The MTR Team finds that planned Project Results, also contributing to moving Georgia closer to the EU, seem valid and realistic. They convincingly link to the agreed Development Objective, i.e. to improving the integrity of civil data on a national level. It also seems convincing that the Project will be able to contribute to strengthening democracy in Georgia, some items, such as the Voter list, being able directly to contribute to an improved democratic performance in the country. Women and men will be affected in the same way by Project Results, which in a traditional society like Georgia probably will mean that the civil rights of women will be strengthened.

Factors influencing Project achievement are assessed as mostly positive, although a possible change in government can potentially affect Project outcome. The risks identified in Sida's Assessment Memo have so-far not affected Project Implementation. No killing factors have been identified.

Most Project Results can be expected to continue also after Project completion. However, the swift development in Georgia might well change preconditions, shortening the lifetime of reforms undertaken and creating new challenges for political decision-makers.

Arrangements for Project Monitoring and Quality Control are not satisfactory at present, the Project Manager being at the same time the Head of CRA's International Department. Her time might not suffice for an adequate monitoring in practice, with too much responsibility and work load being vested in one person. Using Monitoring Advisors in order to strengthen monitoring might be considered, but primarily some supplementary measure should be considered internally. It should also be noted that the remuneration for the PM assignment should suffice for full time service in the Project. Also strengthening Quality Control in IT development should be considered.

The MTR Team also concludes that a more effective monitoring system is needed at a general level in the country, to ensure that personal data is not misused. The risk for misuse can be expected to increase with the number of items being stored in a single database.

The Project is driven by a strong political will. The MTR assesses governmental ownership of the Project as high, as well as the commitment at operational and administrative levels.

The MTR Team concludes that Sida's desire to support improving the reliability and quality of Public Sector Services, thereby contributing to strengthening democracy, is being met in the present cooperation, and that the Project is already contributing to strengthening democracy in Georgia.

The direct financing model chosen is convincing in this case, although conclusions in that respect as regards other potential cooperation partners in Georgia need to be based on individual assessments.

Sida is recommended to

- continue funding the Project Activities agreed with CRA through the agreed period;
- continue following rather closely the implementation of the Annual Work Plan in line with the Project Agreement;
- always establish written Agreed Minutes from Review Meetings with the Project Management;
- together with Project Management, address the issues of monitoring and quality control, ascertaining an improved coverage of the two functions either through internal measures or externally, for example in the form of Monitoring Advisory inputs;
- together with Project Management and/or with the leadership of CRA and/or the Ministry of Justice, address the issue of an improved monitoring function as regards the management of civil data at the national level, and
- in the case that Sida will finance a cooperation with Transparency International, identify and profit from possible synergies with the present Project.

1 Background

The Swedish government's Strategy 2010-2013 for Development Cooperation with Georgia has the overriding objective that Georgia develops into a democratic and responsible state, moving closer to the EU. The Strategy has three sectors of priority, the prime one being Democracy, Human Rights (HR) and Gender Equality (GE). There, the following objectives are guiding programming:

- Strengthened democratic structures and systems, focussing on HR and GE;
- Improved preconditions for free and impartial elections, and
- Improved living conditions for Georgia's Internally Displaced Persons.

The cooperation is intended to have a reform perspective and to support a development closer to the fundamental values, principles and norms of the EU. It should support the development of both policy and capacity. Reforms and capacity development in the public administration will be supported. Cooperation should also take place as a complement to, and in coordination with, the EU. Sweden will support activities that contribute to an increased confidence between the country's government and its citizens, and to the decentralisation of political and administrative power and of resources to the regional and local levels.

As part of its implementation of the Strategy, Sida in 2010 decided to finance continued reform efforts within the Civil Registry Agency (CRA) of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) of Georgia. A Grant Agreement called "Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia" was signed, covering a period of 2½ years from 1 July 2010 to 31 December 2012 and a total Sida contribution of SEK 23,500,000.

Project implementation started on 1 July 2010. According to the Project Document, a Mid Term Review (MTR) of the Project should have been performed in December 2011. It was undertaken in May 2012. The present report is the MTR Report. The Terms of Reference for the MTR are included in Annex 1.

The MTR has been asked specifically to answer following questions:

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid;
- To what extent are the objectives/results likely to be achieved;
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives;
- How good is internal project monitoring and quality assurance including qualitative and quantitative assessments;
- To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after project completion, and

- What is the level of project ownership from Georgian side (Georgian institutions), are they ready to build on the project achievements and carry on exchanging data, investing in new technologies, etc.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

The present MTR report will attempt to provide answers to these questions. In order to address them effectively, a series of project documents and other documents, activity plans, minutes and reports have been studied both in preparation of, and during and after the Mission to Tbilisi, 7-11 May 2012 (Annex 3). Different representatives of Sida, CRA and other Agencies under the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and of other foreign donors, have been interviewed (Annex 2), allowing for cross-checking and triangulation of information and impressions. The selection of interviewees and the meeting schedule was decided on by the MTR Team, based on its own considerations and on suggestions by CRA. The schedule was set in consultation with the Embassy. The Team has interviewed Swedish Embassy staff, CRA project staff and other representatives of the MoJ and other government representatives as well as the representatives of other donors and international NGOs. All interviews were performed in English. A short study visit to the Public Service Hall of the MoJ in Rustavi was arranged.

Reflection on a broader perspective on public administration reform and capacity development was facilitated through continuous exchange of information and findings with two other Sida MTR missions, simultaneously taking place in Tbilisi, namely with the MTR of Sida's support to the National Agency for Public Registry, and the MTR concerning the project "Capacity Building of the Georgian Leadership Community for Improved Decision-making and Negotiation Skills". Finally, quality assurance has been undertaken by Indevlop Sweden AB, which has had the overall professional and contractual responsibility for the assignment.

This being a Mid Term Review, a systematic evaluation of objectives attained in the Project has not been undertaken, although performance so-far has been documented and commented on in line with the MTR ToR. Unfortunately, time constraints (four working days in Tbilisi) severely limited the Team's possibilities of probing deeper into issues, such as how more precisely the Project links into overarching policy priorities, its gender impact and what further effects could be expected at large in the public sector. At least one key foreign donor (UNDP) was not interviewed in person.

The review has had a utilisation focus. The Swedish Embassy in Georgia shared the ToR with CRA beforehand, and preliminary MTR findings were shared and discussed with the Embassy and with CRA during the mission. The MTR is intended to be used by Sida and CRA to support the continued implementation of the Project, and for other action in support of desired change.

The CRA Mid Term Review took place during May 2012. It was performed by Mr. Krister Eduards, supported by Ms. Tinatin Kbilashvili, both of Indvelop Sweden AB. The MTR was greatly facilitated by the staff of the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, as well as by that of State Agencies of Georgia, in particular the CRA, and of foreign donors present in the country, both of whom have generously shared information and documentation. However, the report, including findings and recommendations expressed, remains the full responsibility of the MTR Team.

The MTR team wishes to express its gratitude to all, who have contributed to making its work possible.

2 Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia

2.1 CRA DEVELOPMENT

In 2005, the government of Georgia identified the development of an appropriate civil registration system in the country as one of its top priorities. Civil registration was seen both as fundamental within several spheres of public life and as instrumental for the ongoing fundamental reform of the public sector. Through a new Law "On State Registry", the responsibility for this was assigned to the Ministry of Justice's newly established Civil Registry Agency (CRA). The CRA was to collect, verify, organise, maintain and provide necessary information about the status of the country's citizens. The reform was intended to contribute to rationalising the registration of the entire collection of civil acts such as births, deaths, marriages, divorces, affiliations, etc, and to help administering ID cards and passports.

Since 2005, CRA has covered considerable ground. Draft laws have been produced, for example concerning Population Register, Civil Acts Registration and Identification Documentation. A new Data Protection Law has come into force in May 2012.

