



“COMMITMENT TO CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE” PROJECT TARGET SECTORS AND ISSUES

In finalizing a list of priority sectors and issues, the project has referred to the following:

- Eastern Partnership - Focusing on key priorities and deliverables (the “2020” document),
- Financing Agreements and related documents provided to ALA by the EUD,
- The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (“CEPA”),
- RA Government’s Program from 2017-2022, (RA Government’s Program),
- CSOs’ assessments of priority issues, mainly focus group discussions, based on the mapping study conducted by the project in 2017,
- Recommendations of EUD,
- Latest trends.

The project has also taken into account the sectoral expertise of the consortium members, bearing in mind that their experience is focused on 4 sectors (justice, education, business and local government), while a total of 9 sectors will be covered by the project.

Set out below are the 9 proposed sectors and issues (at least one issue per sector), with a short summary of the reasons for choosing the sector, and the state of play of reform. Where there is more than one issue listed, the first one is deemed the main target, and if the implementing CSO coalition can also participate/influence the other issues, that will be a bonus.

SECTOR 1. JUSTICE

Issues:

1.1. Need to increase access to justice of vulnerable groups, including the strengthening of the public defender institute.

- Is included based on *EUD’s recommendation*.
- Is envisaged in the *Government’s Program*.
 - introduce incentive mechanisms for pro-bono legal service providers;

- expand the scope of providing free legal aid; in particular, increase the limit of the minimum amount for receiving free legal aid in cases of property (monetary) claims to one thousand five hundred-fold of the minimum salary;
 - in parallel with providing free legal aid, introduce, jointly with the Chamber of Advocates, legal and institutional mechanisms necessary for the provision of affordable legal aid;
 - introduce the institution of mandatory insurance against the error of law for advocates by developing criteria for compensating the damage caused due to professional error
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.2. Need to improve the Compulsory Enforcement Service of Judicial Acts.

- Is envisaged in *CEPA*,
 - Is envisaged in *the 2020 document*,
 - Is envisaged in *Government's Program*.
 - clarification and minimizing of the timeframes for enforcement actions, including expert examinations;
 - ensuring that the document electronically flow between compulsory enforcement officers and the participants of enforcement proceedings;
 - introducing video and audio recording for specific enforcement actions;
 - creating an electronic system between courts and the Judicial Acts Compulsory Enforcement Service, while abolishing the process of issuing writs of execution to trial participants.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.3. Need to improve of ethical behaviour in the judicial system.

- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 10. Implementation of key judicial reforms*
 - Adoption of effective disciplinary rules and codes of ethics in line with EU standards for judges and prosecutors,
 - Comprehensive and effective training of the judiciary on judicial competences and ethics
 - Setting a functioning complaint mechanisms accessible to the public.

1.4. Need to improve the RA Legal and Judicial Reforms Programme, poor level of professional CSOs' participation mechanisms in the processes of developing, improving, monitoring and advocating for the RA Legal and Judicial Reforms Programme; need to ensure bigger involvement of CSOs in the processes of developing, improving, monitoring and advocating for the RA Legal and Judicial Reforms Programme.

- Is envisaged in *Government's Program*.

- develop a new RA strategy for legal and judicial reforms and its action plan,
 - develop a comprehensive electronic management system jointly with the Supreme Judicial Council (upon consent),
 - undertake necessary measures deriving from the RA Constitutional Law on the Judicial Code, including activities for drafting regulatory legal acts.
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 10. Implementation of key judicial reforms*
- Including Substantial reduction of the backlog of civil and criminal cases and case disposition time across Partner Countries.
- Is envisaged in *CEPA*,
- Mainly refers to the independence of the judiciary, access to justice, the right to a fair trial and efficiency of judicial system.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.5. Need to improve the probation institution, poor level of professional CSOs' participation mechanisms in the processes of improving, monitoring, and advocating for the probation institution; need to ensure bigger involvement of CSOs in the processes of improving, monitoring and advocating for the probation institution.

- Is envisaged in *Government's Program*.
- ensure phase-by-phase operation of the electronic monitoring system implemented by the State Probation Service,
 - implement a re-socialisation programme within the State Probation Service by engaging at least 30 percent of beneficiaries;
 - ensure the use of measures of restraint that are alternative to detention;
 - put into full practice the functions of the State Probation Service, as well as enhance and improve the capacities of the Service.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

SECTOR 2. HUMAN RIGHTS

Issues:

- 1.1. The need for the elaboration and/or improvement of anti-discrimination public policy, including the legislative regulation of the sector and solution of the problem of persons with disabilities**
- 1.3. The need to improve the procedures for the application of anti-discriminatory legislation by judges, including the need to adopt a procedural manual.**
- 1.4. Improvement of internal anti-discrimination guidelines by state institutions: the need for their introduction in at least 3 state institutions.**
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

