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“Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan” Phase II

Mid-Term Project Evaluation Report

31 July 2022

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ACRONYMS

CAR	Civil Acts Registration
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRDP	CR Development Programme 2021-2025
CROIS2	Civil Registration Office Information System v.2
CRSR Project	“Support to Civil Registration System Reform” Project
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
EOA	Executive Office of President
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoT	Government of Tajikistan
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IALE	Institute for Advanced Legal Education
ILRC	International Legal Resource Centre
IT	Information Technologies
LNOB	Leave No-one Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOHSP	Ministry of Health & Social Protection
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan
MI	Ministry of Interior of Tajikistan
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance of Tajikistan
MoJ	Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan
MTDS	Mid-Term Development Strategy
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSS	One-Stop-Shop (front-and-back office model)
PwDs	Persons with Disabilities
RBM	Results Based Management
RoL	Rule of Law
RT	Republic of Tajikistan
SDC	Swiss Cooperation Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UAGS	Upravlenie Aktov Gradjanskogo Sostoyaniya (Department of Civil Registration)
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Guidelines
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WG	Working Group
ZAGS	Civil Registration Office (or Zapis Actov Grajdansogo Sostoyaniya, Russian name for Civil Registration Office)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BASIC PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION		
Project Title	'Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II'	
Project Number	00085270	
Country	Republic of Tajikistan	
Implementing Partner	UNDP Tajikistan	
Geographical coverage	Nationwide	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	1 January 2020	31 December 2023
PAC meeting date	17.01.2020	
Project budget (USD)	Total resources required:	8,000,000 USD
	UNDP TRAC:	1,000,000 USD
	Donor (SDC):	4,000,000 USD
	Government of Tajikistan (In-Kind):	3,000,000 USD
Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD):	<p>Outcome 1. People in Tajikistan have their rights protected and benefit from improved access to justice and quality services delivered by accountable, transparent, and gender responsive legislative, executive and judicial institutions at all levels.</p> <p>CPD Output 1.2. Justice sector institutions enabled to uphold rule of law in compliance with international commitments; promote and protect Human Rights and improve access to justice and civil registration of vulnerable population groups, especially women, youth and persons with disabilities. Indicative Output(s) with gender marker: GEN 2</p>	

RATIONALE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The mid-term evaluation assessed the progress of the “Civil Registry System Reform Project - Phase II” following standard Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria (**Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability**). Coherence, Impact and Gender are also assessed.

The purpose of the mid-term project evaluation is to identify project implementation issues, assess progress made towards the achievement of objectives, relevance and performance of the project against stated outputs for the last 24 months (January 2020-January 2022), in order to identify issues, lessons learned and recommend course of corrections if required.

The Terms of Reference and the Guidance for UN evaluations and quality standards was followed in the preparation of the evaluation report. The first steps

taken in the evaluation process involved desk review of documents related to the project and the preparation of an Inception Report which was shared with the UNDP and adjusted as necessary prior to and during the evaluation process. Then a field mission with consultations in Tajikistan was conducted by the international evaluation consultant with the support of a national evaluation consultant and with the support of the UNDP, Project Team members and national stakeholders. In addition to Dushanbe ZAGS offices in Firdavsi and I. Somoni districts, the following regions and cities were visited and consultations carried out with ZAGS' staff in: Sughd Region (Khujand and Guliston cities); Khatlon region (Nurek city; Kulyab city; and Vose district), and DRS (Rudaki district and Vahdat city).

PHASE II PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 'Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – *Phase II*' builds on the results and lessons learned from the 'Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – *Phase I*' implemented by UNDP Tajikistan with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The second phase of the Project aims to complete the reform of the civil registry system in Tajikistan. The project continues to work with different actors at different levels to make civil registry institutions and mechanisms more responsive to the populations' needs and more functional, by developing capacities among the relevant institutions and stakeholders and by simplifying and standardizing processes. *The focus of the second phase is on accessibility, affordability and quality of services.* This includes more refined capacity development approaches and creating strategic partnerships with other institutions, such as the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Agency on Social Insurance and Pensions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Interior (MI).

The overall goal of the second phase of the project remains the same:

Women's, men's and children's human rights are better protected by strengthened provision of civil registration services and by increased public access to the system.

The project's activities built around two broad outcomes, as follows:

Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.

Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital

events recorded in the civil registry system.

These outcomes, and the activities under them, separate broadly into supply and demand-side drivers for reform: Outcome 1 is that state bodies and CR system actors are better able and equipped to supply CR services to the population while Outcome 2 is that citizens are aware and empowered to demand their rights for such services. The activities were provided under the following outputs:

Output 1. *Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured.*

Output 2. *New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry.*

Output 3. *Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ.*

Output 4. *Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms.*

Geographic location: The main project office is located in Dushanbe, for ease of coordination with the main government stakeholders. The overall project administration is being carried out at the UNDP Tajikistan Country Office. The project is being implemented throughout Tajikistan, including in the GBAO region of the country. In each region of the country, UNDP already has a long-term presence and partnerships with the ZAGS and other justice sector and local level institutions, including the legal aid centres, women's watch groups, mahallas and jamoats, and local grassroots level NGOs. With regards to the locations for roll-out of the one-stop-shop model, these will be decided by the Ministry of Justice, in coordination with UNDP and based on pre-defined criteria such as the level of service delivery, physical space available, geographical location and pre-existing capacities. The OSS office model being implemented by the MoJ and the CRSR project is probably better described as a 'front-and-back' office model. It qualifies as an OSS model because the ZAGS offices provide a multitude of civil registration services. Whenever there is a reference to One-Stop-Shop (or OSS) in this report it is important to keep this context in mind.

Partnerships: UNDP Tajikistan has long successful strategic partnership history with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Office which is built on unique comparative advantages and led to the number of supported projects by SDC in the area of Governance implemented by UNDP. As the main donors of this project, SDC is a member of the Project Steering Committee. The driving force behind the Civil Registry System reforms in Tajikistan remains the Ministry of

Justice. The key role of the Ministry of Justice continues to be to ensure the institutionalization and sustainability of results and maintain necessary policy coordination with other relevant stakeholders. The Ministry of Justice continues to be the main partner to the project together with the Department of Civil Registration, SEU “Qonuniyat”, and the Institute for Advanced Legal Education and local civil registry offices responsible for the registration of civil status acts. Other partners include: the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan; the Ministry of Health and Social Protection; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Interior; the Committee of Women and Family Affairs; UN Agencies; and NGOs such as NGO Human Rights Center.

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Over the past fifteen years, the Tajik government has undertaken a number of legislative and policy reforms to create the framework for an effective justice and social system. However, full implementation of laws is lagging behind, and judicial and legal institutions remain constrained by the low level of resources budgeted for this sector.

There is no general population registry in Tajikistan. Although initial discussions have taken place regarding the creation of a population registry and the introduction of Unique Identification Numbers, there is currently no coordinated approach reflected in the reform strategies of the Government of Tajikistan. Population related data originates from the civil registry system or the health sector, which collects data on births and deaths. The reform of the civil registry system is envisaged as being the first step in strengthening systems of generating population related data.

One of Phase 2 project’s focus is on the development of secondary legislation and by-laws required to fully implement the new package of legislative and regulatory civil registration amendments developed during Phase I, as well as lobbying and advocating the MoJ for full support to implementation of the new legislative amendments developed and adopted in Phase I. In addition, it is vital to pass a regulation (instruction by-law) on Consular departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is authorised to conduct civil registration of Tajik citizens abroad. In particular, the project continues raising the capacity of Civil Registration Officers to provide quality services, improve their computer literacy, enhancing the capacity of IT unit to be able to maintain the electronic system and other planned activities. Phase II project supports the introductions and piloting of One-Stop-Shop (OSS) model to ZAGS offices, the digitalization of CR archives and public awareness-raising about CR services.

By adopting a human rights-based approach (HRBA), the project is people-centered and links demand by rights holders for better social services outcomes. Through capacity development of duty-bearers (MoJ (CR/ZAGS, SEU “Qonuniyat”, Institute for Advanced Legal Education/IALE), the project increases the ability to access CR services for rights holders, in particular marginalized groups and individuals that will lead to better rights protection for all.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology adopted ensured that the ToR questions relevant to the evaluation criteria requirements under the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability)¹ are adequately addressed. The United Nations Principle *Leave No-one Behind (LNOB)* was also taken into account.

The evaluation methodology adopted adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards. The evaluator adopted an integrated approach involving a combination of data collection and analysis tools to generate concrete evidence to substantiate all findings. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results were triangulated from a variety of sources, as detailed in the paragraphs below, including verifiable data based on project indicators, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits where/when possible. The evaluation team followed a participatory and consultative approach that ensured close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.

The evaluation methodology followed the steps required in the ToR for the evaluation:

Desk review phase: Preliminary desk review and initial discussions with UNDP Tajikistan project team to familiarize with the project’s the intervention logic, identify key stakeholders and the sampling framework and to develop the evaluation methodology;

Data collection phase: Field mission to Tajikistan and live and remote interviews with the project stakeholders; presentation of preliminary findings to the UNDP and key stakeholders;

Data analysis and reporting: Analysis of the data collected, assessment of achieved results, drafting the mid-term evaluation report, conclusions, development of lessons learned and of recommendations.

¹ DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. For additional information: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

FINDINGS

EFFECTIVENESS

F1. The implementation of CRSR Phase II project faced major challenges in 2020 (i.e. Covid-19 pandemic) and in 2021 (i.e. an audit) and a number of other challenges and constraints (i.e. change in MoJ senior leadership; delayed approval of 2021 Annual Work Plan; MoJ reassessment of priorities resulting in the postponement of the approval of the CRDP).

F2. Reasonable progress has been made by the CRSR Phase II project towards the achievement of Outcome 1.

F3. Reasonable progress has been made by the CRSR Phase II project towards the achievement of Outcome 2.

F4. Until a robust micro-service system e-platform, capable of interconnectivity and interoperability and with security protection of data and information shared electronically, it will be difficult to integrate the CR system with other relevant government agencies' systems.

F5. Implementation of Output 1 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 1.

F6. Service improvement as a result of project's support is noticeable in all ZAGS offices visited during this evaluation, particularly in the pilot front-and-back-office (OSS) model in Kulyab² and Rudaki. However there is no division between front and back-office services, which can result in some confusion.

F7. Implementation of Output 2 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 2.

F8. The recruitment of 7 IT specialists in 2021 provided robust capacity to SEU Qonuniyat transforming it into a key IT enterprise at the MoJ³ and potentially in the implementation of e-government in the public service delivery in Tajikistan.

F9. Implementation of Output 3 is on track to being fully achieved at end of project. Reasonable progress has been made towards achievement of Output 3.

² The service improvement in Kulyab ZAGS office is more likely the result of the project's support with equipment and trainings since the Kulyab office is not yet adequately staffed to operate as front-and-back-office.

³ This finding is based on focus group discussions held with the Qonuniyat IT specialists and with MoJ leadership. It is also corroborated by every interview held with heads of ZAGS offices across the country who reported that SEU Qonuniyat IT department provides excellent quality professional IT services.

F10. Implementation of Output 4 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 4.

EFFICIENCY & PARTNERSHIP

F11. The Steering Committee meetings attendance includes high level stakeholders' representatives (Minister of Justice, UNDP Resident Representative, SDC Country Director)_which is efficient and effective in ensuring that the decisions reached has the support of stakeholders with the capacity to implement them.

F12. There was a delay by the Senior Management of the MoJ to endorse the project's 2021 Annual Work Plan and getting the Minister's signature on the document, which caused an unnecessary delay in the implementation of activities.

F13. The MoJ is a reliable and trusted partner of the UNDP, SDC and the CRSR Project. One evidence of this is the MoJ ownership of the products and outcomes of the project, ensuring that most of the trainings and technical activities are carried out by MoJ units and departments (e.g. Qonuniyat; IALE) which have secured state line budgets, building their capacity to sustain the results achieved under the project. The implementation partnership with state institutions makes the project effective and efficient.

RELEVANCE

F14. CRSR Phase II project is relevant and consistent with the national policy and priorities of the Republic of Tajikistan.

F15. ZAGZ and the CR system are directly linked to Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (2016-2030): National Priority 1 ("Enhancing political and legal institutions to ensure fundamental rights") under Section 3.1 ("Effective Public Administration"); Priority 3 under Section 5.5 ("Social Welfare") calls for "the social protection of vulnerable groups. The activities in the project with indicators and targets are directly linked to Priority 2 ("Improving access to basic social services") of Section 5.8 ("Reducing Social Inequality").

F16. CRSR Phase II project is interconnected and directly linked to the development partners' cooperation strategies (SDC), UNDAF outcomes and country development programme documents (UNDP).

F17. CRSR Phase II project is intrinsically linked to three SDGs: Goal 16 (*'inclusive institutions, rule of law and access to justice'*), Goal 10 (*'reduce inequality and discrimination'*) and Goal 5 (*'empowerment of women and girls, gender equality'*).

SUSTAINABILITY

F18. Output 1 (*Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured*) is on track to be sustainable but requires development partners' continued advocacy and support.

F19. Output 2 (New quality business processes in place and effectively applied in civil registry): Currently the quality of service at ZAGS offices shows great improvement with citizens getting registration of civil acts within reasonable period of time and less visits to the CR office; However, in order to ensure sustainability, business processes need to be formalized into effective operational guidelines or standard operational procedures (SoPs).

F20. Output 3 (Electronic civil registry system handed over and effectively managed by MoJ) is on track to be sustainable but the CROIS2 system must be upgraded into a more robust micro-service system e-platform that supports interoperability and guarantees data security.

F21. Output 4 (Public Awareness by the population on how to have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system) – Although there are some results and achievements reported under Output 4 in this evaluation, there is not sufficient data available for a full assessment of the sustainability of this output since the results of research and surveys conducted by the project are not available at the time of this evaluation.

INCLUSION & GENDER

F22. CRSR Phase II project continues to place a lot of focus on issues of gender and persons with disabilities (PwDs) and continues to provide support for improvement of the capacity of ZAGS office staff provide citizen-focused services for women, PwDs and other vulnerable citizens of Tajikistan.

CONCLUSIONS

The CRSR Phase II Project is a complex project with multi-stakeholders and with ambitious set of targets and outcomes. The implementation of the project was significantly influenced by the impact of the Covid-19 Global Pandemic in 2020 and by the Audit in 2021. As well, there was a change in the Senior Management of the Ministry of Justice which took some time to adjust some management aspects and slowed down the process of approval of the 2021 Annual Work Plan. These challenges and constraints resulted in the project efficiency being modest and the project performance being behind the original planned timetable. Given the challenges the project faced in the first two years of operation, the evaluation is **recommending a 'no-cost 1-year extension' of the project** in order to ensure a well-paced and orderly completion of all the activities of the project.

These challenges were mostly out of control of the project team. Nevertheless, the materials and financial resources invested by the project were adequately invested to keep the project on track to achieve its goals and outcomes. It is a reflection of the strong and effective project team that the UNDP has managed to establish for Civil Registry system reform project, which was able to achieve visible results within the short period of time.

The CRSR Phase II Project is highly relevant to national priorities as reflected in the CR system reform legislation and other strategy and policy documents of the Ministry of Justice and the regulatory framework being undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan with the aim to achieve e-government in the provision of public services. The Civil Registration System (CRS) is a core government structure assigned to record the vital events of citizens such as births, marriages, and deaths. The project has responded to its need to digitalize and modernize contributing to reduction in civil registration time and cost which is important particularly for women, children and persons with disabilities and rural communities. The project's outputs respond to the priorities of the government as detailed in the draft National Civil Registry Office (ZAGS) Reform Strategy by focusing on the harmonisation and strengthening of the legislative and policy framework, individual and institutional capacity building, improvements in the working conditions in the civil registry offices and awareness-raising among the population. The project's outcomes and outputs are also contributing to national priorities 1, 2, and 3 in Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (2016-2030) by contributing to enhancing legal institutions to ensure fundamental rights, effective public administration (Priority 1); improving access to basic social services and

reducing social inequality (Priority 2); and in general improving the social welfare system (Priority 3).