In 2009, CRA assumed the competences of the Department on Civil Issues of the Ministry of Justice. Further, the function of confirmation of documents with Apostille and legalisation authority, previously under the International Private Law Department of the Ministry of Justice, was assigned to CRA.

The digitisation of existing civil data has been continued, based on old registers of varying quality. Software for Civil Acts registration, ID:s and Passports was installed in all CRA offices, with staff training on its usage also taking place. A server and a network data centre have been installed. CRA software has been converted into the so-called Service Oriented Architecture (SOA). Public Awareness Campaigns concerning the civil registration reform have been broadcast.

An old, but now settled, issue is the fact that parts of the software being utilised were unlicensed. Recently, CRA entered into a framework contract with Microsoft Inc. covering the usage of MS software for 300 computers. The number of computers licensed can be incremented as needed. As for security, CRA has established a Role Based Security System that ascribes all staff their respective set of functions, access to data and access to function, depending on Job Descriptions. Further, all entries are being logged, which allows ex post controls case by case. In the future structure, plans are to expand the Data Control Team. In addition, operations will be self monitored.

CRA has now 75 territorial offices in the country, and is strengthening the organisation with 15 new Public Service Halls (of which six are operational), where both different MoJ functions (CRA, NAPR, Enforcement, Archive and Public Notary) and other state functions will be performed, such as issuing drivers' licences, school leaving certificate, etc.

At the local level, Village Development Centers (VDC) are being established, to be owned and managed by the local authorities. They are intended to be used by all relevant ministry outlets and by postal services, possibly also for banking purposes. Plans are to establish around 100 such VDCs, all of an approximate 170 square meter size.

Total CRA staff at present is 1,080, including outside Tbilisi. Of these, 712 are female and 359 male. In the management positions of the CRA, there are 70 female officials and 63 male officials. Donor financed staff is in addition.

An Institutional Strategic Plan for the period 2007-2011 has highlighted Agency priorities, guiding institutional development. Today, the Agency identifies the following goals for its work:

- A. Establishment of the joint data register on citizens of Georgia and foreign citizens, residing in Georgia;
- B. Realisation of the activity, stipulated in the legislation, within its competence;
- C. Establishment of integral system, based upon the principles of electronic administration;
- D. Perfection of the current legislation concerning the Civil Register, and
- E. Establishment of identity and documenting of citizens of Georgia and foreign citizens residing in Georgia.

Institutional developments since 2005 constitute a major step for the state sector of Georgia. Or as UNDP expresses it: "Improved civil registration is one of the successes of Georgia's recent reforms. Once an example of corruption and clumsy state bureaucracy, the modernised Civil Registration agency now provides qualified services to the citizens in a prompt and friendly manner"¹.

The Deputy Head of CRA was recently promoted to the post of Head of the Agency, while the former Head resigned to remain as a Vice Minister of Justice. The way these changes have been undertaken contributes to continuity in the Agency.

But the Agency is in for change. CRA, which in its own Strategic Plan defined itself as "widely recognized in Georgia as a leader in public sector reform", has now been

¹ "Civil Registration Reform in Georgia goes on while new challenges emerge", UNDP, 2009

assigned the role of state frontline methodological IT development agency by the government.

In view of the broadened Agency mandate, a gap analysis concerning strengths and weaknesses has been performed and a proposal for a new Agency structure has been elaborated. A new Institutional Strategic Plan for the period 2012-14 is now being finalised. The new strategy will comprise IT-related development work at the service of the whole state sector, something that will also be mirrored in the Agency's new name. Agency objectives will be reformulated as a consequence of the ongoing policy process concerning the role of CRA and its contribution to continued reform within the state sector at large.

The new CRA structure will include an additional function of relevance for the continued reform process within the whole state sector, i. e. a methodological support function geared towards innovative work also within other Government Ministries. A new organisational structure is being considered, the latest (mid-May 2012) draft version being included in Annex 3 of this report. Also the name of the agency will be changed in order better to mirror its new mandate, one alternative considered being the Agency for Service Delivery.

The new structure will be led by a CEO and eight Directors.

CRA has the mandate to retain the revenues from its operations and is intended with time to become a self-financing agency. Since January 2010, CRA receives no recurrent state budget allocation. On the other hand, the government has chosen to finance specific activities ad-hoc, such as the introduction of the e-ID (GEL 7 Million) and the biometric passport (EUR 1.5 Million). CRA has stated that in order for government funding to become available, the Agency first needs to demonstrate to the government that the addressing/voterlist work can be done, and well done. But according to CRA, the government is committed to its reform mandate, financing for example all ID work with its own funds.

2.2 CRA OPERATIONS

At present, the CRA functions comprise ID card², Passport³, Child's Passport⁴, Residence Card⁵, Birth Registration⁶, Establishment of Paternity⁷, Marriage Registration⁸,

² http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=2

³ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=3

⁴ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=4

⁵ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=5

⁶ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=6

Divorce Registration⁹, Adoption Registration¹⁰, Name and Surname Change Registration¹¹, Death Registration¹², Visa Extension, Citizenship¹³ and Apostille¹⁴.

Marriages in Georgia are usually twofold, taking place both as a religious ceremony in churches and officially in State Wedding Halls. The latter is the one being registered in the CRA managed civil registry.

While visas for travelling to Georgia are issued by Foreign Ministry staff abroad, and by Ministry of Interior staff at border controls, CRA is in charge of handling visa issues in the country, mainly the extension of expiring visas already issued. The fee charged for a biometric passport is at present GEL 100 (= SEK 400). Quicker delivery can be arranged, express delivery the same day costs GEL 205.

It is generally reported that in this field, conditions for the population have greatly improved in the country in recent years. While in 2003, a new passport would normally cost both a state fee and a bribe of USD 100, the extension of the same person's passport in 2007 was secured without any extra demands at all. Corruption has decreased considerably in the country, in particular petty corruption, putting Georgia, together with Turkey, at the top in the Eastern Europe/Central Asia group in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

Transparency International (TI) in Tbilisi states to the MTR that CRA is a more transparent agency today, performing well. CRA reforms are seen as quite positive, also rendering positive results and an increased organisational independence. CRA has also been able to assist TI in their operations.

As asked for in the ToR for the present MTR, feedback has also been secured from two non-Georgian citizens who received services from CRA, namely two Swedish representatives of the Swedish NGO Kvinna-till-Kvinna, working in Georgia on the basis of one-year residence permits issued by CRA. One of them had recently married a non-Georgian (Azeri) man in Tbilisi – procedures had been unexpectedly smooth and pleasant. The couple had both married and had their marriage registered in the CRA office in their precinct. Registration for the Swedish representative, with the help of her Georgian e-ID, was instant, that of her husband and his Azeri passport

⁷ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=7

⁸ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=8

⁹ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=9

¹⁰ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=10

¹¹ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=11

¹² http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=12

¹³ http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=67

¹⁴ The certification of a document issued in one country for legal purposes in another country.
http://www.cra.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=74

requiring somewhat more time. The second Swedish representative had met an unexpected issue in registering, as she carries three Christian names, while Georgians have only one. But the CRA staff could help out in a forthcoming and professional way.

CRA works closely with the Data Exchange Agency (DEA), established by the MoJ in 2010. CRA pays a modest sum for the exchange service, the Ministry's different agencies storing and retrieving its own data. The DEA mandate is to coordinate the development of an electronic government system in Georgia, to create a data exchange infrastructure and to develop and implement secure information exchange policies. It is expected to work with the whole state sector, i. e. also with other ministries and agencies than those under the MoJ. In the future, data from also the local administrative level will be fed into the database. Servicing the whole state sector, DEA could have been localised under the Prime Minister instead, but the present localisation was preferred for the combination of political attention and a better balance between policy priorities and formal, structural needs.