- Is envisaged in *“Human rights budget support” Financial Agreement*
 - Adoption of standalone anti-discrimination legislation,
 - Adoption of a procedural manual for judges on the implementation of the comprehensive standalone anti-discrimination legislation,
 - Granting the mandate to HRD Granting the mandate to HRD for:
 - submission of Amicus Curiae to the Constitutional Court,
 - development of guiding documents in combatting discrimination
 - public awareness-raising campaigns on issues related to discrimination
 - authority to launch examination in alleged cases of discrimination,
 - submission of independent report making recommendations.
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 2. Gender equality and non-discrimination* foresees in this regard:
 - Anti-discrimination legislation adopted in remaining Partner Countries/Progress in harmonising relevant legislation,
 - Track record of equality bodies established and effective monitoring of anti-discrimination law.

1.2. The need for monitoring of community-based services for PWDs, including development of a monitoring tool for CSOs, which currently does not exist.

- Was raised during focus group discussions.
- Is included based on *EUD’s recommendation*

1.5. The need to monitor threats against human rights defenders.

- Was raised during focus group discussions.
- Is included based on *EUD’s recommendation*.

SECTOR 3. PUBLIC FINANCE MANAGEMENT

Issues:

1.1. Low level of child- and gender-sensitive budgeting mechanisms at national and local levels, as well as within CSOs and CSO coalitions. The need for improving these mechanisms, as well as of greater involvement of CSOs in monitoring and advocacy activities.

Gender sensitive budgeting is an approach designed to mainstream the gender dimension into all stages of the budget cycle. It refers to the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analyzing and auditing budgets in a gender-sensitive way. It involves analysis of actual expenditure on women and girls as compared to on men and boys taking into account their different needs and priorities. It helps to decide how strategies should be made, adjusted and reprioritized. It is

a tool for effective policy implementation where one can check if the allocations are in line with policy commitments and are having the desired impact.

- Is envisaged in *CEPA* in more general sense (gender equality)
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 2. Gender equality and non-discrimination* in more general sense (gender equality).
- Was raised during *Focus group* discussion in more general sense (gender equality).
- Is envisaged in *“Public finance policy reform” Financial Agreement* in more specific way.

1.2. Low level of CSO participation in discussions on the Simplified State Budget of the RA and its public communication process. The need for improving these mechanisms, as well as of greater involvement of CSOs in monitoring and advocacy activities.

- Is envisaged in *Public Finance Policy Reform FA*
 - Publication of Simplified State budget in line with international standards,
 - Discussion of Simplified State Budget with CSOs
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 11. Implementation of public administration reform*
 - Improvement of management and transparency of public finances”.

SECTOR 4. BUSINESS

Issues:

1.1. The need to improve SME Strategy; low level of mechanisms for CSOs' and Business Associations' participation in the development, improvement, monitoring and advocacy of SME strategy, including the issues mentioned below. The need for greater involvement of CSOs and Business Associations in the development and/or improvement of SME strategy, monitoring and advocacy processes.

- Is envisaged in *“SME development” Financial Agreement,*
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 4. Economic development – regulatory environment*
 - Adoption of SME strategies and action plans/roadmaps.
- Is envisaged in *CEPA*
 - Implementation of strategies for SME development, based on the principles of the Small Business Act for Europe,
 - Monitoring of the implementation process through regular reporting and dialogue.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.2. The need for progress in dialogue on establishment of the “business ombudsman” institute

- Is envisaged in *Government program*
 - Development of the RA Law on the Defender of Interests of Business People and introduction of the institution of the defender of interests of business people as an effective alternative measure for protecting the violated or disputed rights and legitimate interests of business people and for dispute resolution.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.3. The need for improved policy and implementation of entrepreneurship education, including development of curricula on social enterprise education.

- Is envisaged in “*SME development*” *Financial Agreement*.
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 18. Youth leadership and entrepreneurship*.
 - Fostering youth/social entrepreneurship.
- Is envisaged in *Government program*.
 - Introduction of elements of financial and entrepreneurship education in general education institutions.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

SECTOR 5. EDUCATION

Issues:

1.1. The need to develop a new strategic approach to improving the link between VET and the labour market, including the development of a new strategic approach to it.

- Is envisaged in *CEPA* in more general sense
- Is envisaged in *Government’s program*
 - Upgrading vocational education and training (VET) in agriculture by developing and introducing state educational (qualification) standards and relevant syllabi in VET.
 - Establishment of career guidance units with appropriate specialists at VET institutions.
- Is envisaged in *2020, Section 18 Youth leadership and entrepreneurship*.
 - Improvement of the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training, and in particular its responsiveness to labour market needs.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.2. The need for development and monitoring of the school careers advice system.