The project is also aligned with the SDGs and with UN strategic documents. The CRSR project is contributing to three of the four priority areas identified in the UNDP Country Programme. The project contributes to improved governance, equitable economic growth; and to social equity and protection of vulnerable groups from discrimination. Since the UNDP CPD is aligned with the outcomes of UNDAF the project is also contributing to the outcomes of UNDAF in terms of democratic governance and human rights (Outcome 1); equitable economic development (Outcome 2); and social development, inclusion and empowerment (Outcomes 3, 4, and 5).

The project has a direct **link to SDC Cooperation Strategy Outcomes** which is related to *“Public institutions deliver efficient and effective services in an inclusive way and are accountable to citizens. Civil society participates in decision making processes”*.

The analysis of the outputs of the project under the Effectiveness heading of this report provide sufficient evidence to conclude that, at a reasonably satisfactory level, good progress has been made towards the achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2 at the end of the project.

Key achievements of the CRSR Phase II project in partnership with GoT include:

- **Analytical Dashboard** introduced to monitor timely entering of CR records into CROIS2 – increase in digitalization to 93% vs 7% paper-based in 2021 when compared to 73% (2016-2020)
- New **OSS CR Offices model**⁴ in the Firdavsi and I. Somoni districts of Dushanbe, Vahdat city of DRS and Norak city of Khatlon (scheduled to open in 2022)
- The project supported the transition to electronic printing of seven types of certificates using matrix printers (versus previous handwritten) in all CR Offices in Tajikistan. It should be pointed out that the format and the process/methodology of printing need review to be simplified and more cost effective⁵.

⁴ The OSS office model implemented so far by the CRSR project is probably better described as a ‘front-and-back’ office model. It qualifies as an OSS model because the ZAGS offices provide a multitude of civil registration services.

⁵ Although for time being printing has reduced the time for service provision, workload of CR staff and possible errors, The CRSR Phase II project recognizes that it is still not a best solution since it brings

- CROIS2 load and stress test of CROIS2 carried out; Implementation of the major recommendation i.e. increase the bandwidth of the channel and use caching server for the user sessions data, user group and other recommendations reduce costs for system support but increases page loading speed allowing greater no. of users to simultaneously work in the system (now allows 2000-4000 users)
- In 2021 UNDP contracted IT specialists were handed over to IT specialists of **SEU Qonuniyat** under the MOJ, which now is a robust IT entity, with capacity to solve ZAGS' technical problems within minutes online & within 2 hours at ZAGS' offices
- Due to Covid pandemic most formal trainings did not take place. However, during monitoring visits, in-person trainings by Qonuniyat IT specialists and by the project team were provided to 230 CR personnel in Dushanbe, DRS and Khatlon region. Also the expert WG under the MoJ was established to develop **5 e-learning courses** for CR and SALAC staff
- A new friendly user-centered **Website** was developed and launched to guide people through civil registration process – 2,000 persons per month access the website
- Launched a pilot **Mobile ZAGS** (Nov-Dec 2021) registering 386 people (60% women) in 18 districts and 26 jamoats in DRS, Khatlon, Sughd and GBAO
- Conducted outreach sessions with the support of CSO resulting in 700 birth certificates issued and raising awareness of more than 2,000 people in the project target areas (Khuroson, Jayhun, Rasht, B.Gafurov, Farhor, Rudaki, Tursunzade)

CRSR Phase II project placed a lot of focus on issues of **gender and vulnerable citizens**. The design of the OSS model offices and key achievements referred to above, such as the outreach sessions, the design of the **Website** and the piloting of **Mobile ZAGS** were all carried out taking into account women and other vulnerable citizens such as PwDs.

The project ensured that all project activities at outcome and output levels were allocated a gender rating of No 2, meaning that the activities have gender equality as a significant objective, so even if an activity is not specifically dedicated to gender, gender issues are discussed in all sections of it, with inclusion of sex-disaggregated data where relevant. The project supported the monitoring and

additional burden to CR offices to supply special cartridges and seek services to those new printers to deal with technical issues.

collecting of data on **gender disaggregated statistics/indicators** on timely birth registration and gender-related indicators as well. CROIS2 platform can be used to produce reports that show records of births and deaths disaggregated by gender.

While ‘policy sustainability’ of the outputs of the project are in place and the government has taken measures to ensure some ‘financial sustainability’ of the products of the project, technical, financial and institutional sustainability of most of the outputs of the project still depend on further and continued development partners’ support. UNDP’s approach under CRSR Project of reliance on national staff with an in-depth-knowledge of the government bureaucracy and the cultural and development context of the country, coupled with the approach to invest on state institutions (e.g. MoJ’s SEU Qonuniyat), is an added value that will contribute towards sustainability of the products and outcomes of the project.

LESSONS AND BEST PRACTICES

L1. Human resources training and institutional capacity development project targeting priority areas of a key beneficiary (i.e. MoJ’s SUE Qonuniyat, UAGS, IALE) is more effective if it is comprehensive and developed in a way that the project becomes a strategic partner of the target institution. When a project addresses the beneficiary institution’s key priorities and needs, it fosters teamwork and buy-in (i.e. ownership) and results in a more effective implementation of the activities of the project.

L2. Strengthening the capacity of a state enterprise such as SUE Qonuniyat not only contributes to sustainability of products and outcomes of the project but also ensures readily available and provided services to ZAGS offices (i.e. prompt online service and an average of 2-hour on-site service) since it is an in-house state service provider.

L3. Lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic include: the need to increase connectivity of UAGS and ZAGS offices through **better internet and fiber-optic lines**, implement tools such as online notification and/or registration and the introduction of cashless payment for the services, innovative training methods such as online learning, integrated systems for inter-agency coordination and interoperability of systems. The challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance to accelerate the digital transition of Civil Registry System registry offices along with other public services.

L4. Implementing institutional changes must be flexible and adaptable to the needs and work environment of each beneficiary, instead of adopting a *one-size-*

fits-all approach. The OSS model concept may not be fully applicable to all ZAGS office. For example, infrastructural limits or staff shortage may limit the application of new working models and require different support approaches to such ZAGS offices.

L5. The Project supported the training of trainers on gender where IALE instructors were trained by UN Women on the understanding that IALE would incorporate such trainings to ZAGS offices' directors and staff. '*Cascading training modality*', where training participants are required to develop and implement trainings on their own, produces a more robust result of the project intervention. Actually some new ZAGS offices staff are being trained by staff that had received training on CROIS2 system. Any director or other staff receiving specialized training should be required to replicate the training to other staff that was not a beneficiary of the same training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (directed to the project team, national partners and international development partners)

RI. It is recommended that the national partner (MoJ), starting immediately as a priority in the short term, demonstrates strategic leadership in the continuation of the implementation of the project by undertaking clear actions with specific and substantive recognizable results in reforming the civil registry system.

Short explanation/further action:

The national partner ought to move forward quickly with legislation and policy reforms that will support the implementation of the project activities and outputs and ought to take operational steps to raise the effectiveness and the efficiency of the CR system. Reforms must undertake key critical steps in the process of reforming the CR system such as, for example, the abolishment of paper-based certificates, starting with birth registration.

R2. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization needs to be re-activated and operationalized to deal with integration and interoperability issues, and protocols and security guidelines need to be put into place. Clear actions and results goals should be established for the operationalization of this WG. It is crucial that MoJ takes a significant responsibility and leadership in the re-activation and operationalization of this WG with immediate and short-term concrete results.

Short explanation/further action:

The Executive Office of the President assigned the Consular Department under the MoFA as coordinator/lead for data collection and arrangement of meetings with all state institutions involved. The Consular Department expressed its readiness to support with coordination of actual technical integration and data exchange. Although in the past, MoFA decided not to proceed due to concerns about the CROIS2 security of data and its capacity to operate existing systems, if the recommendation to update/replace the CROIS2 system is adopted it would respond to MoFA's concerns. The CRSR project and the GoT should now re-activate and operationalize the Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization with a mandate to study and implement a system to integrate the Civil Registration system with other relevant government agencies' systems (i.e. health, pension system, statistics and the national ID/passport system) with security protection of data and information shared electronically. MoJ needs to take a significant responsibility and leadership in this process and present immediate and short-term results in the re-activation and operationalization of this WG.

R3. Improve the preparatory work ahead of the Steering Committee meeting. The project team needs to do a lot of preparatory work and share the information with the Steering Committee members ahead of the meeting date, highlighting relevant points of concern, alternative courses of action and practical recommendations.

Short explanation/further action:

The Steering Committee meetings attendance includes high level stakeholders' representatives (Minister of Justice, UNDP Resident Representative, SDC Country Director). Committee meetings are very formal which is important at the political level but hard to get work done. In such environment, the meeting time can end up being filled with a number of interventions and speeches leaving very little room for analysis to iron out issues and reach practical and effective decisions. It is recommended that extensive preparatory work is done by the project team in the days leading to the meeting and communicated to the meeting participants in preparation for the Steering Committee meeting. The project team would be in a position to present concrete recommendation which the Steering Committee members would review and reach decisions at the meeting.

R4. Streamline the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan so that, once presented and approved by the Steering Committee, its implementation can proceed without the need to have the Minister sign the Work Plan document.

Short explanation/further action:

The requirement of the Minister of Justice to sign the project's 2021 Annual Work Plan caused some delay in the implementation of activities and it is ineffective. Often, activities are in the process of being implemented and to pause them during the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan causes unnecessary delays. The main purpose of the Steering Committee meeting is the approval of the Annual Work Plan and, once this takes place, its implementation should proceed without the necessity of waiting for the signature of the Minister on the document. Often the Minister is busy with other more urgent matters and cannot deal with the signing of the Work Plan within a reasonable period of time.

R5. Proceed aggressively with the implementation of the MoJ Action Plan by enacting legislative amendments and by-laws (regulations) necessary to implement the original CR legislative package (Government decree #77).

Short explanation/further action:

Now that the MoJ has been selected by the GoT as the lead Ministry in the implementation of the Law on Public Services, it has an opportunity to be bold in pushing forward the necessary legislation to move forward to fully implement the digitalization and modernization of the CR system in Tajikistan. The digitalized CR system, with its model office design, should be showcased as the model for the e-government and modernization of public service delivery in Tajikistan.

R6. Revise the OSS concept in order to adapt it as a front-and-back office model and proceed with the roll out of the remaining OSS/front-and-back ZAGS offices (outputs/key activities of the project).

Short explanation/further action:

Formalize the front and back-office model (e.g. by developing and adopting operational guidelines and SoPs) and apply them to all 10 project-supported CR offices (with adaptation where

necessary) with assistance in internal renovation, including accessibility for persons with disabilities. Continue to support capacity building activities to those Civil Registry Offices on the front and back-office model and on soft skills to improve their interface with citizens, particularly women and PwDs (citizen-friendly services).

R7. Upgrade or replace the CROIS2 system by a robust micro-service system e-platform, capable of interconnectivity and interoperability, which can be integrated with other relevant government agencies' systems (i.e. health, pension system, statistics and the national ID/passport system) with security protection of data and information shared electronically (based on national security standards).

Short explanation/further action:

The problem with CROIS2 is that it is a monolithic system making it hard to integrate with other agencies' systems. Now there are micro-service systems which are designed for interoperability with greater security of information shared electronically. It will also require some legislative and policy groundwork to implement this recommendation. The instruction/by-law on consular departments of MoFA needs to be enacted and a personal electronic identification needs to be established. Continue the process of e-government in the CR system so that citizens can carry out civil registration acts through a Web Portal without the need for physical signature, and to be able to make payment for the service online i.e. online application and registration process.

R8. Provided that the MoJ and the project develop and agree on a sustainability strategy for the gradual withdrawal of the project funding of Qonuniyat, continued support to SEU Qonuniyat and its IT Specialists in terms of capacity building, technical equipment and case management should be considered.

Short explanation/further action:

Supporting and building capacity of Qonuniyat, a state institution, is more sustainable than contracting a private company to do the technical work of supporting the CR system platform. However, gradually the project support for the salary of the IT specialists should be withdrawn as planned while ensuring that the MoJ honours its commitment to keep the number of IT specialists that are required to manage the system and respond promptly to service requests by the ZAGS offices. This support must be conditional upon the national partner (MoJ) producing and agreeing on a sustainability strategy with a clear vision and specific actions the national partner is taking and plans to continue to take to ensure sustainability of these investments when the project exits its support (exit strategy). Without a clear strategy with actionable sustainability strategy agreed to by the national partner this recommendation should not be adopted.

R9. MoJ/UAGS to adopt standard operation procedures (CR instruction) to streamline homogenous standards of service delivery in all CR offices.

Short explanation/further action:

UAGS and ZAGS business and operational processes need to be formalized and operationalized into effective operational guidelines or standard operational procedures (SoPs) resulting in homogeneous standards of service delivery in all CR offices. Clear actions and results goals should

be established for the development and implementation of these guidelines and there should be evidence of results being accomplished uniformly across all CR offices. Currently legislation and by-laws (regulations approved by decree of the MoJ) are the only guidance that ZAGS office staff receive in order to carry out their services to the public. Legislation and regulations (by-laws) should be supplemented by operational guidelines (usually issued by the Ministry or by the department (i.e. UAGS) and reviewed and approved by the legal department of the Ministry) explaining in plain language how to implement the legislation and the by-law. Output 2's implementation is dedicated to the development of operational guidelines and SoPs and it should be implemented effectively.

RI0. A strategy or a concept note to be developed for the digitization of archives with multiple options to be selected and endorsed by the MoJ and donor.

Short explanation/further action:

A strategy for the digitalization of archives should consider different options, including:

1. Training of archivists with salary increase for them by MoJ as a part of their responsibility. MoJ shall regulate this task internally. If the option is selected, the target has to be revised due to inability of the project to achieve 1,000,000 archives digitalized;
2. Creation of the data center under the Qonuniyat with MoJ responsibility to cover the expense of the staff; this option contributes to sustainability. If the option is selected, the target has to be revised due to inability of the project to achieve 1,000,000 archives digitalized;
3. Fully outsource the digitization task to achieve the target. This approach is not sustainable but will allow the project to achieve its target.

RI1. Improve the quality and quantity of outreach activities in order to improve the rate of timely birth registration at ZAGS. Consider engaging, in addition to NGO HRC, other NGOs that work with women and PwDs in the rural areas and jamoats.

Short explanation/further action:

From January to December 2021 there were 271,221 birth registrations, of which only 218,206 or 80% were timely registrations (i.e. registered under 1-year-old). During field mission consultations the evaluator reviewed the radio, video and other podcasts and social media products which were reasonably good but designed more to reach people who have access to such media. More grassroots dissemination of information to create sensibility about the importance of the CR services and how to access them is necessary to increase awareness and NGOs that work with women and PwDs in the districts, rural areas and jamoats outside Dushanbe could be engaged using small-scale grants or contracts to do this work (e.g. CSO Network on RoL and Human Rights).

RI2. ZAGS offices staff trainings ought to include online trainings to ensure regular engagement of all CRR staff in capacity development opportunities and the annual training programs ought to include sessions/components for sharing experiences and lessons and deal with technical glitches and other problems in the electronic registration system.

Short explanation/further action:

Staff training programs are more effective if regional ZAGS offices' staff are encouraged to submit their lessons learned and issues they have faced in their work and have sessions that allow them to present such issues and encourage the sharing of experiences and concerns. This modality would be able not only to improve the quality of the training making it more focused in problem-solving modality but also allow UAGS to identify technical issues that need to be corrected. For example, during the evaluation visits to ZAGS office, staff complained that the system does not alert the director that documents are waiting for her electronic token signature, resulting in staff having to come one after another to remind the director to apply her electronic signature to complete the registration.