The development of a data exchange infrastructure is a step towards establishing an e-governance system in Georgia. Personal portals will be established, allowing individuals to manage all their contacts with the state, including paying taxes, through one and the same window. Further, ensuring high standards of informational security, and specifically cyber security is high on the agency's agenda. A Computer Emergency Response Team has been established within the DEA, who also has engaged its own hackers with the task to identify and model new formats for attack and defence.

A recent case of CRA contribution outside the MoJ sphere is the Parent-Baby Book. Unicef, wanted to launch, together with the Ministry of Health (MoH), this classical Early Childhood Development tool also in Georgia and turned to CRA for technical support. CRA undertook to perform, on contract with Unicef and together with nutrition experts, the testing of this tool in a Georgian context. The ensuing decision was to produce two book versions, one for less and one for more advanced readers, in Armenian, Azeri, Georgian and Russian. Following child birth and registry, maternity staff decides which version to give to parents. Approximately 65,000 copies are being printed each year.

On an initiative by CRA staff, the decision was also taken to select some 63 key messages from the Book and transform them into SMS messages, for example "Your child is now six months old, you are welcome to have a vaccination". The messages are being dispatched in the Georgian and Russian languages, as preferred by the parents, to their mobile phones. Distribution takes place at fixed dates according to a plan, starting counting from the child's birth. The SMS programme has been operational for 1½ years.

The two operations are being managed by CRA in agreement with the MoH. The management of the Parent-Baby Book printing will possibly be transferred to MoH. But the technologically more demanding SMS messaging will stay with CRA for the

time being, and will also be linked to the planned development of a CRA managed, IT-based Baby Portal, intended to be accessed and used by parents.

Unicef expresses great satisfaction with the CRA contribution to these Early Childhood Development efforts, stating that whatever has been started with CRA, has turned out well.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT TO CRA

The main international donor to CRA is the **United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**. USAID is presently prepared to finance addressing work, covering seven districts in the city of Tbilisi. The goal of the project is to link registered persons to physical addresses in seven elections districts of Tbilisi (out of ten election districts) and retain the information in a form usable in support of various official activities linked to addresses. There is a considerable background to the co-operation being planned. USAID started supporting CRA in 2005, at first through OSCE but subsequently through UNDP. The experience of working with CRA was positive to the extent that when Sida was considering embarking on the cooperation being reviewed here, USAID not only endorsed the purpose, but also recommended CRA for direct support, an option that is not available to USAID itself.

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has been supporting civil registration reform in the country since 2005, mostly with the USAID financing just mentioned. In 2007, with funding from USAID and DFID, UNDP took a lead in assisting Georgia to modernise the civil registry system and to provide the public with one-stop-shop access to its services.

Following the armed conflict with Russia in August 2008, Georgia faced the need to cater for up to 150,000 persons displaced from the areas affected by the war. The CRA found itself capable immediately to respond to this crisis by starting providing registration services and issuing temporary ID cards to the displaced citizens.

UNDP helped CRA to develop and install online software and to launch thirty-six mobile groups to register new Internally Displaced Persons (IDP:s) in the capital city of Tbilisi and in the regions.

The USAID-financed UNDP project contributed to the drafting of new laws, including laws relating to the Population Register, Identification Documentation and Civil Acts Registration. It also helped CRA to digitise its archives, to improve its IT system including a high capacity server and its back-up, and to refurbish ten civil registry offices in the regions of Georgia.

In 2009, UNDP and USAID jointly reported on the following results from their 2007-09 support to CRA:

- Three draft laws on Population Register, on Civil Acts Registration and on Identification Documentation, and draft secondary legislation and explanatory notes to these bills have been developed and officially conveyed for further action;
- Digitised Birth certificates from the regional archives from 1990-2004, Tbilisi birth certificates from 1990-2000 and regional death certificates from 1994-2002 together with Tbilisi death certificates from 1987-2004 are available at the CRA;
- All resources for the provision of personal data are consolidated under the CRA, providing it a possibility to generate complete information about a person, and
- All nine territorial offices of the CRA operate in new environment in its full capacity providing customers with prompt, accurate, less time/resource-consuming service.

After completing the 2007-09 project together with UNDP, USAID financed a pilot project in addressing in Tbilisi during 2011. One finding from that project was that maps available and used in state addressing were not correct. In the new eight months project being considered at present, “Facilitating addressing”, plans are to cover seven election districts in a joint NAPR/CRA cooperation financed by USAID through US-based MSI (Management Systems International), totalling USD 1 Million. Six companies are being hired to undertake the measurement work.

USAID received a project proposal, similar to the present Sida financed project, for consideration in 2010, but was not able to fund it, please cf. Section 3.1 below.

Another major CRA donor is the **EU Commission**. An EU-CRA cooperation at a cost of EUR 1.85 Million is currently being discussed, including addressing activities in four regional cities. The new project, based on the CRA Institutional Development Strategy 2012-14, is planned as part of EU:s “Comprehensive Institution Building Programme”. EU takes a positive view of the new strategy document, prepared in consultation with several other ministries, including those for Finance, Foreign Affairs, Health and Interior (please cf. Section 2.1 above).

The new EU project will cover costs for addressing, systems development and operational costs. Additional operational staff will be hired. The contribution from EU will come as a direct support. Previously, the EU has financed a series of CRA initiatives, such as bio-metric passports, different cases of systems development, putting five Public Service Centres in order, and a number of inputs in the migration area, all-in-all totalling around EUR 10 Million.

Based on cooperation experience, the EU considers CRA one of the few agencies in the country that could be eligible for direct support. At the same time, the EU sees the overall setup as a potentially high risk endeavour, the undertaking being risky both for its degree of complication and for its size. For that reason, CRA capacity is key to success. The outcome of elections this autumn might also change priorities.

3 The Project

In the following, the term Project is used to designate the agreed activities in view of Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia, which Sida has undertaken to finance in accordance with the Grant Agreement between Sweden and the Civil Registry Agency of Georgia that entered into force on 1 July 2010 and remains valid to 15 October 2013, and with informally agreed amendments to the Project Format presented in the Inception Report.

3.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

As has been reported above, the Project has a background that situates it squarely in the CRA process of institutional development. By 2009, some major donors, in particular UNDP, USAID and the EU, had been supporting the consolidation and further capacity development of CRA for several years. On the basis of that history of cooperation, a project proposal bearing the same name as the one being reviewed here, and containing much the same development activities, had been elaborated by CRA together with the UNDP, and submitted to USAID for consideration. At that point in time, USAID was not able to fund it.

Following that, CRA continued to elaborate on the project proposal, with a view to finding some other source of financing. For CRA, the additional functions mentioned above that had been ascribed to the Agency in 2009 meant that the legal framework in certain areas needed to be modified, legislation having to be changed along with procedures of CRA's workflow, as well as the rules for CRA's relations with other institutions regarding the database usage. Staff training would become necessary in order to enable CRA staff to study and analyse the new legal regulations and improve their technical skills as regards new IT systems. For CRA, identifying a donor for this important development effort became a priority. Sida was approached with a request for financing the further amended Project Document (PD) in 2009.

The preparation of the PD subsequently agreed by Sida had been a rather long process and had included a series of working sessions within the MoJ, with the National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR) contributing actively. Following the request to Sida for financing, Project preparation continued. Sida wished to consider the option of direct funding to CRA, an issue that needed further study. A Public Finance Management (PFM) assessment was undertaken in March 2010, endorsing the suggested direct channelling of funds to CRA. Further, the PFM assessment concluded that there would be no "fungibility risk so long as the Sida transfer is ring-fenced into a dedicated budget line", and that, on the other hand, the "biggest risk to Sida funding is therefore one of additionality", meaning that Sida "needs to be confident that the

requested funds cannot be provided by the budget or directly by the CRA itself.” That question is being addressed during the present MTR mission.

In its Assessment Memo of June 2010, based on a 12 May 2010 PD version, Sida concluded that the proposed Project is relevant to the priorities of the current Swedish Country Strategy and in line with the objective of bringing Georgia’s public institutions closer to EU standards and norms. Summing up, Sida assessed the Project as feasible, although appropriate monitoring mechanisms needed to be formed. Sida concluded that a “good system for project implementation follow-up and monitoring” was needed.