- Is envisaged in *Government's program*.
 - Establishment of career guidance units with appropriate specialists at VET institutions.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

SECTOR 6. SOCIAL SECTOR:

Issues:

1.1. The need to assess key issues, develop and (or) improve public policies, as well as to advocate for reform implementation, through monitoring of social inclusion of children with disabilities

- Is envisaged in *Government's Program*,
 - harmonizing national legislation with the requirements of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - Adoption of the Law On Protection of Rights and Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;
 - Imposing administrative liability for infringement of accessibility conditions established by the RA legislation, as well as for failure to comply with the requirements for accessible conditions.

1.2. The need to introduce, improve and monitor community-based support centres, as well as advocate for them.

- Was raised during focus group discussions.
- Is included based on *EUD's recommendation*

SECTOR 7. AGRICULTURE

Issues:

1.1. Cross-cutting: the need to promote and improve e-agriculture

E-agriculture involves the conceptualization, design, development, evaluation and application of innovative ways to use information and communication technologies in the rural domain, with a primary focus on agriculture

- Is envisaged in *CEPA* in more general way
 - sharing knowledge and best practices with regard to rural development policies to promote economic well-being for rural communities,
 - promoting the modernisation of agricultural production.

1.2. The need to develop women entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector, as well as development of niche markets and organic farming

- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.
- Is included based on *EUD's recommendation*.

1.3. The need to develop and promote an effective regulatory system for agricultural cooperatives.

- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 6. New job opportunities at the local and regional level*
 - Continued increase of farmers' participation in business oriented groups/cooperatives (by 2020 at least 15 000 farmers are members of business oriented farmer groups/cooperatives; at least 1 000 business-oriented farmer groups created to promote better market access.)
- Is envisaged in *"ENPARD" Financial Agreement*
 - Adoption of legislation on business oriented farmers corresponding to international standards (Although is already adopted, there are gaps, mainly regarding tax issues, which stand as obstacles for the business activities of cooperatives)
- Is envisaged in *Government's Program*
 - Implementation of a state programme for support to cooperatives.
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

1.4. The need to advocate for policies which ensure fair competition in the agricultural market.

- Is envisaged in *Government's Program*
 - Continuation of the operation of the second programme of rural agricultural resource management and competitiveness,
- Was raised during *focus group* discussions.

SECTOR 8. ECONOMY

Issues:

1.1. Low level of mechanisms for CSOs' participation in local growth strategies and "smart" community initiatives: the need to ensure greater CSO engagement in local growth strategies and "smart" community initiatives, improvement of these strategies and initiatives, their advocacy and monitoring

1.2. The need to monitor and promote successful implementation of local economic development plans.

1.3. The need to advocate for PAR local government reforms.

- The economic development in more general sense is envisaged in *CEPA*
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 6. New job opportunities at the local and regional level*
 - Smart specialisation strategies identifying key priorities for economic modernisation developed in at least two countries.
 - Implementation of a plan for local economic development by Local Authorities, and at least kick-starting of 10 urban demonstration projects in the frameworks of Mayors for Economic Growth programme,
 - Implementation of regional development projects via their pipeline and/or regional development fund.
 - Participation of regional/local stakeholders in planning and implementation of relevant local pipeline.
- Is envisaged in *Government Program* in general way.
 - ensuring economic development in marzes,
 - introduction of the Marz Development Fund scheme,
 - raising the funds from the state budget, grants and other sources through which part of the operational plans of marzes will be financed.

SECTOR 9. ENERGY

Issues:

1.1 The need to monitor rural green economy and clean energy initiatives, and promotion (advocacy) of these issues in schools.

- Is envisaged in *CEPA*
 - Cooperation on energy matters ensuring access to secure and environmentally friendly energy.
 - The promotion of green economy measures and eco-innovation, the identification of the necessary human and financial resources and a review mechanism.
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 16. Environment and adaptation to climate change*
 - Drafting and adopting Green economy plans.

1.2 The need to monitor and promote local government energy efficiency initiatives

1.3 The need to advocate, develop and/or improve public policies, and advocate for best practice codes and regulatory measures to mainstream energy efficiency in public works processes (e.g. in public procurement).

- Is envisaged in *CEPA*

- Cooperation on energy matters ensuring access to affordable energy and promotion of the energy efficiency and energy savings.
- Is envisaged in *2020 document, Section 15 Energy efficiency and renewable energy*
 - Energy efficiency measures, i.e. better performing district heating systems, energy efficient public transportation/lighting.