R13. Support training for UAGS on improvement of maintenance and repair logistics and on procurement processes for machines' parts and supplies. Clear actions and results goals should be set for the establishment of these systems and processes and there should be evidence of results being accomplished.

Short explanation/further action:

UAGS need training to improve the logistics of ZAGS offices' maintenance and repair services (e.g. air condition repairs) and on procurement processes for supplies (e.g. printer's ink and printer parts, paper and other office supplies). The issue of logistics (rules and SoPs) ought to be raised with the MoJ to identify whether each office has financial means to carry out this function or if central logistical support is to be provided in timely manner.

R14. A no-cost project extension of 12 months (1-year) is recommended to allow the project implementation to be completed at a reasonable pace and achieve its planned goals/outcomes.

Short explanation/further action:

The Covid pandemic prevented many planned activities from taking place during the 2020 and the Audit process denied the project team access to most of the project funds during 2021. Although the project team worked very hard to overcome these major constraints in 2020 and 2021, there is still some catch up work to ensure effective implementation of all planned activities. Consultations carried out with the project team and review of the documentations and project funds lead to a conclusion that it is not reasonable to expect that available project funds can be spent with effectiveness and efficiency unless there is a 12-month 'no cost' extension of the project. In principle, SDC and the MoJ are not objecting to such an extension. Considering all above, particularly the extraordinary circumstances faced by the project (i.e. Covid and Audit), it can be argued that the project meets all required pre-requisites for a no-cost extension. **If an extension is granted, the project should hold a retreat with all the relevant stakeholders** to conduct a thorough situation analysis of the changes that may be advisable to make in terms of activities, methodology, approaches and timelines for the completion of the project activities in the time horizon of an additional year.

General framework of the recommendations

The table presents the general responsibility framework of the MTE recommendations.

Rec. #	Recommendations	RESPONSIBILITY: Project Team/ DP/ National Partner (MoJ)
<i>A. Strategic Recommendation</i>		
<i>Rec. 1</i>	<i>National Partner demonstration of strategic leadership in the implementation of the project.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>B. Operational Recommendations</i>		
<i>Rec. 2</i>	<i>Re-Activate and Operationalize the Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization with MoJ taking significant responsibility and leadership role in the process.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 3</i>	<i>Improve the preparatory work ahead of the Steering Committee meeting</i>	Project Team
<i>Rec. 4</i>	<i>Streamline the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 5</i>	<i>Aggressive implementation of the MoJ Action Plan.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 6</i>	<i>Roll out of the remaining OSS/front-and-back ZAGS offices.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 7</i>	<i>Upgrade or replace the CROIS2 system by a robust micro-service system e-platform.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 8</i>	<i>Continued support to Qonuniyat provided that the MoJ and the project develop and agree on a sustainability strategy for the gradual withdrawal of the project funding of Qonuniyat.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>Rec. 9</i>	<i>MoJ/UAGS to adopt standard operation procedures to streamline homogenous standards of service delivery in all CR offices.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 10</i>	<i>A strategy or a concept note to be developed for the digitization of archives with multiple options to be selected and endorsed by the MoJ and donor.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>Rec. 11</i>	<i>Improve the quality and quantity of outreach activities in order to improve the rate of timely birth registration at ZAGS.</i>	Project Team
<i>Rec. 12</i>	<i>Adoption of online training and inclusion of experience sharing and lessons learned during annual ZAGS offices staff trainings.</i>	Project Team & NP
<i>Rec. 13</i>	<i>Improvement of procurement, maintenance logistics for ZAGS.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 14</i>	<i>No-cost project extension of 12 months (1-year).</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)

MAIN REPORT

I.0 RATIONALE, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Introduction

The evaluation assessed the progress of the “Civil Registry System Reform Project - Phase II” against stated outputs for the last 24 months (January 2020-January 2022), in order to identify issues and recommend course of corrections if required. It also highlights issues and challenges affecting effective and efficient implementation of outputs and their impact or contribution to project outcomes and impact⁶.

The Terms of Reference and the Guidance for UN evaluations and quality standards was followed in the preparation of the evaluation report. The first steps taken in the evaluation process involved desk review of documents related to the project and the preparation of an Inception Report which was shared with the UNDP and adjusted as necessary prior to and during the evaluation process. Then a field mission with consultations in Tajikistan was conducted by the international evaluation consultant with the support of a national evaluation consultant and with the support of the UNDP, Project Team members and national stakeholders. In addition to Dushanbe, the following regions and cities were visited and consultations carried out with ZAGS’ staff in: Sughd Region (Khukand city); Guliston city; B. Gafurov district; Nurek city; Rudaki district; Vahdat city; Kulyab city; and Vose city.

The report provides a brief description of the background and the context of Tajikistan and describes the objectives and the overall approach and methodology of the evaluation. It also contains a set of annexes: terms of reference (ToR) for the evaluation; list of stakeholders interviewed; evaluation mission work schedule; documents reviewed; and the evaluation design matrix.

Country Context

During the period 1996-2014 Tajikistan was in transition from the old Soviet system towards a relatively open democracy, with guaranteed freedoms and free economic development. Reforms have been started in multiple sectors, including in legal aid and civil registration. Despite the progress in the legislative sphere and the commitment by the Government to the reforms, key challenges remain in relation to their implementation, in particular lack of financial means, weak institutional and professional capacities and poor inter-ministerial coordination.

Tajikistan has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.357, ranking it 69 out of 155 countries in the 2014 index⁷. On the Gender Development Index (GDI)⁸

⁶ The source of most of the information described in Part I of this report is from the desk review documents received from the UNDP some of which have been reproduced *verbatim* after verification of its veracity.

⁷ Update: Tajikistan has a **GII value of 0.314**, ranking it 70 out of 162 countries in the 2019 index. In Tajikistan, 20.0 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 93.3 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 95.7 percent of their male counterparts. Source: Tajikistan – Human Development Reports (<http://hdr.undp.org/Country-Profiles>TJK>)

Tajikistan has a GDI value of 0.952⁹. Tajikistan has a number of formal legal protections for the rights of women; however, the application of these laws is often weak or absent. A national gender policy was passed in 2010, the National Strategy for Enhancing the Role of Women in the Republic of Tajikistan, which listed concrete actions to improve women's participation in education, the labour market, entrepreneurship, and in politics. However, the National Strategy does not identify responsible agencies, and lacks timeframes with milestones, funding sources, and monitoring plans. Furthermore, gender policy at the national level is often not manifested locally, and gender mainstreaming in subnational planning is sporadic or absent. Overall, the Rule of Law extends only intermittently and unreliably to women in Tajikistan.

Persons with disabilities (PwDs) also face major obstacles to accessing justice and government services. While Tajikistan has several laws on the books dealing with PwD issues, in practice these are not effectively enforced. Tajikistan is now a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) but has not ratified it and does not have a coherent legal framework for dealing with these issues. Funding for PwD issues and problems is very low.

According to the Constitution, the judiciary in Tajikistan is independent and protects the rights and freedoms of people, state's interests, organizations, institutions, law and justice. Over the past fifteen years, the Tajik government has undertaken a number of legislative and policy reforms to create the framework for an effective justice system. Most of these legislative reforms are of relatively good quality. However, full implementation of laws is lagging behind, and judicial and legal institutions remain constrained by the low level of resources budgeted for this sector.

There is no general population registry in Tajikistan. Although initial discussions have taken place regarding the creation of a population registry and the introduction of Unique Identification Numbers, there is currently no coordinated approach reflected in the reform strategies of the Government of Tajikistan. Population related data originates from the civil registry system or the health sector, which collects data on births and deaths. The reform of the civil registry system is envisaged as being the first step in strengthening systems of generating population related data.

1.2 Phase II Project Overview and Development Context

Project Description

The 'Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – *Phase II*' builds on the

⁸The GDI measures gender inequalities in achievement in three basic dimensions of human development—health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older); and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI per capita). http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/TJK.pdf

⁹ Update: The 2019 female HDI value for Tajikistan is **0.586** in contrast with 0.712 for males, resulting in a **GDI value of 0.823**. The GDI is calculated for 167 countries. Source: Tajikistan – Human Development Reports (<http://hdr.undp.org/Country-Profiles/TJK>)

results and lessons learned from the ‘Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – *Phase I*’ implemented by UNDP Tajikistan with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in close cooperation with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) of the Republic of Tajikistan.

The second phase of the Project aims to complete the reform of the civil registry system in Tajikistan. The project continues to work with different actors at different levels to make civil registry institutions and mechanisms more responsive to the populations’ needs and more functional, by developing capacities among the relevant institutions and stakeholders and by simplifying and standardizing processes. *The focus of the second phase is on accessibility, affordability and quality of services.* This includes more refined capacity development approaches and creating strategic partnerships with other institutions, such as the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Agency on Social Insurance and Pensions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the Ministry of Interior (MI).

The overall goal of the second phase of the project remains the same and is that:

Women’s, men’s and children’s human rights are better protected by strengthened provision of civil registration services and by increased public access to the system.

The Project has 2 identified Outcomes that together will produce the goal, the first of which has been amended since the first phase:

Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.

Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.

Outcome 1 intervenes at the national, regional and local level on the supply side, whereas Outcome 2 intervenes at the national, regional and local level on the demand side. Thus, it was anticipated that the second phase of the project would continue to result in changes both at local, regional and national levels (micro, medium, macro), which will lead to systemic changes in the provision of civil registration services in Tajikistan.

Outcome 1 has three (3) outputs [Outputs 1, 2, and 3] and **Outcome 2** has one (1) output [Output 4].

Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.

Output 1. *Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured.*

The project adopts a consolidated approach and continues to support the change in the state approach/policy in respect to the civil status registration system according to which the system is to be enhanced and the provided services are to become accessible to everybody; the law should respond to and resolve all the issues and problems faced/arising in practice; and bylaws/instructions should be developed in order to support the proper implementation of the basic law and establish a common practice in the field. It is necessary to change the role of the state from passive registrar to active implementer – the state should use all means for timely identification and registration of civil acts and should not depend on the will of an applicant; this is particularly so with regards to birth and death registration.

In this context, the project is facilitating the development of secondary legislation and by-laws required to fully implement the new package of legislative and regulatory civil registration amendments developed during Phase I, as well as lobbying and advocating the MoJ for full support to implementation of the new legislative amendments developed and adopted in Phase I. For example, the Decree of the Government #77 regarding civil registration is being revisited with a view to amending it so that there is no requirement for the citizen to sign their act, and thus for the act to be printed. The act should be verified purely electronically, saving time and resources. The project is monitoring the implementation of these legislative and regulatory amendments and intervenes when appropriate. In addition, the project supports the development of monitoring and evaluation capacities within the Ministry of Justice, so that it can assume this role itself.

In addition, it is vital to amend the law on Consular departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which is authorised to conduct civil registration of Tajik citizens abroad. It is necessary to incorporate **Civil Registration Office Information System v.2 (CROIS2)** system and free of charge birth registration into this bill. The revision should be followed by separate instruction for consular departments to conduct civil registration abroad.

The ZAGS Reform Programme 2020 – 2025 was anticipated to be adopted by the end of 2019. Due to a change of the government policy focus as a result of the Law on Public Services and the decision to implement e-government in the overall country public service delivery adoption of the programme was postponed. The Ministry of Justice then adopted a 2-year Action Plan (2021-2022) which allowed the project to continue the implementation of the activities in support of the CR system. In particular, the project continues raising the capacity of Civil Registration Officers to provide quality services, improve their computer literacy, enhancing the capacity of IT unit to be able to maintain the electronic system and other planned activities.

During Phase I of the project implementation, challenges were identified in developing the civil registration system further, due to the lack of coordination within the government institutions regarding a national system of e-governance, and the lack of inter-operable information systems. Existing approaches are fragmented and need to be harmonised so that all stakeholders are working towards a common vision. In this context, the project will go further in its provision of support to the MoJ and will provide technical advice and assistance in the strengthening of the enabling environment required for the development of inter-agency agreements between relevant stakeholders.

The MoJ's coordination role in developing the system of civil registration in Tajikistan needs to be further strengthened so that it can coordinate the activities of not just the ZAGS, but also the jamoats at the local level, and consular services operating outside of Tajikistan. Thus, the project is providing capacity building and institutional support to the MoJ to assume the lead role in advancing the reform of the civil registry system. The project will continue closely liaising with Executive Office of the President (EoP) and Parliament to keep these key institutions involved in coordination processes. In addition, the Project supports the coordination working group on informational technologies under the EoP established in 2019.

Output 2. *New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry.*

The second phase of the project plans to continue to focus on the development of the civil registry offices, through strengthening service provision and continuously providing support to ZAGS. This includes the development of new business processes to further streamline the provision of civil registry services and the development of new instructions for ZAGS to create a more client-orientated focus in service provision.

During the first phase of project implementation steps have been made towards introducing a new organisational structure for the civil registry system, which corresponds to the new and amended primary and secondary legislation and policy framework. While developing the new organizational structure, special attention is being paid to strengthening the MoJ Civil Registration Department and administering its performance. It is important for the Department to have all the operational tools for the proper management of the civil registration bodies. Hence, the project is to conduct functional review of the entire Civil Registration Department to fully understand what the key deficiencies and areas are to improve. This covers the business process, HR policies, monitoring and evaluation, etc. As a result, the project is to propose more innovative and most effective management tool for the entire Civil Registry system which still operates on old traditional paper-based workflow.

As part of the efforts of improving service delivery, the project supports the Ministry of Justice in establishing a Working Group on the development of Multi-Functional Centres (MFCs). These centres would include a number of different institutions, which would provide services to the population from a single-window. Feasibility studies will be conducted to ascertain which institutions could be included as part of the MFCs, as well as a cost-benefit analysis to gauge the costs of establishing such centres¹⁰.

A new human resources (HR) policy will be defined as well as an upgraded system of performance evaluation to encourage both the quality of service provision and staff retention. In the context of the goal and objectives of the civil registration reform and of the project, human resource reform is one of the key components to achieve the desired outcome. HR reform is comprised of developing a new approach towards recruitment, training, appraisal, improvement in qualifications, internships to attract new resources and to create a human resource reserve, a motivation system and a new remuneration policy. The project will provide research, recommendations and introduction of innovative methods to incentivize ZAGS to provide enhanced services as well as research, recommendations and support to the implementation of a new HR policy overall.

The project will continue to support the development of a systematic training programme for all ZAGS, who will receive comprehensive pre-service training, complemented by regular, incremental in-service basic and advanced training to fully develop their capacities and skills. This includes training on the new provisions in the legislation, regulations and instructions; on application of the CROIS2 and digitalized archives and the introduction and reinforcement of gender aspects in civil registration through training. Training will also be provided on the One-Stop-Shop (OSS) model. The OSS office model being implemented by the MoJ and the CRSR project is probably better described as a 'front-and-back' office model. It qualifies as an OSS model because the ZAGS offices provide a multitude of civil registration services. Whenever there is a reference to One-Stop-Shop (or OSS) in this report it is important to keep this context in mind.

However, in addition to the practical training, skills-focused training will also be provided in order to raise the client-orientation of the service provision. Training on the amended legislative framework and regulations and instructions will systematically be provided. In addition to specific training projects for the ZAGS, joint trainings will be organised at the local level so that participants will have opportunity to discuss particular issues facing that region and so that the training can be tailored accordingly. Training will be conducted in Dushanbe and in regional centres as well as mobile training, which will be provided in the more remote areas of Tajikistan. Regular pre- and post- training assessments will be conducted to

¹⁰ This support is a conditional on developments on further reform of public service by the GoT and on the project receiving clear information and proposals from the MoJ/GoT.

monitor knowledge increase. All trainings are provided through the MoJ's Institute for Advanced Legal Education.