The funding agreement entered into force on 1 July 2010. A Project Inception period followed, where certain additional tasks were defined and agreed to by Sida, and introduced into the Project’s agenda. Additions cover mandatory CRA tasks plus a Public Awareness Campaign. Therefore, the formally valid Project Plan is the one documented in the Inception Report (IR).

3.2 PROJECT DESIGN

Both the PD and the IR define the Development Objective of the Project as “promoting the integrity of civil data on a country scale”. The Development Objective is intended to be reached through activities in four main, closely interlinked areas, namely Voter List, Migration and Citizenship, Addressing and Training, plus through the mandatory tasks and the Awareness Campaign. Specific Project Objectives are not formulated in the PD.

The Inception Report states the following six expected Project Results:

- Improved efficiency of state institutions raised through access into the CRA’s database completed with digitised and biometric data;
- Improved public services with on-line access to the CRA’s database, less time-consuming and preventing falsification;
- One-Push Button voter list that implies access for updated voter list at any time that provides information on voters in each polling district;
- Georgian consulates abroad will be connected on-line with CRA and would be able to register Georgian citizens in respective countries and in case of readmission cases to provide persons with necessary documents;
- A single and integrated management infrastructure for addressing to be uniformly used on the entire country scale, and
- Trained and qualified CRA and Georgian consulate staff (760 people) with improved knowledge and technical skills, widely using new IT programs and providing better services to citizens.

The basic design of the Project is simple. Being a case of direct Sida funding, this Project is fully implemented within the structures of CRA. The Sida-financed software development, for example, takes place in the general CRA IT Department.

Sida's financial contributions make additional resources available, in turn allowing activities to take place that would otherwise have had to wait until other financing became available. As stated above, CRA is intended with time to become a self-financing agency, but does not at present receive sufficient revenues from operations to finance also the development work that Sida is financing in the Project.

A Project Board, comprising the heads of relevant CRA departments and of concerned other institutions, was constituted at the onset of the project. The Board then reviewed planned activities and agreed on the format for further cooperation. Three months prior to the completion of the project, the Board will assess project results and impact.

The budgeted staff costs cover salary plus mandatory health insurance. No other cost items are included in budgeted amounts. Total Project staff is at present 83 persons. The management team comprises female staff only, the IT component mainly being staffed with male specialists. In the other components of the project, the majority of staff is female.

The Head of CRA's International Department is also the Sida Project Manager (PM), specific Project activities being executed under the responsibility of respective existing CRA Area Head. No specific structures have been created for Project Monitoring, the PM thus carrying this responsibility. Also no specific arrangements have been agreed for Quality Control, which means that the respective Heads of Units are in charge of that function.

3.3 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT TO DATE

After almost two years of Project implementation, considerable performance can be noted in the Project's activity areas.

The **mandatory tasks** added to the four major Project activities originally being part of the PD in agreement between Sida and CRA are being implemented. They are the development of a Consulate Registration Module (finalised) and of a Readmission Module (finalised), the unification of different business data processes into one system and data base (finalised), and the introduction of the e-ID as single identification tool (ongoing). The Sida Project facilitates the launching of ID cards. Of a targeted number of over 2 million ID cards, 400,000 have now been issued.

Work on legislation and regulation concerning Civil Acts, previously initiated, has continued under the Project. Draft decrees have been produced on Civil Acts Registration, on Birth and Death Medical Certificates, on the statute of CRA territorial offices, on the competence of consulate staff, and on requisites for registration certificates. Also, decrees have been drafted concerning the registration of citizens of Georgia and aliens residing in Georgia, the issuing of identification documents, the delegation of competence from CRA to MoFA consulate staff, and the definition of legal and practical guidelines for CRA staff.

As for the **Voter list**, forms for data exchange with the two Ministries for Foreign Affairs and of Corrections have been agreed, database unification activities going on. In addition, corresponding negotiations are going on with another two ministries and with the Supreme Court. The databases of the CRA and the Central Election Commission (CEC) remain to be harmonised. Cooperation with the Data Exchange Agency (DEA) has been launched.

A new ad hoc Commission has been created under neutral leadership, responsible for securing the accuracy of the voter list. Therefore, and during the current year, CRA provides the data not the CEC but to this special commission. CRA develops the software needed for the list and runs it, the Commission checking whether the list produced is correct. The checking of accuracy is performed by a large number of students hired specifically for this purpose.

In the area of **Migration and citizenship**, project lawyers have studied relevant existing legislation, in particular the following legal acts:

- Organic law “Citizenship of Georgia”,
- Presidential Decree 2006 “Granting Georgian Citizenship to Foreign Citizen”,
- Presidential Decree 2009 “On approval of rule on the consideration of applications and nominations for Georgian citizenship”,
- Law of Georgia on the legal status of Georgians, and
- Presidential Decree No. 399 of 28 June 2006 on rule concerning issuing, prolonging and terminating visas.

A range of problematic issues have been revealed by Project staff in the area of granting and termination of citizenship of Georgia. Based on this process and ensuing recommendations, a new draft law on “Citizenship of Georgia” has been developed, currently under final consideration prior to its submission to Parliament. Further, amendments to the Decree “Granting Georgian Citizenship to Foreign Citizen” and recommendations concerning the existing Visa policy have been drafted and submitted to respective agencies and ministries. During the period of Project Implementation, legal acts of different levels relating to migration and citizenship issues are being developed.

The Digitisation of migration and citizenship related cases was launched last October, currently 90 percent of the cases having been digitised. Overall, more than 600,000 civil acts have been digitised and almost 500,000 corrected.

Addressing activities within the Project are focused on problematic areas, for example where the inhabitants have no addresses. Streets are being designated, the number and use of houses defined, and individual persons attached to their respective addresses. Spatial information is shared with the National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR), also under the MoJ, and integrated into the general real estate and street registry managed there. Since May this year, NAPR has taken the lead in the quality control of land measurement activities.

Within the Project, 15 persons are currently performing addressing work. By May 2012, 300,000 persons have been registered at corrected addresses, equivalent to 40,000 households, in 300 municipalities, the Sida financing thus being able to cover 10 percent of the total resource need for addressing. In addition, as was mentioned above, USAID and EU will probably finance other parts of the total addressing agenda in the country. There is no government deadline for the effort, but CRA wishes to finalise the work by 2014.

In order to raise **public awareness** about the considerable change that is taking place within the sphere of civil registry, and on the basis of separate, additional Sida financing, a short film, “Future Georgia” was produced. It has now been installed in the Public Service Halls, in whose Demo Centers it is constantly being showed.

The Project’s **training programme** has been amended to incorporate new service delivery approaches and the new structure of the agency, including the PSH. As in the Project’s initial phase the Civil Acts Law was delayed, also the training programme had to be delayed, by two months. But as assessed by the PM, it will be fully implemented during 2012. Some of those trained, will now become trainers.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MoFA) is a partner to the Project’s training programme. MoFA uses CRA data and has had the planned 60 staff trained on new legislation and civil acts in the training programme. MoFA finds the data as well as the training most useful. As MoFA does not have the funds necessary to gather them to Tbilisi, an additional 55 staff abroad has not been able to participate in the training programme, although they have received the new legislation and procedures for information.

The Sida financed **software development** in relation to the four main activity areas takes place within the CRA general IT Department. Initially, external resources were used for the work. After some time, however, software development was moved in-house. A core team of eight persons, self-taught, performs the software development. In addition, an analytical group addresses data quality. Together with the IT operators, the IT Department numbers a total of 32, of which ten are financed by Sida. Initially in Project implementation, external resources were used, but based on experience it was decided to continue the necessary software development in-house instead. Quality control is performed as Test and Final Acceptance at the Unit level. Moreover, Bug Fixing is frequently conducted in already operational systems.