Output 3. *Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ.*

In line with the Action Plan 2021-2022 and the priorities of the Ministry of Justice, the project plans to continue to support the introduction of a fully electronic system of civil registration, together with expansion of the digitalised archives. The project will complement the MoJ's efforts in fully equipping and capacitating all ZAGS offices.

During the first phase of the project, the one-stop-shop (OSS) model was piloted in the ZAGS offices in Kulob city and Rudaki district. During the second phase, the project is introducing and piloting the OSS model in an additional eight ZAGS offices, based on the lessons learned and experiences of the Kulob and Rudaki ZAGS offices. The selection of the additional eight pilot offices will be based on an assessment, which the project will undertake on an ongoing basis of the location, how many, and which, ZAGS offices are suitable for the introduction of the OSS model¹¹.

Based on the cost analysis, and on the lessons learned during phase I, digitalisation of the archives will be progressively scaled up during the second half of the second phase. Amendments and refinements will be made based on experiences and lessons learned. If the feasibility studies and other analyses indicate that conditions do not exist then the digital archive will not be further expanded by the project, and the project will re-orientate these activities towards improving existing conditions and processes.

In order to make civil registry services even more accessible to the people of Tajikistan, a cost-benefit analysis will be undertaken of the development of a mobile ZAGS application, which the public could use to apply for civil registry certificates via an online portal. Depending upon the outcome of the cost-benefit analysis, the project may or may not support the development of such an application, but in any event will research options to bring the civil registry services closer and more accessible to the people.

There are still shortcomings in the MoJ's IT Unit's material, technological and human resource capacities, required to provide IT support for the full integration of the CROIS2 platform. In this context, the project will undertake an assessment to identify what capacities are required and will then develop a roadmap on how best to address these needs. Continual and systematic capacity development of the IT Unit's staff to use and provide support for the CROIS2 platform will be provided. Further, the project will consider the introduction of a mentor for the IT

¹¹ Source: CRSR Phase II Project ProDoc, p. 17.

Unit (from Moldova, Georgia or similar country) who will support the Unit in fulfilling its obligations with regards to supporting the electronic civil registry system and digitalised archives.

Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.

Output 4. *Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms.*

The fourth output focus is on raising the awareness of the population, which is assessed as still being low and is one of the key obstacles in increasing the level of civil registration of the population. During the first phase, the MoJ developed a Communications Strategy 2019 - 2021 setting out its approach to tackling this issue. In the second phase, the communications strategy will be updated, based on the impact of the awareness raising activities conducted in Phase I and reflecting the current level of knowledge of the population. This includes civil registration awareness campaigns to be conducted through mass and social media at the national level with specific outreach to the project areas. Innovative solutions and tools are being developed to promote increased civil registration among the population, using already existing structures such as the mahalla committees, Legal Aid Centres, maternity hospitals etc. The project also supports the MoJ in developing a Communications Strategy for the period 2022 – 2030.

To complement the MoJ's approaches, selected CSOs are supported to further raise awareness of the population at the grassroots levels in line with the government's communication strategy, with a focus on women, youth and persons with disabilities, and focusing on those areas where the least numbers of people register their vital events. This includes in-depth community work in the project implementation areas, to raise awareness not only of the rights of people in terms of civil registration, but also of why civil registration is important in their day-to-day lives and how it can have a positive impact on them and their children as individuals. The in-depth community work will also focus on women, youth, PWDs and other vulnerable groups. Impact studies on the awareness campaigns and in-depth community work will be conducted regularly to constantly refine approaches and ensure that they are targeted and focused on those most in need, as well as to assess the increased level of knowledge and awareness among the population. In this regard, the project will coordinate with the UNDP implemented and SDC supported "Access to Justice Project," which has consolidated data and information on who the most hard to reach people are, and where they are located.

In addition, the project supports the MoJ in sending out mobile teams into remote and rural areas, where registering civil acts is more challenging. Although the mobile teams are not able to immediately register the civil acts for the population in these areas, the teams are able to collect documents and take them back to the ZAGS for processing. The mobile teams will have multiple functions in that they will also be used to raise awareness and to speak with the population about the challenges they face in registering their civil acts. The mobile teams will also be used as a feedback loop in order to constantly improve services and make them more accessible to the population.

As part of the efforts to monitor and evaluate the impact of the civil registry reforms and the project activities, a customer feedback collection mechanism has been elaborated and is being implemented. The mechanism will be implemented in all ZAGS offices and will produce data that can be analysed to see the effects of the reform in terms of improvements in services for the population. The data will also be used as a means of continual improvement to the system. Different feedback loops will be introduced and tested to see which are the most effective, with a view to their subsequent rollout in Phase III. This may include piloting SMS notification of when a civil registration certificate is ready for collection, paying an additional fee to have the certificate posted, electronic immediate feedback mechanisms etc.

CSOs and NGOs will also be supported in strengthening their capacities to advocate and lobby for civil registry reforms and to monitor and evaluate the civil registry reforms being implemented.

All activities under this output will be calibrated with the development of a National Strategy for the Legal Education of the Population, currently being developed by a Working Group under the Ministry of Justice, with which the project will close align.

Annual Action Research will be conducted to regularly check the validity of the project assumption and measure the social impact of the reform. The Action Research will be conducted by an independent organisation within the framework of the project, to regularly check the validity of the project assumption. The Research will also provide an opportunity to measure the social impact of the reform implementation to date. The Research will be conducted at the end of each project implementation year and will be informed by the Baseline Survey conducted at the start of the project implementation period, which will provide baseline data and indicators against which progress can be measured.

In addition, in Phase II of the project innovative solutions for gathering client satisfaction feedback will be introduced and tested, as a means of the population feeding back into the improvement of the system. The feedback loops will contribute to the development of a quality, affordable and accessible system of

civil registration for all in Tajikistan.

Geographic location: The main project office is located in Dushanbe, for ease of coordination with the main government stakeholders. The overall project administration is being carried out at the UNDP Tajikistan Country Office. In order to further the goals of the project, the project will create partnerships, synergies and linkages with other stakeholders, including relevant government institutions, international organisations and UN Agencies, donors and INGOs and NGOs/CSOs. The project is being implemented throughout Tajikistan, including in the GBAO region of the country. In each region of the country, UNDP already has a long-term presence and partnerships with the ZAGS and other justice sector and local level institutions, including the legal aid centres, women's watch groups, mahallas and jamoats, and local grassroots level NGOs. With regards to the locations for roll-out of the one-stop-shop model, these will be decided by the Ministry of Justice, in coordination with UNDP and based on pre-defined criteria such as the level of service delivery, physical space available, geographical location and pre-existing capacities.

Partnerships: UNDP Tajikistan has long successful strategic partnership history with Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) Office which is built on unique comparative advantages and led to the number of supported projects by SDC in the area of Governance implemented by UNDP. As the main donors of this project, SDC will be a member of the Project Steering Committee. All in all, collaboration between the UNDP and SDC continues to be promising and warrants greater synergies. UNDP is the project implementing partner, as a partner with strong and recognized positioning is needed to act as counterpart and advisor to high governmental levels. UNDP expects to continue strong ties with SDC within this project and beyond promoting effective reform actions that has a lasting effect and helps to achieve development goals in Tajikistan.

The driving force behind the Civil Registry System reforms in Tajikistan remains the Ministry of Justice. It has demonstrated a large degree of commitment to reforming the civil registry system in the first phase of the project. Its commitment remains strong, as evidenced by the development of the Action Plan 2021-2022 and in all meetings and consultations conducted. The key role of the Ministry of Justice continues to be to ensure the institutionalization and sustainability of results and maintain necessary policy coordination with other relevant stakeholders. The Ministry of Justice continues to be the main partner to the project together with the Department of Civil Registration and local civil registry offices responsible for the registration of civil status acts.

During the first phase of the project, secondary partnerships have been created with relevant state institutions, including the Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, both of whom show continued interest in cooperating with the project,

for the harmonisation of civil registration and vital statistics data and improved coordination and information sharing. Fledgling partnerships have been developed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior, which will continue to be strengthened during the second phase of the project, with a view to creating a consolidated population registry. A continued partnership with the Committee of Women and Family Affairs and its subordinated structures is anticipated, in implementation of interventions specifically focusing on women.

A strong partnership with the **Institute for Advanced Legal Education** has been developed during the first phase of project implementation, as the main provider of training for ZAGS and jamoats and strong interest and commitment to continuing this in the second phase has been demonstrated. The capacities of the Institute are limited in terms of human and financial resources and support will be provided in this regard through train the trainers, curricula development and production of supporting course materials. However, discussions will be held on ensuring the financial sustainability of the interventions at the end of the project implementation period.

In addition to the project partners, partnerships are being sought beyond the level of the project with development partners, at a more strategic and development level. This includes, but not be limited to UN Agencies, INGOs and NGOs that are active in civil registration, based on their comparative advantages and strengths and the contribution they can make towards furthering the goals of the project, in the context of their on-going work related to civil registration and how these can be linked to the project and furthering the project goals. Attention is being paid to avoid duplication and to provide complementarities where possible.

Basic project information is summarized in the table below¹²:

Project Information		
Project Title	'Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II'	
Project Number	00085270	
Country	Republic of Tajikistan	
Implementing Partner	UNDP Tajikistan	
Geographical coverage	Nationwide	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	1 January 2020	31 December 2023
PAC meeting date	17.01.2020	
Project budget (USD)	Total resources required:	8,000,000 USD
	UNDP TRAC:	1,000,000 USD
	Donor (SDC):	4,000,000 USD
	Government of Tajikistan (In-Kind):	3,000,000 USD
Contributing Outcome (UNDAF/CPD):	Outcome 1. People in Tajikistan have their rights protected and benefit from improved access to justice and quality services delivered by accountable, transparent, and gender responsive legislative, executive and judicial	

¹² Source: ToR for the final evaluation of the project.

	<p>institutions at all levels.</p> <p>CPD Output 1.2. Justice sector institutions enabled to uphold rule of law in compliance with international commitments; promote and protect Human Rights and improve access to justice and civil registration of vulnerable population groups, especially women, youth and persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Indicative Output(s) with gender marker: GEN 2</p>
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1.3 Scope and Specific Objectives of the Evaluation

Specific Objectives of the Evaluation

The mid-term evaluation assesses the project following standard Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria as follows: **Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency** and **Sustainability**. Coherence, Impact and Gender are also assessed. Since this is a mid-term evaluation all assessments are being conducted on the outputs and activities carried out up to the date of the evaluation and examines their impact and potential contribution to the outcomes.

As stated earlier the purpose of the project evaluation is to identify project implementation issues, assess progress made towards the achievement of objectives, relevance and performance of the project as compared to the project document, identify and document lessons learned and recommendations.

Specifically, the objectives are:

- To ascertain the achievements of the project and its relevancy, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact including synergies with other UNDP support efforts (coherence).
- Assess whether the project achieved or did not achieve outcomes and outputs stipulated in the Project Document and Results Framework and/or the progress towards such achievements;
- Identify factors that have contributed to achieving or not achieving project results and/or the progress towards such achievements;
- Assess the relevance, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency of the Phase II project;
- Highlight the key results of the project and analyze the key challenges faced by the project and how they have or haven't been resolved;
- Analyze the effectiveness of the existing partnerships established/maintained with the donor SDC and with the Ministry of Justice and ZAGS, civil society, UN Agencies, donors and other key stakeholders. Identify lessons learnt, effectiveness of project partnerships, level of state commitment and ownership;
- Assesses to what extent the project has addressed gender considerations and promoted gender equality throughout its implementation.

Evaluation Scope, Criteria and Questions

Scope of Work

The evaluation assesses the relevance, effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project interventions to date. In addition, the evaluation indicates if the produced results are in the right direction towards contributing to strengthening rule of law and human rights to empower people in Tajikistan. Particularly, the evaluation covers areas specified in the ToR for the

mid-term evaluation of Phase II, such as (but not be limited to) the following areas:

- Relevance of the project: review the progress against project outputs and contribution to outcome level results as defined in the project's theory of change and ascertain whether assumptions and risks remain valid. Identify any other intended or unintended, positive or negative, results.
- Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation approaches: review project's technical as well as operational approaches and deliverables, quality of results and their impact, alignment with national priorities and responding to the needs of the stakeholders; covering the results achieved to date, the partnerships established, as well as issues of capacity;
- Review the project's approaches in general including mainstreaming of gender equality and social inclusion, with particular focus on women and marginalized groups;
- Review and assess the sustainability of the results and risks and opportunities (in terms of resource mobilization, synergy and areas of interventions) related to future interventions;
- Review external factors beyond the control of the project that have affected it negatively or positively;
- Review planning, management, monitoring and quality assurance mechanisms for the delivery of the project interventions;
- Review coordination and communication processes and mechanisms with the stakeholders;
- Review how the implementation of project interventions has been impacted by COVID- 19 and the appropriateness of the Project response to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

Evaluation Criteria and Key Guiding Questions

The evaluation will follow the OECD-DAC's revised evaluation criteria - Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Partnership and Human Rights will be added as cross-cutting criteria. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the final evaluation of the "Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights to Empower People in Tajikistan", Phase Two Project specifically stipulated the questions to be considered under the evaluation criteria set out above¹³.

¹³ Source: ToR for the evaluation. See ToR (Annex A) for the list of evaluation questions to be considered under the each of the evaluation criteria.

2.0 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Project's Theory of Change

The Project's **Theory of Change** reads as follows¹⁴: *"**If** the reformed civil registry system is effectively managed and provides quality, affordable and accessible services to the population and vital statistics for the state, and contributes to the development of enhanced partnerships and coordination among relevant agencies on providing e-services; **and if** the population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system and provide feedback to improve the quality of services; **then** women's, men's and children's human rights are better protected by strengthened provision of civil registration services and by increased public access to the system".* Crosscutting each of the focus areas will be the issues of governance and gender and ensuring that men and women benefit equally from the interventions.

The evaluation approach and methodology will follow the project design and intervention logic to see if it supports the conclusion of the project's Theory of Change (ToC).

The ToC envisages that:

- a. If the duty bearers (civil registry institutions) are capacitated to provide effective, affordable, quality and accessible civil registry services; and they are well-coordinated with other relevant state agencies on providing e-services; and they are able to provide vital statistics to the state; And
- b. If the right holders (the population) are aware of their rights and of their ability to demand increased access civil registry services; and they are consulted on how to improve the quality of such services;

then the "women's, men's and children's rights are better protected".

Underpinning this development logic are the following assumptions:

- That the civil registration system and its implementation plan will be so well grounded within the legal framework of Tajikistan that a change of policy priorities resulting from changes at the central government level will not significantly impact the results of the project;
- That the civil registration system will be well-resourced and its staff capacitated on an ongoing basis and motivated to provide quality services;
- That the population, once aware of their rights, will actively advocate and demand quality civil registration services;

¹⁴ Phase II Project Document (ProDoc), pp. 11-12

- That the government will consult and act on input from the population to improve the quality of its civil registration services;
- That the data collected through the civil registry system will feed into the vital statistics of the state and will be used to assess the services needs of the population;
- That the project will be able to build new relationships with incoming senior government managers during periods of political transitions following elections in Tajikistan;
- That the project will be able to counteract and respond quickly to the loss/departure of key counterparts at partner institutions, such as for example at the change of Ministers, during the implementation of the project;
- That the project will be able to engage successfully with professional associations (i.e. NGO Coalitions, the CSO Network and civil society organizations working in the area of human rights) to develop a system of monitoring and reporting on the accountability and quality of civil registration service delivery;
- That the project will be able to conduct achieve its outputs and counter risks of natural disasters and pandemics such as Covid-19;
- That, once the project is over, there will be adequate funding and resources provided by the government and/or by development partners to ensure that the technical and institutional capacities are maintained to deliver quality civil registration service in Tajikistan.

2.2 Evaluability Assessment

It is important for the evaluability assessment that the objectives of proposed activities in a project are well-defined and easily verifiable¹⁵. The evaluator is satisfied that activities, outputs, and outcomes are aligned and follow a logical causal pathway. The evaluation placed a focus upon verifying the logic of this causal pathway, and in identifying any unanticipated results and/or factors affecting results achievement.

The evaluator was able to a certain degree to trace the evidence chain and pathway from the outputs and their contribution to the ultimate outcomes. However, the fact that there are other projects supporting human rights, rule of law and access to justice in Tajikistan and contributing to increased capacity of the same stakeholders benefitting from the “Civil Registry System Reform Project-

¹⁵ The OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (2002) states that the evaluability assessment “calls for the early review of a proposed activity in order to ascertain whether its objectives are adequately defined and its results verifiable.”

Phase II”, coupled with the fact that Phase I of the same project laid the foundations for Phase II and supported some of the institutional and capacity development (albeit at a more basic level) of the stakeholders involved in Phase II, made it more difficult to discern the specific contributions of other interventions vs. those of the Phase II project. For these reasons, a thorough examination of the internal and external factors that either contributed to or inhibited results achievement and an extensive consultation process was a focus of the evaluation.

The evaluation methodology adopted ensured that the ToR questions relevant to the evaluation criteria requirements under the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria (Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability)¹⁶ are adequately addressed. The United Nations Principle *Leave No-one Behind (LNOB)* was also taken into account.

Under Relevance, the evaluation assessed the project’s relevance to the thematic country context of Tajikistan and national policy documents and whether it is relevant to capacity challenges and priorities of national counterparts involved, such as the Department of Civil Registration (ZAGS, MoJ), Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Agency on Statistics under the President, IALE, Konuniyat and CSOs.

Under Effectiveness, the evaluation assessed achievements against the project objectives and expected outcomes and outputs (since it is a mid-term evaluation the evaluation assessed progress towards the achievement of expected outcomes and outputs). Implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were reviewed. More importantly, the evaluation assessed the effects on the target beneficiaries of the project activities (particularly women and disabled persons).

Under Efficiency, the evaluation assessed the allocation of resources (financial, human, technical) towards the project outputs. The evaluation examined the budget delivery rate and contrasted it with the delivery rate of the outputs of the project to assess efficiency in management, performance and delivery.

Under Sustainability, the evaluation assessed sustainability perspectives at the policy, institutional and financial commitments of the GoT and the need for further support from its development partners to sustain the results of the project.

Based on our analysis, the evaluator found that the logical pathways and assumptions are plausible, understandable, and verifiable criteria against which to evaluate the project.

The evaluation methodology followed the steps required in the ToR for the evaluation:

¹⁶ DAC Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance. For additional information: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

Desk review phase: Preliminary desk review and initial discussions with UNDP Tajikistan project team to familiarize with the project's the intervention logic, identify key stakeholders and the sampling framework and to develop the evaluation methodology;

Data collection phase: Field mission to Tajikistan and live and remote interviews with the project stakeholders; presentation of preliminary findings to the UNDP and key stakeholders;

Data analysis and reporting: Analysis of the data collected, assessment of achieved results, drafting the mid-term evaluation report, conclusions, development of lessons learned and of recommendations.

2.3 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology adopted adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards. The evaluator adopted an integrated approach involving a combination of data collection and analysis tools to generate concrete evidence to substantiate all findings. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results were triangulated from a variety of sources, as detailed in the paragraphs below, including verifiable data based on project indicators, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits where/when possible. The evaluation team followed a participatory and consultative approach that ensured close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.

Data Sources

Data sources included documents and communications products of each of the stakeholder groups involved with Phase II i.e. Ministry of Justice / Department of Civil Registration (ZAGS); SDC; ZAGS offices in Dushanbe and other districts (Rudaki district; Nurek district; Vahdat city; Guliston city; Gafurov city; Kulyab city; Vose city); Agency on Statistics under the President; Ministry of Health and Social Protections; Ministry of Interior; State Committee on Women and Family Affairs; MoFA; Institute for Advance of Legal Education (IALE); State Unitary Enterprise "Konuniyat"; and NGO Human Rights Centre. Project beneficiaries targeted for consultation using purposeful sampling were identified with the help and input from UNDP, project team and national stakeholders.

Structured and Semi-structured Data Collection Tools

Methods for data collection included structured and semi-structured questionnaires and tools. For structured data collection, protocols were followed consistently within and across the different interventions of Phase II to ensure the reliability of data and enable comparison across interventions and results achieved. Structured data were also collected through questionnaires that

followed ranking, sorting and multiple choice designs. Semi-structured data was collected through interviews or informal group discussions so that it can later be collated and analysed.

Data Collection Protocols

An overview and some generic samples of data collection tools and protocols that were used in the mid-term evaluation are provided below. Data collection methodology and tools specific to the 7 key evaluation criteria have been described in detail in this report. The Evaluation Matrix used for the evaluation is described in Annex E of this report. Other data collection methodologies and approaches are listed below:

Data collection and sampling plan: The evaluator used the following principles to identify, prioritize and collect evaluation data:

- Utilized both document and stakeholder data sources (and utilized congruency or lack of congruency among data sources to inform participatory evaluation activities);
- Ensured that data is collected from all key identified stakeholder groups (implementation partners, primary stakeholders—direct beneficiaries, interested parties);
- Identified and prioritized key data sources to focus evaluation effort (e.g., ensured Phase II performance reporting is collected);
- Ensured in-person data collection and sampling of data sources from each of the partners/ stakeholders involved with Phase II;
- Adopted a multi-site data collection method that allows observation of stakeholders in their own environment (**visit ZAGS/CR offices in Dushanbe and in districts (Rudaki district; Nurek city; Vahdat city; Khujand city; Guliston city; Kulyab city; Vose city)**);
- Worked with implementation partners throughout the evaluation to identify documents and key individuals (male and female and PWDs) and groups for analysis, interviews, existing project’s surveys and/or informal group discussions;
- Collected and reviewed previous evaluations (i.e. Phase I evaluation) and external related documents to inform design and analysis;
- Made explicit effort to collect data addressing gender equality and PWDs - in all data collection and sampling, disaggregated data for analysis and inclusion in evaluation products.

Integrating qualitative and quantitative data: The data collection tools were intended to create direct linkages between the different types of data to arrive at a more meaningful interpretation of both qualitative and quantitative information. While some tools are designed to capture either qualitative or quantitative data others were designed applying mixed methodology to use qualitative data to explain quantitative findings¹⁷. They were used in interviews and informal group discussions, by following up on close-ended quantitative questions with qualitative, open-ended questions to obtain further clarifications. Also qualitative data and findings from interviews and field mission were used to refine questionnaires designed to collect quantitative data. This method is useful in the collection of data related to unanticipated outcomes. The team also used different tools to obtain different but complementary data concerning certain outcomes using convergent-parallel mixed method approaches.

2.4 Previous and/or Other Evaluations

2.5 Ethical Aspects

The evaluation of the project was carried out according to ethical principles and norms established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)¹⁸.

- *Anonymity and confidentiality.* The evaluation respected the rights of individuals who provide information, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.
- *Voluntary participation.* The evaluation respected the rights of all stakeholders consulted regarding voluntary participation in the project evaluation process, including their right to withdraw at any stage, if they so decide.
- *Responsibility.* The evaluator is responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the information collected and for the information presented in the evaluation report.
- *Integrity.* The evaluator is responsible for highlighting all issues not only those specifically mentioned in the TOR.
- *Independence.* The evaluator ensured his independence from the intervention under evaluation, and he was not associated with its management or any element thereof.

2.6 Challenges and Limitations

During the evaluation process all stakeholders were found to be very receptive and cooperative towards the evaluation team. The evaluation team was able to build trust and confidence of GoT partners in the evaluation team so that the challenges

¹⁷ Creswell, John W. and Vicki L. Plano Clark, 2011 *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, page 82.

¹⁸ For additional information see: UNEG Ethical Code of Conduct to Evaluations in the UN system: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/100>

identified below during the inception phase did not impact the evaluation. Potential challenges included:

- Methodological limitations in checking the quantitative data as some data collected during evaluation may be of qualitative nature;
- The ongoing COVID-19 restrictions which may not permit some site visits and also may make it more difficult to interview some stakeholders;
- Language and translations challenges.

As mentioned above, these potential limitations originally identified ended up not impacting the evaluation process. The fact that the national consultant is a Tajikistan national expert, who is fluent in Tajik language and has experience working in Tajikistan with different stakeholders, helped mitigate many of the difficulties that these challenges presented.

The evaluator used similar template questionnaires for the different groups of stakeholders and kept notes of different circumstances peculiar to different locations and stakeholders, which helped in the analysis of data collected. UNDP Project Team has been very helpful in assisting with the development of a list of key stakeholders that are available to be interviewed by the evaluation team¹⁹. The evaluator is confident that data collected from the interviews with the key stakeholders coupled with the data in the documentation provided by the implementing partners resulted in valid findings of the results of the Phase II project and adequately informed the conclusions and the recommendations of this evaluation.

¹⁹ See Annex B for the List of Key Stakeholders interviewed.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

3.1 EFFECTIVENESS

Overall Project Findings

The design of this project presents an ambitious set of expected results. The project has two clear outcomes:

Outcome 1: *The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.*

Outcome 2: *The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.*

The Theory of Change (ToC) for the project envisages that, if:

- a. The duty bearers (civil registry institutions) are capacitated to provide effective, affordable, quality and accessible civil registry services; and they are well-coordinated with other relevant state agencies on providing e-services; and they are able to provide vital statistics to the state; And
- b. The right holders (the population) are aware of their rights and of their ability to demand increased access civil registry services; and they are consulted on how to improve the quality of such services;

then the “women’s, men’s and children’s rights are better protected”.

CRSR Phase II Focus Areas

Reform the Civil Registry System by:

- *Implementing the civil registry legislative package adopted by the GoT under Phase I while facilitating the development of secondary legislation and by-laws necessary to fully implement the legislation; and ensure interagency coordination [Output 1]*
- *Developing new quality business practices and have them implemented effectively in the civil registry i.e. business process, HR policies, systematic training program for all ZAGS, monitoring and evaluation [Output 2]*
- *Handing over the electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives to the MoJ and MoJ capable to effectively manage the system [Output 3]*
- *Awareness Raising of the benefits of timely registration through the MoJ communication strategy supported by CSOs to bolster registration and receive feedback on improving the quality of services [Output 4].*

In assessing the project performance and achievements, the following RAG²⁰ (Red-Amber-Green) Rating System will be used:

Table 1. Evaluation Assessment Grid

Colour	Assessment	Comments
Green	Fully achieved	Evaluation findings prove that the targets have been reached.
Amber	Partially achieved	Project partially achieved its targets (> 50%). – <i>On track</i>
Red	(Mostly) Not achieved	Targets (mostly) have not been reached.
White	Cannot be assessed	Performance cannot be assessed due to lack of information.

The implementation of CRSR Phase II project faced 2 major challenges²¹:

- ❑ The COVID-19 Global Pandemic in 2020: The implementation of Phase II started in January 2020 coinciding with the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- ❑ Project Audit in 2021: The project underwent an audit as a result of concerns raised about a contract bidding process, resulting in the suspending of the tranche/funding for the period of the audit and the pausing of all major activities²².

Other challenges and constraints faced during the implementation of the CRSR project included:

- The change in leadership and operations in the MoJ, which is a normal process in every government, required a certain period of adjustment for the MoJ team and the project team to hold briefings and develop working relationships and a common understanding and approach to continue implementing the activities of the project in a professional and orderly way;
- The process of reaching an agreement on the 2021 Annual Work Plan before it could be implemented was unexpectedly lengthy resulting in some delay in the implementation of the Work Plan;
- A lot of work had gone into the drafting and holding consultations to get the endorsement of key ministries for the CR Development Programme 2021-2025 (CRDP). This document was not approved by the Executive Office of the President (EOA) due to the fact that, as a result of reassessment of priorities, GoT policy focus turned to the reform and modernization of the whole public service delivery making the CRDP document premature to

²⁰ The RAG system is a popular project management method of rating for issues or status reports, based on Red, Amber (Yellow), and Green colours used in a traffic light rating system.

²¹ Annex G contains a chart of the risk management measures adopted by the project to deal with the challenges and constraints faced by the project [Source: Annual Progress Report 2021, p. 19-21]

²² The audit found nothing wrong with the procedure and the process followed in the procurement process.

approve at that time. The GoT adopted the Law on Public Service in 2019 and the MoJ has been designated the lead Ministry in the implementation of the Law on Public Service (ePublicService) so it made good sense to hold off on the CRDP until a decision is reached on how the programme can be integrated in the overall process of public service modernization. There were also concerns raised by MoFA about the security of the CR IT system platform (CROIS2). It should be pointed out that the MoJ moved quickly to immediately filled the gap resulting from postponement on the adoption of the CRDP by drafting and adopting a new CR Action Plan 2021-2022 on 23 Nov 2021, which allowed it to be able to continue implementing CR reforms;

- Due to the same reasons described above, Inter-Agency Coordination meetings to coordinate interoperability of the CR system with those of other government institutions and agencies did not take place then as previously planned, which also made good operational sense.

⇒ The implementation of CRSR Phase II project faced major challenges in 2020 (i.e. Covid-19 pandemic) and in 2021 (i.e. an audit) and a number of other challenges and constraints (i.e. change in MoJ senior leadership; delayed approval of 2021 Annual Work Plan; MoJ reassessment of priorities resulting in the postponement of the approval of the CRDP).


OUTCOMES

Analysis of the Outcomes of the Project

The analysis of the outcomes and outputs of the project, which follow below, provide sufficient evidence to conclude that, at a reasonably satisfactory level, notwithstanding the challenges and constraints that the project faced in the first 2 years of its implementation, reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2.

Outcome 1: *The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.*

Table A: Outcome 1 indicator/target achievements²³

<u><i>Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.</i></u>	Partially achieved – On midterm track To being fully achieved at end of	
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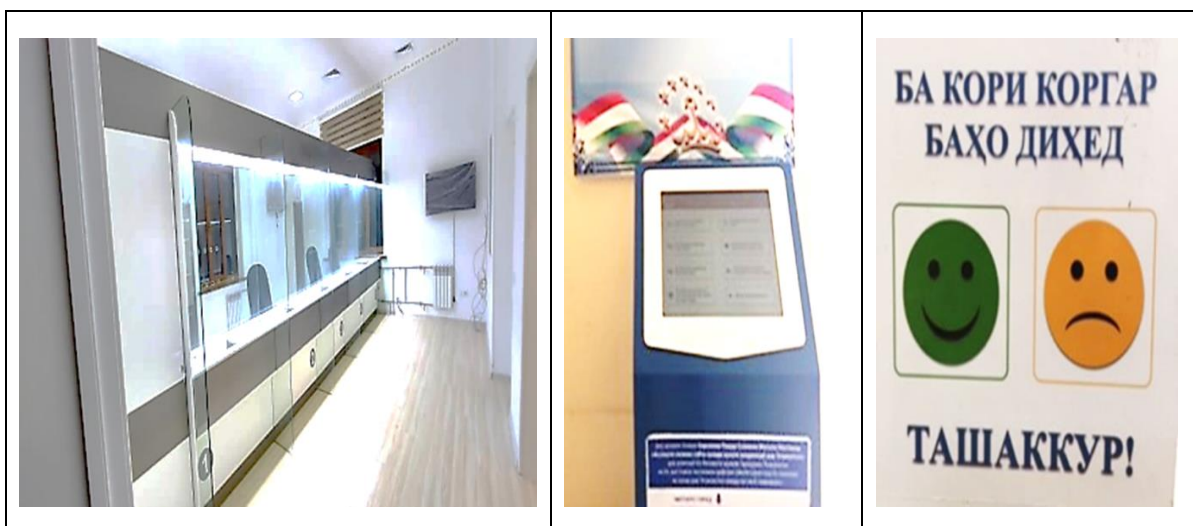
²³ Source of information: Project team.

		project	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	
1.1 No. of ZAGS offices with One-Stop-Shop (Front and Back offices) model in Tajikistan .	- 4 ZAGS (in addition to the original 2 OSS Office operating in 2019.	- 2 new offices operate with elements of OSS*	
1.2 No. & quality of reports produced with use of CR electronic data.	- 4 good quality reports	- 8 good quality reports generated using CR electronic data.	
1.3 % of population satisfied with delivery of civil registration services, (disaggregated by gender) (SDG 16.6.2/16.9.1).	- 64% (M/F)	- The results of the study are being analyzed at the time of report. - There is qualitative evidence of good satisfaction level with the new service model of ZAGS.	