The initial Project goal for software development was to create a unified IT system that would be operated within all CR activity areas. After one year’s operation, the goal was changed – now also other MoJ Agencies, including the Data Exchange Agency, and ultimately also other ministries and their agencies are to be included. So, now the ambition is to create a collaborative environment that allows changing everything – software, hardware and processes. The change in political instruction to CRA and its IT Department is, however, not seen as a reason for Sida to draw back,

on the contrary to continue supporting and rather to be prepared to consider an extension of its support.

Project **monitoring and quality control** is currently ascertained by the PM and her assistant, and by respective Heads of Units. In addition, other CRA staff help to follow-up in different technical areas, such as in migration and citizenship or in addressing. As required, ad-hoc meetings take place in respective activity area, plus financial follow-up to avoid “non-reasonable” spending. Agency leadership takes interest in the Project, which means that the PM has no difficulties in receiving guidance, when needed.

Sida has a close cooperation and almost monthly meetings with the Project Management. Annual reports from CRA are scrutinised by Sida, comments and inquiries are made and meetings with CRA held. In practice, Sida regards these meetings, or sometimes series of meetings, as Annual Meetings in response to the requirements outlined in the Project Agreement with CRA. However, signed agreed minutes are not established as required by the Grant Agreement.

Sida confirms that CRA is careful when adjustments to the Project are needed, even in cases where an adjustment is not of major importance. Sida responses are given in the form of e-mails, saying whether Sida accepts a suggested adjustment or not. In the majority of cases, approvals are communicated, as CRA sounds out requests beforehand.

As for **Project Implementation**, and according to the PM’s assessment, all project specific activities will be completed in time. As stated to the MTR Team, CRA plans to approach Sida for considering a one year extension of the cooperation, covering additional digitisation work and some other activities.

4 Midterm Review Findings

The present Mid Term Review has been assigned six specific questions to be answered in this report. They are:

1. To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid;
2. To what extent are the objectives/results likely to be achieved;
3. What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives;
4. How good is internal project monitoring and quality assurance including qualitative and quantitative assessments;
5. To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after project completion, and
6. What is the level of project ownership from Georgian side (Georgian institutions), are they ready to build on the project achievements and carry on exchanging data, investing in new technologies, etc.

Using the evaluation terminology of DAC and of Sida, question No. 1 relates to the *relevance* of project objectives, while questions Nos. 2 and 3 address the issue of their *effectiveness*. The *sustainability* of results will be discussed under questions Nos. 5 and 6. The *cost-efficiency* of operations is not explicitly covered by the six MTR questions, but is in substance part of question No. 4.

4.1 TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT STILL VALID?

It should be noted that the stated Development Objective of the Project “to promote the integrity of civil data at the national level” is not formulated as an objective, also lacking both qualification and quantification. The Development Objective as stated could rather be seen as a purpose of a more general character, or indication of desired direction of impact. In an evaluation perspective, it can primarily be used as an indicator in general terms of whether Project Implementation has contributed to it or not.

Project Objectives are not stated, neither in the PD nor in the IR. Instead, available documentation reports on expected Project Results to be attained thanks to Sida’s financing. As formulated, the stated Project Results rather have the character of Project Outcomes, and do seem adequate for guiding, following and evaluating Project Implementation. They have also been assigned Indicators to measure Fulfilment, and Sources of verification in the Results Assessment Framework (RAF). Although not fully covering the total field of activity, this information should basically be relevant, both for guiding operations and for evaluating them.

The mandatory activities approved as part of the Project in the IR and implemented in the first place are not, or not entirely, specified in the RAF. The Project Agreement states that any change to the RAF must be agreed during Review Meetings and documented in Agreed Minutes. As reported above, Sida and CRA do undertake regular meetings that are regarded as Annual Review Meetings as required by the Grant Agreement. While the MTR Team has no specific objection to the said activities, it has to note that in fact, the Project has objectives that have not been documented in Agreed Minutes between the Parties as required.

While certain changes as regards Project priorities have thus taken place, some of which were mentioned already in the PD, the Project Manager (PM) assesses the original formulation of Project Results together with amendments informally agreed with Sida still to be fully relevant, concluding that they should not be amended at this point in time. Changes have also occurred as the results of Project achievements, something that, however, according to her should also not necessitate objectives to be revised.

The MTR Team finds Project Results primarily not policy dependent, i.e. in the sense that another government would be inclined to change them. Instead, they seem technically motivated and clearly in line with the broader scenario of change that is currently a salient feature in the country. Against the background of a successful Project Implementation thus far, they also seem reasonably realistic. Furthermore, objectives are in line with what is generally required in the EU, contributing to moving Georgia closer to the EU. Thus, Project Results do still seem valid.

Seen in a perspective of Change theory, the MTR Team finds that the six stated Project Results do convincingly link to the agreed Development Objective, i.e. to improving the integrity of civil data on a national level. At this level, however, further improvements should be considered, please cf. 4.4 below. In a broader perspective, it also seems convincing that the Project will be able to contribute to strengthening democracy in Georgia, some items, such as the Voter list, being able directly to contribute to an improved democratic performance in the country.

4.2 TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THE OBJECTIVES/RESULTS LIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED?

As has been reported above, considerable performance can be noted in the Project's activity areas after almost two years of Project Implementation. As regards the mandatory tasks, a series of results have been reported, please cf. 3.3 above. However, as the MTR Team does not have access to what has been agreed in terms of planned mandatory tasks results, it is not possible to assess the extent to which they will be achieved during the Project period, i.e. within a period of little more than six months ahead of the MTR.

As for the six expected Project Results, as quoted from the Project Inception Report, the following can be noted.

An (i) “improved efficiency of state institutions raised through access into the CRA’s database completed with digitised and biometric data” has partly been achieved, as has also the (ii) “Improved public services with on-line access to the CRA’s database, less time-consuming and preventing falsification”. The (iii) “One-Push Button voter list that implies access for updated voter list at any time that provides information on voters in each polling district” is unlikely to be achieved within the Project timeframe.

The goal that (iv) “Georgian consulates abroad will be connected on-line with CRA and would be able to register Georgian citizens in respective countries and in case of readmission cases to provide persons with necessary documents” will probably not be achieved within the Project timeframe, as the necessary communication equipment is not part of the Project budget and at least at present beyond the government’s budget restrictions. As reported above, the MoFA is scrutinising the possibilities to acquire the needed technical equipment.

The goal (v) “A single and integrated management infrastructure for addressing to be uniformly used on the entire country scale” could possibly be attained, while the (vi) “Trained and qualified CRA and Georgian consulate staff (760 people) with improved knowledge and technical skills, widely using new IT programs and providing better services to citizens” has basically already been achieved.

In Sida’s Assessment Memo, certain risks to the Project were identified. One, the political climate, has not affected implementation thus far. Secondly, the risk that state institutions would not cooperate to the extent needed has also not materialised. The risk for corruption, discussed in the PFM Report mentioned above, has been followed-up by two annual audits, which have approved Project financial management. As to the conclusion of the PFM study concerning an “additionality” risk, please cf. 4.5 below.

Summing-up, most stated Project Results are likely to be achieved to an acceptable degree, the one not within reach being the on-line connection of Georgian consulates abroad with CRA.

4.3 WHAT ARE THE MAJOR FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ACHIEVEMENT OR NON-ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES?

The major factors influencing Project success are policy, cooperation and resources. As for policy, the government priority attached to the Project during its inception still seems unwavering. It could, however, be changed depending on the outcome of par-

liamentary elections in October, at least in theory. On the other hand, changing priorities do not seem probable in this case.

Cooperation from the side of other state entities is key to success. Thus far, cooperation has been satisfactory. It can be assumed that also in this case, success breeds success, or that if other ministries and agencies see CRA succeeding in its endeavours, they will feel more inclined to contribute. Provided the high political priority is maintained, institutional cooperation can probably be counted upon.