* The project intended to introduce OSS model service delivery in two (2) other CR offices in 2020. However, due to COVID-19 pandemic and to changes in the senior management at MoJ, construction work and the opening of new Justice Centers were delayed, except in the Mastchoh district. The construction of CR office in the Mastchoh district was completed without introducing elements of OSS model, partly because the MoJ was going through a change in senior management and reassessing priorities in the first half of 2020. In 2021, as a result of reassessment of priorities, instead of proceeding with the opening of new offices with OSS model the project, in agreement with MoJ, supported the purchase of built-in furniture for the registry offices of the Firdavsi district of Dushanbe and Nurak, both of which have back and front office elements.

Major Successes

- *Analytical Dashboard introduced to monitor timely entering of CR records into CROIS2 – increase in digitalization to 93% vs 7% paper-based in 2021 when compared to 73% (2016-2020);*
- *New OSS CR Offices in the Firdavsi and I. Somoni districts of Dushanbe, Vahdat city of DRS and Norak city of Khatlon (scheduled to open in 2022). These are in addition to the Kulyab and the Rudaki district ZAGS OSS offices;*
- *The one CR office design model (as exhibited in the new Norak CR office) is an excellent output design model which can be duplicated not only in CR offices across the country but also in other government public services OSSs in the future;*
- *In 2021 UNDP contracted IT specialists were handed over to IT specialists of **SEU Qonuniyat under the MOJ, which now is a robust IT entity**, with capacity to solve ZAGS' technical problems within minutes online & within 2 hours at ZAGS' offices.*



ZAGS offices with One-Stop-Shop (Front and Back offices) model in Tajikistan

In September 2021 the MoJ opened new Justice Centres which will be housing the OSS CR offices. Experts on OSS and business processes conducted an analysis on introducing Personal Identification Number (PIN), produce reports on PIN, and draft terms of references for key CR staff (Head of Offices and senior/head specialist)²⁴.

The evaluator was very impressed with the functioning of the Rudaki district ZAGS office after participating in a full work tour of the office and interviewing the Head of the Office. The office is very modern and efficiently managed. When a citizen arrives at the office s/he is welcomed by the security guard who helps the citizen in obtaining the correct ticket from the queue machine. The service was provided in an orderly and competent fashion and the office was professionally run²⁵.

Number and Quality of reports produced with use of CR electronic data

Seven types of reports are being generated and used by CR offices and CR departments to analyse statistical data, compare with paper reports and identify discrepancies due to delays in data entry in the electronic system. A description of the 7 reports is presented in the chart below²⁶:

#	List of reports	Description
1.	Report on the number of births registered in the first 3 months after birth and up to 1 year	The report provides the number of birth registrations for 3 categories 1) up to 3 months after birth, 2) from 3 months up to 1 year and 3) total, broken down by signed / not signed and by each location (Country, Region, CR Office and jamoat).
2.	Report on the number of civil status records (with the signature of the	The report provides the number of registrations for all 7 seven types, disaggregated by 7 types, and broken

²⁴ Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 8

²⁵ Field mission visit and stakeholders interviews 24 June 2022, Rudaki district ZAGS office.

²⁶ Source: Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 8-9

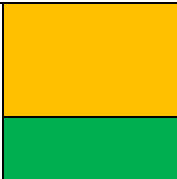
	CR employees and the head of the CR office)	down by signed / not signed and by each location (Country, Region, CR Office and jamoat).
3.	Report on the number of civil status records (with the signature of the head of CR Office and draft status)	The report provides the number of registrations for all 7 seven types disaggregated by 7 types, signature of head of CR office and draft status, and each location (Country, Region, CR Office and jamoat)
4.	Report on the number of civil status records, named Shakli peshtara (Previous form)	The report provides number of registrations for all 7 seven types at least signed by one CR staff, broken down by country, region, CR Office and jamoat.
5.	Report on Active Users	The report provides the list of all active users of CROIS2 with their role in the system, place of work (at district or city level), number of working hours in CROIS2.
6.	Report on Civil Registration in regions, cities and districts of the Republic of Tajikistan (Form #61)	The report provides the number of registrations for all 7 seven types broken down by regions, cities and districts including jamoats, with data and comparison with the previous period
7.	Report on birth registration by date of birth	The report provides the number of CR records on birth registration including date of birth, location, and etc.

CROIS2 reports allow supervisors at the Department of Civil Registration (UAGS) under the MoJ and even the First Deputy Minister of Justice to **monitor the work of CR employees** by reviewing and evaluating the reports on active and inactive users of CROIS2, as well as the number of entries made into the system. The project developed and tested a **dynamic analytics dashboard tool on birth registration** in CROIS2 to visualize **disaggregated statistics** on CR offices, jamoats and regions, age and **gender**. It allows tracking active and inactive users of CROIS2, the number of records entered by a specific employee or ZAGS offices in a given period of time, the time spent on completing one registration in the system and other activities of the CR staff²⁷.

⇒ *Reasonable progress has been made by the CRSR Phase II project towards the achievement of Outcome 1.*

Outcome 2: *The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.*

Table B: Outcome 2 indicator/target achievements²⁸

<i>Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.</i>		Partially achieved – On midterm track To being fully achieved at end of project	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	
<i>2.1 % of children under 5 years old with birth certificates</i>	- 93% (M/F).	- 94% of children under 5 years old have birth certificates*	

²⁷ Source: Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 9; Project team interviews. The evaluator was very impressed with the level of detailed knowledge of the First Deputy Minister of Justice about the monitoring capability that the Analytics Dashboard tool provides, which can be used for staff evaluation (Stakeholder interview 22 June 2022).

²⁸ Source of information: Project team.

<i>(disaggregated by gender).</i>		
2.2 % of timely birth registrations in ZAGS <i>(disaggregated by gender).</i>	- 90% births are registered on time (M/F)	- 80% to 83% of births were registered on time *

* According to CROIS2 data records.

Major Successes for the Population:

- *The project supported the transition to **electronic printing of seven types of certificates** using matrix printers (versus previous handwritten) in all CR Offices in Tajikistan*
- *Negotiated contract with IT company, LLC Rebus, to install the **Queue Management system** in CR offices.*
- *A new friendly user-centered **Website** was developed and launched to guide people through civil registration process – 2,000 persons per month access the website.*

Citizens now can obtain first time printed certificates from digitalized records for 7 different registered acts:

1. Birth certificate
2. Marriage certificate
3. Divorce certificate
4. Death certificate
5. Paternity/Parenthood proof certificate
6. Adoption certificate
7. Change of name certificate



Children under 5 years old with birth certificates (disaggregated by gender)

According to CROIS2 reports for the period from January to December 2021, 252,008 child births were registered in the system, of which 237,300 (123,792 boys and 113,508 girls) or 94% are children under 5 years. However, since the UAGS paper-based reporting system doesn't generate data on the number of birth registration of children under the age of 5, it is not possible to cross-check the total proportion of children under the age of 5 years whose birth is registered in the civil registry offices (on paper). The UAGS paper report on birth registration generates data on birth registrations of children registered (a) up to 1 year after birth; and (b) after 1 year of birth from 1 year up to 16 years of age²⁹.

Timely birth registrations at ZAGS

Based on data from UAGS in 2021, the total number of birth registrations for the 12 months from January to December 2021 was 271,221, of which only 218,206 or 80% were timely registrations (registered under 1-year-old) and 53,015 were late birth registrations. Of the 218,206 timely registrations under 1-year-old, 165,991 cases (76%) were registered within the first three months. Below is a comparison chart of birth registrations in 2020 and 2021:

Birth registration	Jan-Dec 2020	Jan-Dec 2021	Difference (quantity)	Difference (%)
A. Up to 1 year old	239,946	218,206	(21,740)	9.9 %
including up to first 3 months after the birth	176,999	165,991	(11,008)	6.6 %
B. After 1 year old including after 1 year until 16 years old	48,719	53,015	(4,296)	+8.8 %
including after 16 years old	2,519	2,405	(114)	- 4.7 %
TOTAL (A + B)	288,665	271,221	17,444	6.4 %

⇒ *Reasonable progress has been made by the CRSR Phase II project towards the achievement of Outcome 2.*

OUTPUTS

Analysis of the Outputs of the Project

Output 1: Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured.

Table 1: Output 1 indicator/target achievements³⁰

<i>Output 1: Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured.</i>		Partially achieved – On track	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	

²⁹ Source: Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 9

³⁰ Source of information: Project team.

1.1 Status of implementation of the new CR Law, the Government decree #77 and the law on consular departments of MFA.	- Progress towards harmonization of all relevant legislation in line with the new CR law	-Draft by-laws in line with the new CR law done; There was a revision of these by-laws submitted to MoJ*
1.2 Status and number of agencies connected to the data exchange with CR electronic system.	- Progress towards achieving 5 agreements between MoJ and other relevant agencies	- Postponed to 2022*

Key successes under Output 1 include:

- Implementation of the CR law continued to be implemented and services continued to be provided in ZAGS offices across the country notwithstanding Covid-19 pandemic challenges;
- With project assistance, MoJ continued to monitor the implementation of CR legislation and regulatory (by-laws) amendments;
- With project support an Action Plan to improve the civil registration system for 2021–2022 endorsed by MoJ is being effectively implemented;
- GoT’s decision to have the MoJ lead the implementation of Law on Public Service (ePublicService) is, to a certain extent, evidence that the CRSR project has contributed to capacity strengthening and to the raising of the profile of the MoJ through the project’s technical support to key departments of the Ministry (e.g. UAGS, Qonuniyat, IALE).

Implementation of the new CR Law, the Government decree #77 and the law on consular departments of MFA

The implementation of the CR legal framework package developed during Phase I of the project was delayed due to changes in the senior management in the MoJ³¹. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no meetings of the Working Group on Legislation under MoJ were carried out in 2020. In 2021 (Q4 2021, November) the project engaged a National Legal Expert to provide technical legal expertise and assistance to the Ministry of Justice in the area of monitoring the implementation of CR legislation and regulatory (by-laws) amendments under Output 1 of the project.

The National Legal Expert supported the MoJ and produced the following output/results a) draft of Action Plan to improve the civil registration system for 2021–2022 which was endorsed by MoJ; b) draft job descriptions for key CR staff; c) draft amendments to the Decree of the Government No. 77 of 27 February 2010, “*On Approval of the Civil Registration Forms*” which were approved by MoJ

³¹ Annual Progress Report, December 2021

and sent to the Government for review and approval/endorsement; d) conducted field meetings with representatives of local executive authorities and jamoats to prepare a review of the law enforcing the practice of registration of acts of civil status carried out by jamoats; and e) prepared and submitted an analysis of civil registrations carried out by jamoats. The result of this analysis was completed in March 2022.

The following by-laws developed with the support of the project's recruited National Legal Expert i.e. "*Draft Instruction on the procedure for registration of acts of civil status*" and "*Draft Instruction on the procedure for registration of civil status acts by the consular offices*" have not yet been adopted by the Ministry of Justice due to the GoT's pending approval of the amendments to Decree of the Government No. 77 and due to structural changes in the Ministry of Justice in accordance with *Law on Justice Authorities/Institutions* and the affiliation the CR Department into the structure of the central office of the Ministry of Justice.

Interagency Coordination – Interoperability of electronic systems of state institutions

The project engaged an international company LLC Borlas (Russian Federation) to conduct a technical assessment on the integration and interoperability of CROIS2 with other state agencies' information systems. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 travel restrictions and border closing, the company had to conduct the assessment remotely. As per the ToR developed with the MoJ, the following state institutions were selected for the assessment:

1. Ministry of Justice (www.adliya.tj) including Department of Civil Registration under the Ministry of Justice
2. Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population (www.moh.tj)
3. Ministry of Internal Affairs (www.mvd.tj) including Passport and Registration Service of the MIA
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.mfa.tj) including Main Consular Department under MFA
5. Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (www.stat.tj)
6. Agency of Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (www.nafaka.tj)
7. Ministry of Education and Science (www.maorif.tj)

UNDP formally requested those institutions to provide data. Based on this request the Executive Office of the President assigned the Consular Department under the MoFA as coordinator/lead for data collection and arrangement of meetings with all state institutions involved. Although the Consular Department expressed its

readiness to support with coordination of actual technical integration and data exchange, it decided not to proceed with collecting depth data related to technical specifications and capacity to operate existing systems. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely the Main Consular Department which maintains the Identity Management System in the country (both National ID and international passports), may have had concerns with inter-agency connection for data exchange (and the assigning of a Personal Identification Number) in terms of ensuring citizens' information security and protection.

The project supported the Draft of bilateral agreements between Ministry of Justice and Ministries and Agencies involved in the civil registration sphere for an Inter-ministerial coordination mechanism. Technical level meetings were conducted with the Agency on Statistics, Agency on Social Protection under Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Agency on Social Insurance and Pensions. However, until the GoT starts implementing the Law on Public Service (ePublicService)³² and a robust e-platform is installed to ensure information security (replacing CROIS2) it is unlikely that interoperability with other state agencies' electronic systems will be established³³. It will also require necessary legislative groundwork, including the introduction of Personal Identification Number, common standards and data sharing, requirements and mechanisms for information security and protection of personal data.

⇒ Until a robust micro-service system e-platform, capable of interconnectivity and interoperability and with security protection of data and information shared electronically, it will be difficult to integrate the CR system with other relevant government agencies' systems.

During stakeholders' consultation for this evaluation, Ministry of Health representatives reported the importance of the integration of their system with CR system because the Ministry of Health & Social Protection often needs access to dates of birth and dates of death and other information required to target social and financial assistance to citizens such as, for example³⁴:

- Identify poor households or persons with disabilities that may need support;
- Vaccination requirements (which became evident under the Covid-19 pandemic);
- Emergency single payments (such as was done under Covid).

³² In December 2019, the 'Concept of Digital Economy of the Republic of Tajikistan' was adopted through Government Decree N642. 'Roadmap of Digital Economy Development in Tajikistan' has been drafted by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade but has not yet been adopted by the government.

³³ CROIS2 is the remnant of the EPOS system originally adopted in 2012 by the Minister of Health.

³⁴ Source: Stakeholders' interviews 23 June 2022.

The problem with CROIS2 is that it is a monolithic system making it hard to connect with other agencies' systems. Now there are micro-service system e-platforms which are designed for interoperability with greater security of information shared electronically. All technical experts consulted by the evaluator insist that it is time to move from the CROIS2 system to a micro-service system e-platform with security and interoperability capacity. MoJ supports this move so that it can proceed with the full and effective implementation of this output³⁵.

⇒ **Implementation of Output 1 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 1.**

Output 2: *New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry.*

Table 2: Output 2 indicator/target achievements³⁶

<i>Output 2: : New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry.</i>		Partially achieved – On track	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	
<i>2.1 Status of internal rules, regulations and SOPs adopted and implemented (guiding day-to-day working procedures and practices of the civil registry offices in line with the relevant national legislation).</i>	<i>- Progress towards achieving the drafting and adoption of all internal rules and SoPs by MoJ and applied regularly by ZAGS.</i>	<i>- Postponed to 2022-2023</i>	
<i>2.2 Number of visits to CR Office by citizens required for the registration of civil acts.</i>	<i>- A total of 2-3 visits</i>	<i>- A total of 2-3 visits *</i>	

* According to the recent study conducted in the framework of satisfaction level of the population with the CR services.

Before highlighting some of the successes achieved so far under Output 2, the evaluator wishes to point out the lack of institutional culture of issuing operational guidelines or Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) in the Tajikistan bureaucracy, which is a challenge that must be overcome by the project and MoJ in implementing activities under this output. Every single stakeholder interviewed by the evaluator, from the top of the UAGS to the Head of ZAGS offices and to the office staff, when the evaluator inquired about an operational guideline the answer was that they follow the by-law (regulations approved by decree of the MoJ).

³⁵ Source: Interviews with SUE Qonuniyat IT specialists, UAGS and MoJ officials.

³⁶ Source of information: Project team.

The problem is that by-laws are usually drafted in technical ‘*legalese*’ jargon which should be supplemented by an operational guideline (usually issued by the department and reviewed and approved by the legal department of the Ministry) explaining in plain language how to implement the regulation/by-law. From observation and field interviews³⁷ the evaluator has found no evidence of the existence of operational guidelines or SOPs and this should be corrected during the remaining period of Phase II project implementation.

Key successes under Output 2 include:

- *Negotiated contract with IT company, LLC ISYS, to develop electronic document management system for the Ministry of Justice.*
- *During monitoring visits to ZAGS offices, in-person trainings by Qonuniyat IT specialists were provided to 230 CR personnel in Dushanbe, DRS and Khatlon region.*
- *Negotiated contract with the IT company, LLC Bit, to design and develop Learning Management System and electronic courses for MoJ (CR system and SALAC)***
- *The expert WG under the MoJ was established to develop 5 e-learning courses for CR and SALAC staff.*

** A number of ZAGS office stakeholders consulted during the evaluation field mission confirmed having participated in online training courses and finding them useful and convenient, particularly due to the concerns about Covid-19 pandemic. For example, the Head of the Office in the Somoni district ZAGS office reported that she undertook online training courses after 2020 and that it is a good alternative to in-person trainings.

One-Stop-Shop (OSS)

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, particularly travel restrictions, the rolling out of OSS³⁸ to a number of ZAGS offices was impacted. However, the project continued to support the operations of ZAGS offices. In response to electricity shortages the project acted upon the request from MoJ and equipped with diesel generators the ZAGS offices in Kulyab city (Khatlon), Rudaki district (DRS) and Darvaz district (GBAO). At the end of 2021 the project provided furniture for front-and-back offices, **queue management systems** and a **feedback system** for ZAGS offices in

³⁷ Source: Stakeholders’ interviews

³⁸ A front-and- back office model. The front office interacts with citizens, receiving the information and application, while the back office is responsible for registration and document management.

Firdavsi district (Dushanbe), Vahdat (DRS), Nurak (Khatlon) and I. Somoni district (Dushanbe).

During field mission work the evaluator had the opportunity to inspect a number of ZAGS offices³⁹ and to compare old registry record books and the new electronic digitalized registration process, which some ZAGS office staff compared metaphorically as *'the difference between day and night'*. A registration work that, prior to 2019, used to take 45 minutes to 1 hour when the citizen provided all the required documents, now takes only 10 to 15 minutes. OSS model offices are modern and citizens at arrival receive a number in the electronic queue machine and on average are attended within 5 to 10 minutes⁴⁰. ZAGS staff attending the citizen fills the application information into the electronic system and puts the electronic signature and the application is forwarded electronically to the Head of Office (Director) for review and a final electronic signature⁴¹.

⇒ Service improvement as a result of project's support is noticeable in all ZAGS offices visited during this evaluation, particularly in the pilot front-and-back-office (OSS) model in Kulyab⁴² and Rudaki. However there is no division between front and back-office services, which can result in some confusion.

It should also be pointed out that there are some electronic glitches with the CROIS2 system that were observed in some ZAGS offices that need to be dealt with:

- ❑ The system does not alert the Head of CR office that there are documents waiting online for her signature, often requiring staff after staff going to the office of the director to remind her to review the document and apply her electronic signature to it*;
- ❑ Confusion exists on whether or not a document that contains an error on it can be re-opened in the system using its original file number to make the correction or whether the document must be opened with a new file number**;
- ❑ Logistics delays in repairing equipment such as the queue machine, air condition, printers and other office equipment⁴³;

³⁹ List of ZAGS offices visited are available at Annex C (Evaluation Field Mission Schedule)

⁴⁰ Provided internet and all systems and equipment are working adequately.

⁴¹ Stakeholders' interviews at ZAGS offices

⁴² The service improvement in Kulyab ZAGS office is more likely the result of the project's support with equipment and trainings since the Kulyab office is not yet adequately staffed to operate as front-and-back-office.

⁴³ One such example is the Kulyab ZAGS office where the air condition had not been working for a while and it was unbearably hot not only for the clients but also for the staff.

- ❑ On the “Establishment of parenthood”, the birthdate of the parent is recorded on the system and is shown on the certificate, but it is not shown on the paper printout⁴⁴.

* This is a matter that should have been identified already and a programmatic solution implemented. It creates a backlog of work during the day and results in constant interruption of the work of the Head of Office to alert her to review and apply her ‘token’ or electronic signature on documents.

** While two ZAGS offices reported to the evaluator that they can correct mistakes on registries already carried out by using the same file number to carry out the correction, two other ZAGS offices felt that that is not possible and that a new file number was needed to proceed to correct the mistake. They reiterated the fact that they are always checking, double-checking and even triple-checking their documents to avoid making mistakes because it is not possible to carry out corrections once the document is registered with a mistake. This is being emphasized in this report because there should be a platform for sharing experiences and lessons among ZAGS offices and, also, these issues need to be elements of discussion as a component of annual trainings of staff to ensure performance uniformity in ZAGS offices all over the country.

Other concerns raised by ZAGS Office staff during the evaluator’s field mission include⁴⁵:

- ❑ CROIS2 system issues in terms of flexibility & adaptability. CROIS2 was developed in 2016 on the DHIS open-source platform with a primary focus on collecting and processing the statistical data ONLY on births and deaths. Now it is processing an additional 5 civil registration modules.
- ❑ Internet issues, which will become a major concern for e-government in Tajikistan⁴⁶;
- ❑ ZAGS offices with premises that require modernization and accessibility⁴⁷;
- ❑ Supply issues – logistics and procurement issues particularly for printer ink.

In 2021 the project supported the design and development of the **Analytics Dashboard** which shows the activity of CR staff in the CROIS2 information system. The Ministry of Justice used data from Analytics Dashboard to select the best CR staff from each region, in a total of 15 people or 1st, 2nd and 3rd places from every 4

⁴⁴ Source: Stakeholder interview Vose city ZAGS office 28 June 2022

⁴⁵ Field visit to ZAGS offices and staff and Head of Office interviews.

⁴⁶ Issues with network/internet connection in Civil Registration Offices: In 2021, the fibre-optic internet was connected in Kulyab and Rudaki CR offices operating under OSS service delivery model [Source: 2021 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2021, p.22]

⁴⁷ For example, the Vose city ZAGS office is located in an old Justice Centre.

regions (Sughd, Khatlon, DRS, GBAO) and from Dushanbe (thus 5 regions X 3 = 15 CR staff) and awarded prizes to them. Prizes included: smartphones, tablets, 4G modems and USB sticks which were procured by the project⁴⁸.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic and the lack of funding during the audit process, the classroom training that the project negotiated under a Letter of Agreement (LoA) with the Institute of Advanced Legal Education (IALE) for **a)** conducting traditional classroom-based training for around 300 CR staff and **b)** developing materials for e-learning for MoJ, could not be carried out. However, the project managed to do preparatory work before postponing the training, particularly conducting the **Training for Trainers (ToT)** of IALE. Information of this work can be accessed on the UAGS website: http://rahsh-adliya.tj/ru/2021/08/31/news_dushanbe_info/

In order to circumvent the Covid-19 challenges in providing classroom-based training, the project turned its focus on the development of a **Learning Portal** for ZAGS. The project prepared a concept note on introducing an electronic **Learning Management System (LMS)** with online courses (**e-learning**) for CR staff which was submitted to the Ministry of Justice for approval. A separate analysis of Learning Management Systems was also conducted by the project. Based on these documents and discussions held with the Ministry of Justice, the decision was to build LMS based on the open-source platform Moodle (www.moodle.org). Terms of Reference were developed to engage a company to design and develop an LMS web platform and mobile app based on Moodle platform and to design and develop online courses. The procurement process was established and a local company (LLC Bit) was awarded a contract to carry out this work. The project supported an orientation workshop for all experts including IALE, members of the working expert group (Subject Matter Experts) established under the Ministry of Justice and an e-learning methodologist. News about this workshop is available on the UAGS website:

<http://rahsh-adliya.tj/ru/2021/09/25/meetingdevelopelectroniccourses-2/>

ZAGS offices provide internal trainings to their own staff training them, in addition to their assigned work, to be able to work in any of the 7 areas of civil registration by adopting a rotational work model with mentoring and learning on the job modality⁴⁹.

Internal rules, regulations and SOPs guiding day-to-day working procedures and practices of the civil registry offices in line with the relevant national legislation

⁴⁸ Project team interviews; Stakeholders' interviews at ZAGS Offices. A Vose city ZAGS office staff was awarded a diploma of excellence signed by the Ministry of Justice in recognition of his performance reported through the analytics dashboard system.

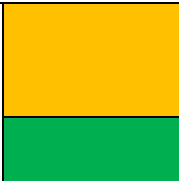
⁴⁹ This is another area that the evaluator was impressed with the detailed knowledge of the First Deputy Minister of Justice who described this staff rotational work modality during the consultation process carried out by the evaluator (Stakeholder interview 22 June 2022).

To foster communication and exchange of information among CR offices including responding to internal and external requests, the project supported the launch of a corporate email in 70 CR offices. As a result, the information exchange between the CR offices and the Project, and communication between offices and the population has improved. The **internal SOP for the CR staff on the use of email** was developed in Tajik and Russian languages and shared through corporate email with CR personnel⁵⁰.

⇒ **Implementation of Output 2 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 2.**

Output 3: *Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ.*

Table 3: Output 3 indicator/target achievements⁵¹

<i>Output 3: Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ.</i>		Partially achieved – On track To being fully achieved at end of project	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	
<i>3.1 % of the civil registry records timely entered into the electronic system (with further break down by type of registrations and office geographic location).</i>	- 90% of records are timely entered into the system.	- 93% of records are timely entered into the system	
<i>3.2 Number of paper-based archive records digitalized into an electronic format.</i>	- 700,000 records by the end of Y2	- 178,000 records*	
<i>3.3 Number of queries dealt by the MoJ IT Unit (*precise technical parameters will be developed during initial project imp. period- e.g. length of time to resolve queries, successful resolution, customer service etc.).</i>	- 70% of queries dealt with in a timely and effective manner.	-100% of queries resolved with IT specialists of Qonuniyat at different levels.	

* The project has developed the Terms of Reference for the digitization of 1 million records during 2021-2023. The project initiated the tender process in January 2021, and the evaluation process continued. However, by the decision of UNDP senior management in 2021, the review and evaluation of the case were postponed until further notice. Later, towards the end of the year, it was decided

⁵⁰ Source: Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p.13

⁵¹ Source of information: Project team.

to close the case due to a new approach to digitalizing archives. To ensure sustainability in the future, all three parties (the donor, the Ministry of Justice and UNDP) agreed to procure the necessary equipment and build the capacity of the CR staff to digitalize archives.

Key successes under Output 3 include:

- *The recruitment of 7 IT specialists in 2021 provided robust capacity to **SEU Qonuniyat** transforming it into the key IT enterprise at the MoJ with the capacity to solve ZAGS' technical problems within minutes online & within 2 hours at ZAGS' offices). Now that the MoJ has been selected as the point Ministry to coordinate e-Public Services in collaboration with Qonuniyat, the status of Qonuniyat has risen potentially to support the modernization of the whole Tajikistan public service*.*
- *CROIS2 load and stress test of CROIS2 carried out; Implementation of the major recommendation i.e. increase the bandwidth of the channel and use caching server for the user sessions data, user group and other recommendations reduce costs for system support but increases page loading speed allowing greater no. of users to simultaneously work in the system (now allows 2000-4000 users)*
- *A new friendly user-centered Website was developed and launched to guide people through civil registration process – 2,000 persons per month access the website*
- *Negotiated contract with IT company, LLC Tajfintech, to design and pilot online platform to submit applications and produce online payment for CR services.*

***ICT Capacity - SEU Qonuniyat**

A Letter of Agreement (LoA) with SUE Qonuniyat (IT Unit under MoJ) was signed each year to support and increase the capacity of Qonuniyat in IT Service Management – maintenance of CROIS2 and its infrastructure and technical support to CROIS2 users. Interviews conducted with different stakeholders at the MoJ highlighted the extent of the increase of technical capacity of the SEU Qonuniyat as a result of the project's support. Prior to the CRSR project, SEU Qonuniyat role was a modest one involving mostly the printing and dissemination of government legislation. The CRSR project started working with SEU Qonuniyat during Phase I which has been extended during Phase II with the agreement to support the funding of the salary and training of 7 IT specialists. In the words of one stakeholder interviewed by the evaluator "the project has turned the status of

SEU Qonuniyat around 180 degrees with the recruitment and training of the IT specialists”⁵².

Qonuniyat IT specialists also conduct regular visits to ZAGS offices during which they provide mentorship and training to staff on a per need basis. SEU Qonuniyat is also responsible to ensure that the technical operations of ZAGS office run smoothly providing solutions online or by phone and, if necessary, send a technician to a ZAGS office to fix technical glitches in the system. Every ZAGS office visited by the evaluator reported that they are very satisfied with the support they receive from SEU Qonuniyat and that, on average, problems that can be solved online are solved within 30 minutes and, problems that require the physical attendance of the specialist at the ZAGS office, a Qonuniyat specialist attends to the office and solves a reported problem within 2 hours of their calling SEU Qonuniyat⁵³.

The special status of SEU Qonuniyat in that it can provide services for other agencies on a pay-for-services basis greatly contributes to its sustainability. The fact that the MoJ has been appointed by GoT to be the focus point Ministry responsible for the implementation of the Law on Public Services in collaboration with SEU Qonuniyat, makes SEU Qonuniyat’s sustainability even greater.