Financial resources are part of the Project, but constantly need to be transformed into human and other resources. The conditions of employment in the Project are good, which speaks for stability for the time being.

4.4 HOW GOOD IS THE INTERNAL PROJECT MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE INCLUDING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENTS?

As reported above, internal Project monitoring and quality control is ascertained by the Project Manager (PM) and her assistant. Concerned staff follow-up in different technical areas, and ad-hoc meetings take place in respective activity area as required. But no specific mechanism or organ seems to be in charge of overall internal monitoring and quality control.

This is probably the weakest point in the present Project setup. The present Project Manager is at the same time also the Head of CRA's International Department, where she is responsible for CRA cooperation with other donors and for other international issues. This situation does constitute a risk. It was also identified as a requirement in the Assessment Memo mentioned above, Sida concluding that a "good system for project implementation follow-up and monitoring" was needed. This expectation seems not to have been met thus far.

One aspect is that time might not suffice and that therefore monitoring and quality assurance in practice does not get all the attention needed, certain programme items under the radar risking monitoring neglect. The MTR Team has no indication that this has happened, but wishes preventively to raise the issue, as an item of principle. Another aspect is that too much responsibility and workload may be vested in one person, which could be detrimental to Project Implementation, apart from risking being detrimental also to her in person.

Historically, Sida has often used Monitoring Advisors (MA) in project cooperation. MAs have been used for different purposes – one is monitoring and facilitating that implementation follows plans and reporting back to Sida, another being to strengthen implementation by contributing professionally.

In this case, where Project Implementation is fully entrusted to CRA, Sida through the Swedish Embassy holds recurrent meetings and maintains a continuous dialogue with Project Management, something that makes MA inputs for following and reporting back redundant, so long as Sida has the staff time needed. The MTR Team does also not feel that a professional MA, for example in the form of a legal expert, is technically needed, as the professional capacity of the Project Team seems secured and as one such additional input into implementation rather might risk increasing the work load on the PM. Should it anyway be considered, the area of EU Acquis regarding the legal aspects of public administration might be relevant for such a reinforcement of expertise at CRA's disposal.

But primarily, it is internally that some supplementary measure would merit consideration. The MTR Team is not in a position to suggest specific measures to be taken, but feels that the issue should be raised between the Parties. It should also be discussed between Sida and CRA whether not the present PM could be relieved of tasks outside the Project, particularly in view of the fact that the remuneration for the assignment suffices for full time service.

Quality control as regards IT is implemented through testing at the level of Unit, and through Final Acceptance of new designs. Also here, and particularly in view of the fact that the majority of the IT design staff is self-taught, some measure of reinforcement might preferably be considered. In that area, also an MA input could possibly be of interest.

In addition, when studying the reform process and environment surrounding the CRA, the MTR Team has the impression that a more effective monitoring system is also needed at an institutional level, to ensure that personal data is not misused. The risk for misuse can be expected to increase with the number of items being stored in a single database. This impression is confirmed unofficially by the Tbilisi office of Transparency International, which also reports that at times it has proven difficult and unpredictable to take illegitimate bureaucratic interventions to court.

The MTR Team has also understood that Sida is considering supporting Transparency International's Georgian programme, something that seems both logical and interesting. Synergy effects could perhaps be found.

4.5 TO WHAT EXTENT WILL THE BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT CONTINUE AFTER PROJECT COMPLETION?

Most Project activities will result in new legislation and procedures of operation and cooperation, in newly created IT models and templates, and in staff trained in these areas. The effects that these Project Results will produce can be expected to continue also after Project completion. For example, it seems probable that the staff will be

able to use the skills they have gained, that data will continue to be collected, and that IT systems will be updated and managed.

On the other hand, development in Georgia is swift, which was also seen within the Project, when – early – political priorities shifted, so that on-time achievement of planned results on time as regards legal acts was challenging. This implies that the lifetime of reforms undertaken may be shortened by changing preconditions and context, Project Results becoming outdated. Such a scenario is of course quite logical as a result of the present reform situation in the country, and should first of all be taken as a challenge for decision-makers and inspiration to promoting continued reforms.

Project impact in terms of **gender balance** was reported above, the management team comprising only female staff, and the IT component being mainly staffed with male specialists. In the other components of the project, the majority of staff is female. As for impact outside the Project, the prime stakeholder group is actually the population at large. Women and men will be affected in the same way by Project Results, which in a traditional society like Georgia probably will mean that relatively, the civil rights of women will be strengthened.

4.6 What is the level of project ownership from Georgian side (Georgian institutions), are they ready to build on the project achievements and carry on exchanging data, investing in new technologies, etc.

The ongoing reform process in Georgia, of which the present Project is part, is being initiated and driven by a strong political will. In parallel, the MTR assesses the ownership as regards the Project as high. Also the commitment at operational and administrative levels, that is the readiness to build on Project achievements and to continue using procedures and models developed within the Project, seems to be clear.

The Public Finance Management (PFM) assessment mentioned above endorsed the direct channelling of funds to CRA. Further, the PFM assessment concluded that Sida needed to be confident that the requested funds cannot be provided by the budget or directly by the CRA itself. This, in effect, has not been fully proved to the MTR Team, who finds for example that mandatory tasks should by definition be financed by the government. Summing up its impressions, the MTR Team feels that the government, knowing that foreign donors are interested in supporting action in this area, for that very reason itself abstains from financing at least parts of it. Or put differently, the government feels that if donor financing is accessible, it should be used. On the other hand, this does not seem basically to affect government commitment to the reform process, as government financing for other items within the CRA reform programme has been made available.

But the fact that Sida's financing has been approved as well for agreed Project Activities in the pursuit of (not specified) objectives in support of the stated Development Objective, as also for agreed mandatory tasks, which would have to be executed in-

dependently of Sida's presence, has resulted in a mixed type of development support. The MTR Team has understood that initially, i.e. during Project Preparation, the CRA cooperation from Sida's viewpoint was seen as a case of project support. Early, however, additional financing purposes were added to the original PD, including mandatory ones that CRA would have to perform but did not have the necessary resources to do, which by definition is a kind of budget support. So, it can be concluded, Sida's support to CRA has become a mixture of project support and budget support.

This is not a dilemma of principle. The issues at hand for the MTR are twofold. (i) Sida's approval is needed for this kind of change and as already noted above, Sida has confirmed that the amended Project Plan has been approved. (ii) These amendments should not be allowed to dilute the priority already given to agreed Project Components. As also stated above, Project Management has confirmed to the MTR that all agreed activities will have been implemented when the Project period runs out. Further, the assessment of CRA as a cooperation partner that could be eligible for direct financing, which has been confirmed during this MTR, does also mean that budget support is a relevant form of cooperation. Thus, the MTR comment here would only be to suggest that these aspects of the CRA cooperation be fully considered and documented in the form of Agreed Minutes.

5 Conclusions

The MTR Team sees the rationale for Sida's support to CRA as the desire to support the Georgian Government's effort at improving the reliability and quality of Public Sector Services, thereby contributing to strengthening democracy in the country. The Team concludes that this desire is being met in the present cooperation, and that the Project is already contributing to strengthening democracy in Georgia.

Further, the original Project Results to be achieved were relevant and in most cases realistic. They still are. Purposes, linked to the mandatory functions of CRA, added to the original Project Plan also seem valid and realistic. As Project Activities thus are of two kinds, Sida's support has come to be both project support for what would not have to be done without the Project, and budget support for what would have to be done anyway.

The financing model chosen, direct financing, is convincing in the present case, although conclusions in that respect as regards other potential cooperation partners in Georgia need to be based on individual assessments. Project Implementation is swift, the majority of objectives having been met already. The gender distribution with the Project is balanced.

Factors influencing Project achievement are assessed as mostly positive, although a possible change in government can potentially affect Project outcome. The risks identified in Sida's Assessment Memo have so far not affected Project Implementation. No killing factors have been identified.

The setup for Monitoring and Quality Control is weak. Too much responsibility seems to be vested in the present Project Manager. Also, remuneration under the post of Project Manager should suffice for a full time assignment. Internally, supplementary measures for strengthened monitoring and quality control should be considered. In addition, Monitoring Advisory inputs could be considered.

The MTR Team finds the probability high that the benefits of the project will continue after project completion. Two main reasons underpin the conclusion – one being the fact that planned Project Results in many cases are technical and should not be politically controversial, the second being that government commitment to the CRA and its reform agenda is continued high.

6 Recommendations

Based on the MTR findings presented above, Sida is recommended to

- continue funding the Project Activities agreed with CRA through the agreed period;
- continue following rather closely the implementation of the Annual Work Plan in line with the Project Agreement;
- always establish written Agreed Minutes from Review Meetings with the Project Management;
- together with Project Management, address the issues of monitoring and quality control, ascertaining an improved coverage of the two functions either through internal measures or externally, for example in the form of Monitoring Advisory inputs;
- together with Project Management and/or with the leadership of CRA and/or the Ministry of Justice, address the issue of an improved monitoring function as regards the management of civil data at the national level, and
- in the case that Sida will finance a cooperation with Transparency International, identify and profit from possible synergies with the present Project.

Annex 1 – Terms of Reference

Review of the project Promoting Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia

Evaluation Purpose: Sida wishes to procure a consultant for reviewing Sida funded project “Promoting Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia” that has been implemented by the Civil Registry Agency (CRA) under the Ministry of Justice of Georgia since July 2010 (completion date July 2013) with overall budget of the project 23 500 000 SEK. Outcome of the review will be used by Sida Eastern European Unit, also by Swedish Embassy in Georgia and will be shared with CRA as the implementing partner and Government of Georgia.

Intervention Background: Sida is active in Georgia since late nineties and especially after Sida opened its office in Georgia in 2006. Since then the Georgia Democratic Governance and human rights sector has been one of the most important focus area having leading role in Sida’s Georgia country strategies. Georgia has managed to improve services provided by the state to the citizens. There are couple of state agencies who are champions in improving quality of provided services. Among the best one would mention Civil Registry Agency and National Agency for Public Registry. With both Sida runs projects.

The project implementation partner is CRA itself to which Sida provided a grant. This is the first time when Sida provided funds directly to the Georgian authority that implements the project. Therefore Sida is highly interested in learning as much as possible about project progress, lessons to learn and in case of positive outcome to use the approach in other suitable cases.

The development objective of the project is to promote the integrity of the civil data on a national level.

The project objective is to turn the CRA into a more customer-friendly and transparent organisation which is able to operate within the boundaries of its functionalities preferably without any external support in a safe, rapid and accurate fashion. This will benefit the citizens and the government structures alike by providing prompt, accurate, less time and recourse-consuming service and hence, significantly increase overall governance effectiveness in the country.

Expected outcomes:

- Improved efficiency of state institutions. The access into the CRA’s database completed with digitized and biometric data will raise efficiency of other state institutions along with CRA in execution of their functions.

- Improved public services. The on-line access to the CRA's database the public services will be less time-consuming and prevent cases of falsification.
- Accurate addressing templates. A single and integrated management infrastructure for addressing will be established to be uniformly used on the entire country scale.
- Automatically generated, accurate, one-push-button list.
- Well trained professional staff at the CRA and MFA.
- Regulated activities through an updated legal framework.
- Raised awareness among the Georgian population on the reforms.

Evaluation questions: the consultant is expected to answer following questions

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid
- To what extent are the objectives/results likely to be achieved
- What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives
- How good is internal project monitoring and quality assurance including qualitative and quantitative assessments
- To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after the project completion
- What is the level of project ownership from Georgian side (Georgian institutions), are they ready to build on the project achievements and carry on exchanging data, investing in new technologies, etc.

Methodology: A consultant will need to conduct desk study of the project related documentation, e.g. Project Document, reports and project produced documents and products.

A consultant will need to conduct interviews with CRA relevant staff that are involved in the project. This will require to travel to Georgia and apart of interviewing CRA staff, on the top of it to interview also Sida officers and selected number of the project beneficiaries – relevant Georgian Government officials and some selected donors and civil society representatives. If possible to get feedback from Georgian and non-Georgian citizens who received services from CRA.

Work Plan and Schedule: It is expected that review will happen in May 2012 and will take fifteen working days including about five working days in Georgia for conducting interviews and visiting project sites.

Before leaving Georgia update and debrief Sida and/or Swedish Embassy about early findings.

Consultant should produce a draft report by mid June if possible. After receiving comments from Sida the consultant will finalise the report.

Reporting: The consultant shall write a report of maximum 20 pages long (excluding appendices) with a three page executive summary. The report must be concise. The consultant first will produce a draft report that will be shared with Sida and after receiving comments and questions from Sida the draft will be finalised. The report should be submitted in Microsoft Word format.

Required skills and qualification: Sida is looking for a consultant

- familiar with aid effectiveness agenda, the Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action
- good knowledge of project cycle management
- at least five year experience of evaluation/reviewing projects
- experience in good governance and management
- the proposed personnel must have excellent spoken and written English
- knowledge of Georgian or other language spoken in the region will be an asset

Annex 2 – Persons Interviewed

CRA MTR, MAY 2012, PERSONS INTERVIEWED

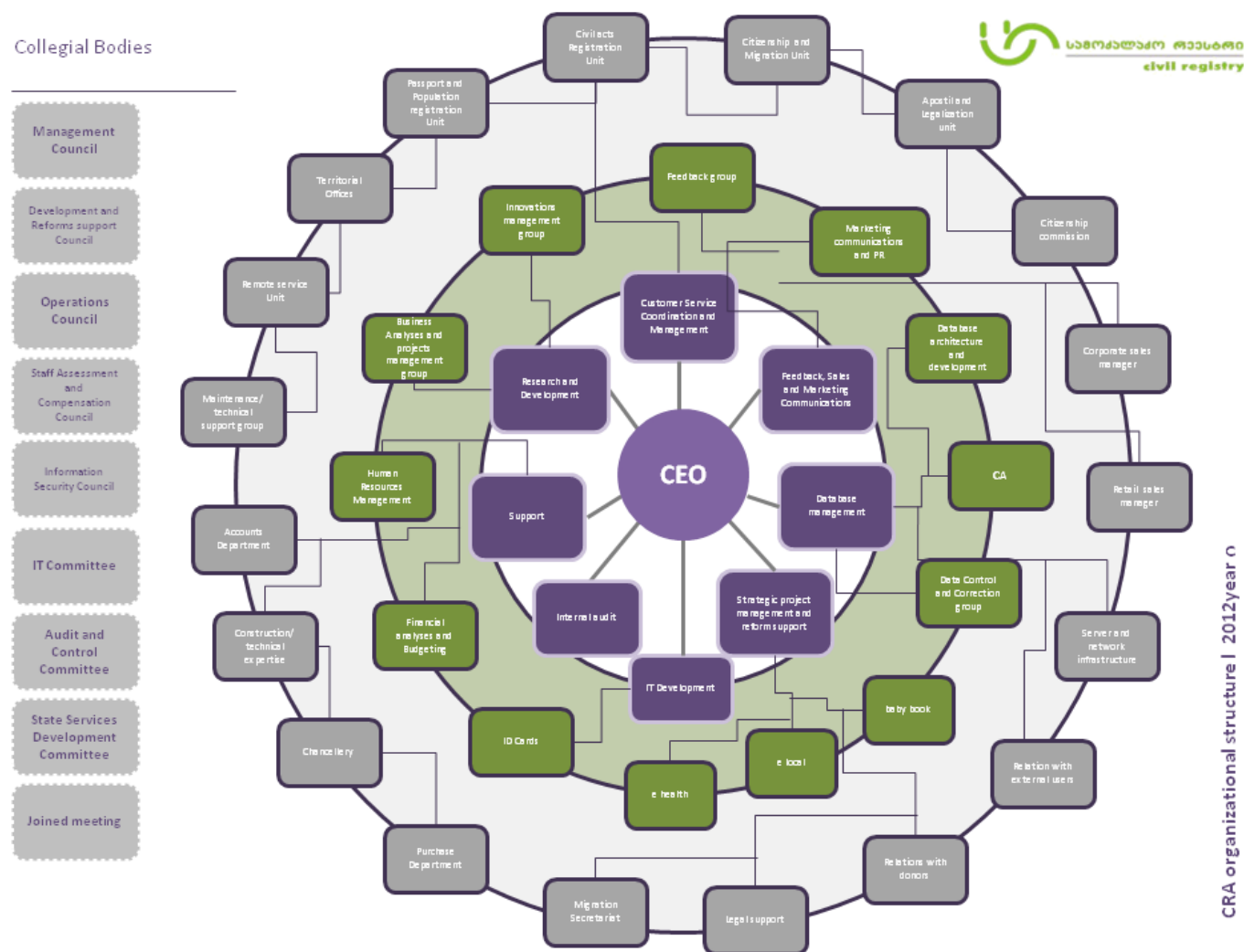
- Alf Eliasson, Counsellor and Head of Development Cooperation, Sida
- Artur Kazarov, Project Lawyer, CRA
- Erekle Urushadze, Senior Analyst, Transparency International
- Gigi Bregadze, Project Coordinator, UNDP
- Giorgi Grigalashvili, Deputy Director, Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Giorgi Mebonia, Coordinator of Addressing Field Activities, CRA
- Givi Chanukvadze, Director, Rustavi Public Service Hall
- Ia Biganishvili, Project Lawyer, CRA
- Irakli Gvenetadze, Chairman, Data Exchange Agency
- Kakha Khimshiashvili, Programme Officer, Sida
- Ketil Gomelauri, Sida Project Manager and Head of International Division, CRA
- Ketevan Khutsishvili, JD, Project Manager, Rule of Law and Good Governance, EU Delegation
- Khatuna Khvichia, Project Management Specialist, Democracy and Governance, USAID
- Kirsten Michener, Senior Democracy and Governance Advisor, USAID
- Levan Samadashvili, Project Manager, CRA
- Mamuka Samkharadze, Head of Passport and Population Registration, CRA
- Marie Wirde, Kvinna-till-Kvinna
- Mari Khardziani, Deputy Head, International Division, NAPRI
- Nino Lortkipanidze, MD, Nutrition Officer, Unicef
- Rusudan Mikautadze, Project Coordinator, NAPRI
- Sara Laginder, Kvinna-till-Kvinna
- Zura Magradze, Head, Information Analytical Division, CRA

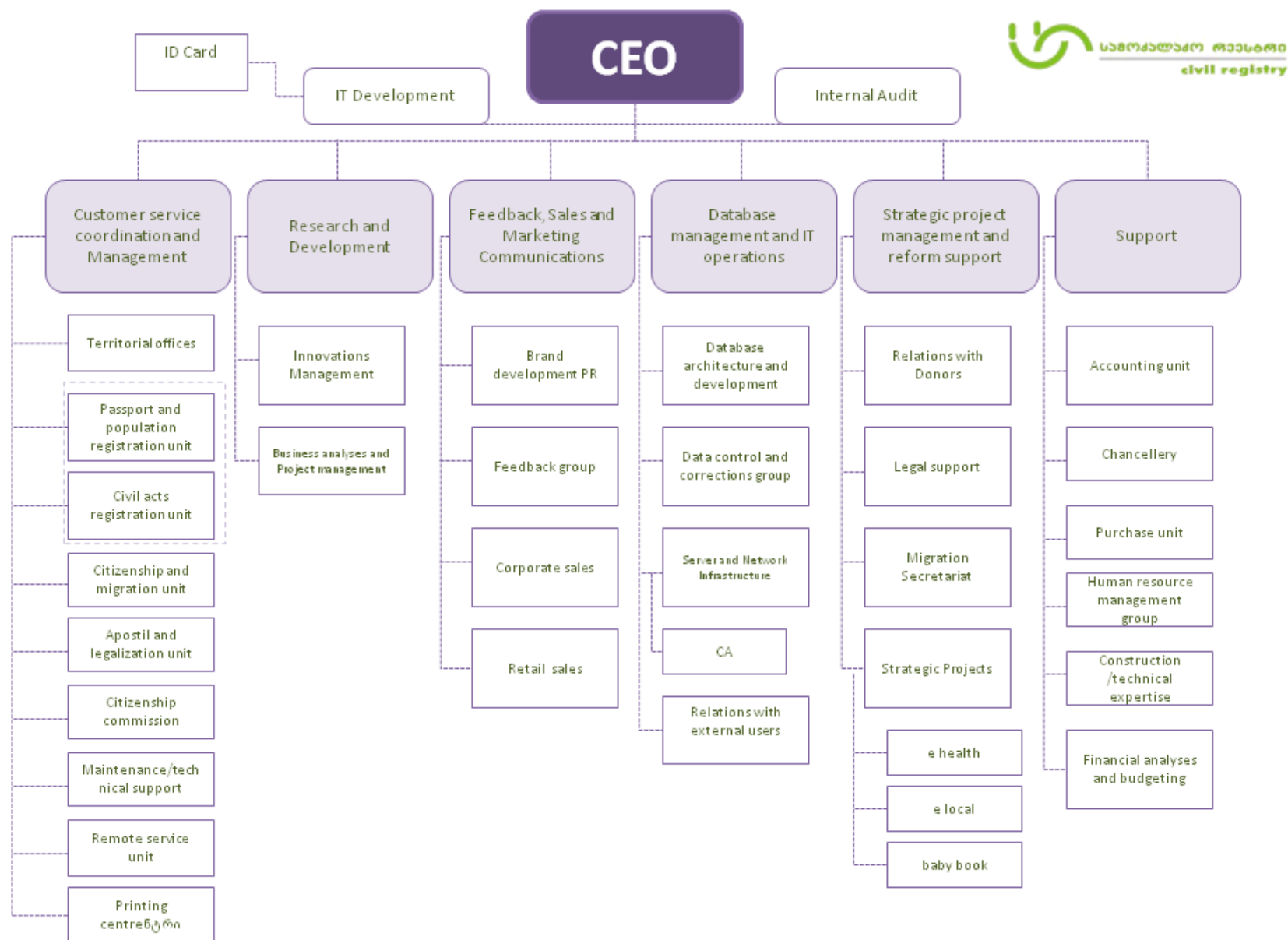
Annex 3 - Bibliography

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Annex 4 – The New Organisation of CRA





CRA organizational structure | 2012 year



Evaluation of Promoting the Integrity of Civil Data in Georgia

Sida support to the Civil Agency of Georgia 2010-2012

In support of state sector reform in Georgia, Sida contributes SEK 23,500,000 from 2010 to 2012 to the Civil Registry Agency (CRA). The Project is an input into strength-ening democracy. CRA, an agency under the Ministry of Justice, is responsible for all civil registration in the country, including births, deaths, marriages, divorces, affiliations, citizenship, etc. Sida supports CRA reform efforts in the areas Voter List, Migra-tion and Citizenship, Addressing and Training, plus certain mandatory tasks.

The present Mid Term Review concludes that overall advancement so far within CRA constitutes a major step in terms of institutional development for the state sector of Georgia. As for the Sida Project, most Planned Results will probably be achieved in time. Planned Project Results, which seem valid and realistic, will contribute to moving Georgia closer to the EU. Government ownership is high, although government financing for CRA is limited. Arrangements for Project Monitoring and Quality Control should be strengthened.

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