⇒ *The recruitment of 7 IT specialists in 2021 provided robust capacity to SEU Qonuniyat transforming it into a key IT enterprise at the MoJ⁵⁴ and potentially in the implementation of e-government in the public service delivery in Tajikistan.*

Civil registry records timely entered into the electronic system

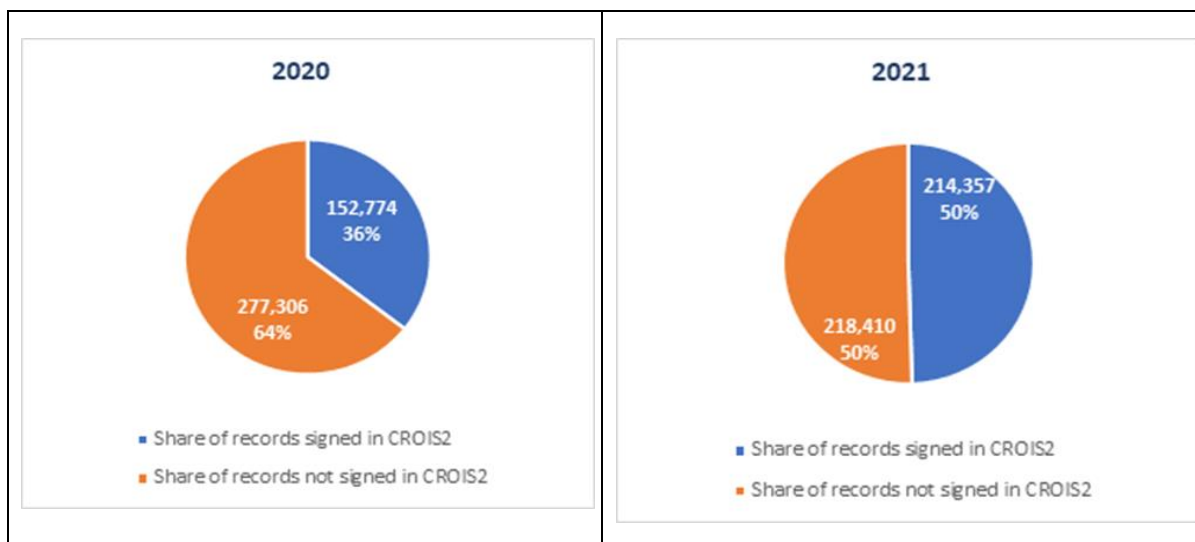
During the 2021-2021 years, signed acts by CR staff increased from 36% to 50% (14 %). *Chart below provides a comparison of CR records entered in CROIS2 & UAGS reports⁵⁵:*

⁵² Source: Stakeholders’ interviews.

⁵³ Source: Stakeholders interviews: ZAGS office staff; MoJ (UAGS, Qonuniyat IT specialists).

⁵⁴ This finding is based on focus group discussions held with the Qonuniyat IT specialists and with MoJ leadership. It is also corroborated by every interview held with heads of ZAGS offices across the country who reported that SEU Qonuniyat IT department provides excellent quality professional IT services.

⁵⁵ Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 15



CR Electronic System - Digitalization of the Paper-Based Archives into an Electronic Format

Based on the lessons learnt from the pilot digitization of 180,000 archive documents of the CR, completed in 2020, the project developed Terms of Reference for the digitization of 1 million records in the period 2021-2023. The digitalization tender was announced in January 2021 and the evaluation started in February 2021 but did not proceed as the project was going through an audit.

During the consultations carried out by the evaluator with Ministry of Health officials it was reported that, when the Ministry of Health was faced with the need to digitalize thousands of archived records, they set up a “Data Entry Center” in the Ministry of Health, where they set up 30 computer desks, recruited 30 young data entry staff, working 24/7 and paid by record entry done by each staff⁵⁶. In principle, the MoJ also supports to have the digitalization of the 1,000,000 CR archive records done in-house at the MoJ/UAGS, with the support of the project, instead of contracting out as this approaches builds up capacity at the MoJ and contributes towards sustainability of future digitalization process⁵⁷.

Queries dealt by the MoJ IT Unit

To support the Ministry of Justice in coordinating improved reporting, data entry and monitoring of work in CR offices, the project supported the recruitment of 8 ICT experts assigned different tasks at the Qonuniyat. Two (2) specialists for regular maintenance and testing of CROIS2, 1 specialist for updating knowledge products and ICT policies and procedures and upgrading CROIS2, 2 specialists in the Call Center to provide daily technical support and consultations to CR staff, 2 specialists based in the regions (Sughd and Khatlon) for hardware and technical

⁵⁶ Source: Stakeholder interview 23 June 2022.

⁵⁷ Source: Comments made by the MoJ during the validation workshop 1 July 2022.

maintenance, and 1 specialist for IT park monitoring and on-site mentoring specialist.

Through a Letter of Agreement (LOA) signed between UNDP and SEU Qonuniyat under the MoJ, Qonuniyat is responsible for IT system and service management, including but not limited to CROIS2 maintenance, IT support for CR staff and capacity building. In March 2021, 7 IT specialists' contracts were amended by the project to support the MoJ to maintain Civil Registration Electronic System, improve reporting and data entry, install printers in 70 CR district offices and conduct trainings for the relevant ZAGS employees on printing electronic certificates and provide expert and helpdesk support to all CR offices. In order to ensure sustainability, it was agreed that the UNDP will gradually reduce the number of IT specialists and hand over their responsibilities to the MoJ. Therefore in 2021, the project and the MoJ agreed that, instead of 8, only 6 IT specialists were contracted by the project⁵⁸.

Between January to December 2021, 1,514 incidents/requests or queries to Qonuniyat from ZAGS were recorded. The queries include such requests as⁵⁹:

- Technical assistance and Consultation provided by Call centre, email, remote apps (TeamViewer, Viber).
- Consultation and technical assistance on electronic printing of certificates and acts through CROIS2.
- Regular updates, backups, bug fixes in CROIS2.
- New dashboard analytical tool was developed in CROIS2 and presented to CR offices.
- Installation of Software and Hardware, regular antivirus scanning of laptops.
- Consultation and assistance on stable internet connection for data entry on CROIS2
- Assistance provided for integrated AMS with CROIS2.
- Monitoring of CR offices on IT related issues, mentoring training to newly CR staff on CROIS2, and printing of electronic certificates.

⇒ Implementation of Output 3 is on track to being fully achieved at end of project. Reasonable progress has been made towards achievement of Output 3.

Output 4: Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms.

Table 4: Output 4 indicator/target achievements⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 16

⁵⁹ Annual Progress Report, December 2021, p. 16

<i>Output 4: Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms.</i>		Partially achieved – On track	
		-Sufficient data not available for full assessment	
Indicator	Target at Mid-Term [Y2]	Target Achievement	
<i>4.1 Number and quality of campaigns carried out to cover various groups of people and the most vulnerable. (disaggregated by gender)⁶¹.</i>	- Communication strategy 2019 - 2020 is fully implemented. - New Communications Strategy 2021 – 2022 is developed & adopted ##* ⁶² (M/F)	- A 4-year Communication Strategy was drafted but had to be revised*	
<i>4.2 % of adult population of Tajikistan (16 years old and above) that are aware of the benefits of free of charge timely birth registration and reduced waiting time.</i>	- XX %* ⁶³ of population are aware of the benefits of registering civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act)	- The % will be identified during 2022 Impact assessment study.	
<i>4.3 % of adult population (16 years old and above) that know how/where to obtain information in selected 4 big areas (Rudaki district, B. Gafurov, Bokhtar city and Dushanbe city) how registering their civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act).</i>	- 80% At least 2,400 PwDs and women.	- The % will be identified during the 2022 Impact assessment study.	

*The Communication Strategy for the MoJ was drafted in line with the 4-year CR Development Strategy. But as the CR Development Strategy has not been adopted by the GoT, the Communication Strategy is currently being revised to align it with the Ministry of Justice’s CR Action Plan.

Key successes under Output 4 include:

- *Conducted outreach sessions with the support of CSO resulting in 700 birth certificates issued and raising awareness of more than 2,000 people in the project target areas (Khuroson, Jayhun, Rasht, B.Gafurov, Farhor, Rudaki, Tursunzade)*

⁶⁰ Source of information: Project team.

⁶¹ For awareness raising on timely birth registration reproductive health centers will be used as additional platform for information dissemination. This will ensure that women and young mothers receive important information on birth registration

⁶² * Data will be updated as a result of the Ethnographic and Behavioral Insight Research (Action Research) for Civil Registration to be completed by April 2020 [note: this data is still not available].

⁶³ * Data will be updated as a result of the Ethnographic and Behavioral Insight Research (Action Research) for Civil Registration to be completed by April 2020 [note: this data is still not available].

- *The project supported the transition to electronic printing of seven types of certificates using matrix printers (versus previous handwritten) in all CR Offices in Tajikistan*
- *The project launched a pilot Mobile ZAGS (Nov-Dec 2021) registering 386 people (60% women) in 18 districts and 26 jamoats in DRS, Khatlon, Sughd and GBAO*
- *A friendly user-centered Website launched to guide people through civil registration process receives 2,000 persons contacts per month*
- *Negotiated contract with research company, Tahlil va Mashvarat (Z-Analytics), to conduct assessment on satisfaction level of population with ZAGS' services.*

Awareness-Raising of the Benefits of Civil Registration Services

In the first half of 2020, the project has engaged Public Organization Human Rights Centre (HRC) as a key partner in conducting public awareness campaigns in selected districts and cities. During 2021 the Project, with the support of its partner HRC, implemented a number of activities aimed at raising public awareness about importance and benefits of timely registration, the types of public services provided by CR Offices and the documents requires for registration of a specific vital event.

A partnership was established by the HRC with the Ministry of Health & Social Protection of Population (MoHSPP) to conduct outreach activities through maternity hospitals of target districts. It was decided to disseminate the CR services message using fabric diaper bags. The message and the bag prototype were approved and the dissemination campaign took place in October 2021. A total of 750 women from rural areas received the CR informational message through diaper bags. Given that the average number of family members is about five, it was estimated that around 3,000 people increased their knowledge about the importance and benefits of timely birth registration.

In close partnership with the MoJ, outdoor sessions were organized in project target areas resulting in a total of 700 free birth certificates being issued to children up to three months and more than 2,000 people, including women, increased their knowledge about importance of timely birth registration.

Social Videos and Podcasts

A total of five social videos aimed at encouraging people to timely register the birth of their children and raising public awareness about types of services provided by CR offices, have been filmed and approved by the MoJ. Promotion through social networks and broadcast on TV is planned to be carried out through the 2nd half of 2022.

With the support of HRC⁶⁴, ten (10) podcasts describing the seven types of civil registration, procedures and the documents required to register the relevant acts were produced and broadcasted in the Fall of 2021 through the media agency (Your.tj) with a total audience of 12 to 13 thousand people coverage, mainly from urban areas of the country. These podcasts can be accessed through the link <https://your.tj/tj/tag/bojad-donist/>.

In 2021, the Project supported the Civil Registry Department in organizing a webinar for CR staff on the Use of Advanced Communication Platforms (Facebook) to inform the public about their work and processes for CR registration. The CR employees learned the process of creating a corporate page on Facebook – starting from the registration, creation of posts, as well as recommendations on standardization and maintenance of pages to better inform the public about services and the legislative changes. At the end of the event, participants received a step-by-step video tutorial on how to create a working Facebook page, as well as text instructions on how to effectively manage a social network and engage the public.

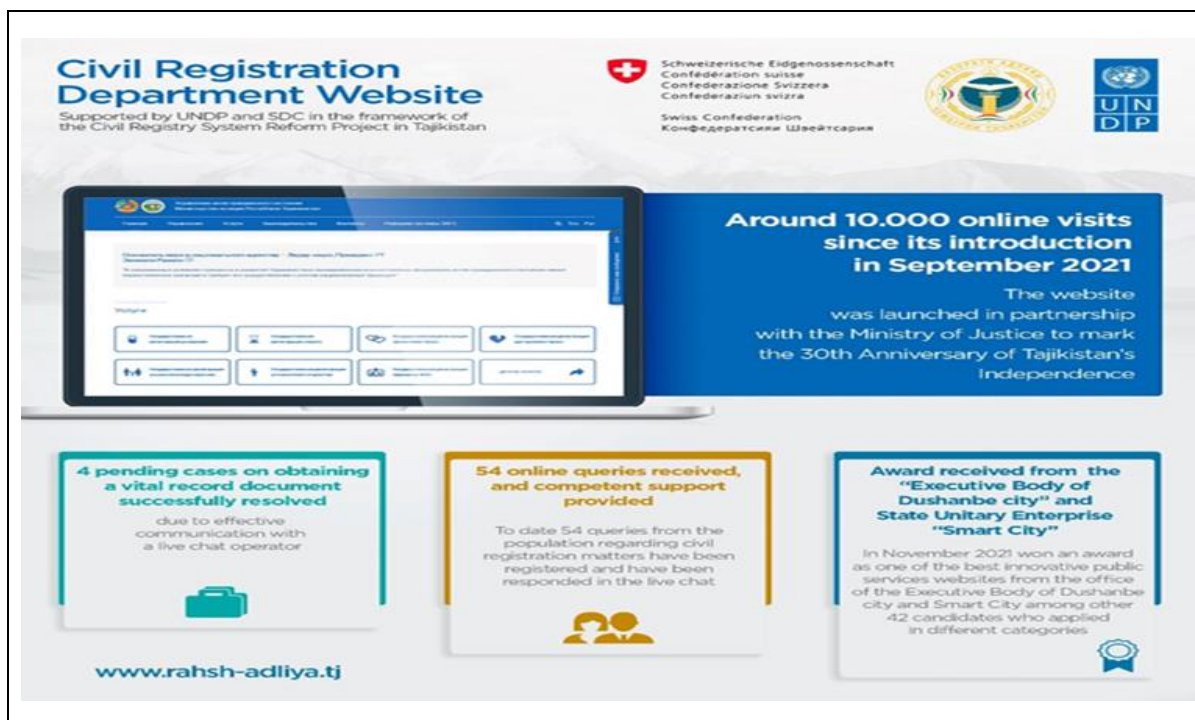
Civil Registry Website

The project supported the MoJ in development and launch of CR website to provide first-hand information and guidance to people on civil registration service processes and respond to the public queries (<http://rahsh-adliya.tj/ru/home/>). The HRC contributed to the development of the website⁶⁵. Between September 2021 and March 2022 over 10,000 people visited the site and more than 54 people requested and received response to queries, varying from types of documents required for a specific vital event, to cost of services and legalization of documents received outside the country.

⇒ Implementation of Output 4 is on track. Reasonable progress has been made towards the achievement of Output 4.

⁶⁴ Source: Project documents' review; HRC representative interview 23 June 2022. The evaluator reviewed and analysed the media products and the podcasts prepared by HRC (reviewed TV interviews, podcasts on Facebook and YouTube) and, if adequately disseminated, these products will contribute to creating sensitivity and awareness about CR services. HRC representative reported that the focus of radio spots is Radio Vatan which, in his opinion, has a potential audience of 90% of Tajikistan's population.

⁶⁵ Source: Stakeholder interview 23 June 2022.



Mobile Teams of Civil Registration

Mobile Civil Registry Office/Mobile ZAGS was piloted during November – December 2021 to reach out into remote areas to render legal aid and information on civil registration processes. This was accomplished with the support of HRC, CR staff and ZAGS offices⁶⁶. A total of 386 people (**60% women**) received CR services through the Mobile Civil Registry Office. Within the Mobile Civil Registry Office model support was provided to the MoJ, ranging from the development of the concept, the schedule of visits and design, to the procurement of a vehicle, coordination and promotion in social networks of the events.

The Mobile Civil Registry Office carried out 296 registrations (279 of births, 3 deaths, 11 marriages, 1 registration of adoption, 1 paternity registration) and 90 free legal consultations in 18 remote districts of Sugd, Khatlon, GBAO and DRS. The cost of design, rental of an equipped car, purchase of a mini-generator and fuel amounted to 155 thousand TJS. As a result, the cost of one service amounted to around 401 TJS. (155 thousand / 386), including consultation, registration, and issuance of a document⁶⁷.

In 2022, the Project intends to procure 4 specialized vehicles for the MoJ to continue to carry out the practice of Mobile ZAGS in the regions. The vehicles will be equipped with all the means to ensure that they can reach hard-to-reach areas and render CR support to people in those areas. The procurement of the vehicles is currently in-progress.

⁶⁶ Stakeholders' interviews: Project team and HRC representative interviews.

⁶⁷ Source: Project documents; Project team staff interviews; HRC representative interview.

Provision of services through Mobile Civil Registry Office

In partnership with the Civil Registration
Department of the Ministry of Justice



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Swiss Confederation
Конфедерация Швейцария



Supported by UNDP in Tajikistan in partnership with the Civil Registration Department of the Ministry of Justice

Mobile Civil Registry Office was established, designed to travel regularly to render legal advice and provide on-site birth registrations without any cost to the population. It addresses the challenge of low birth registration in remote areas with limited access to the internet and modern digital technologies.



The pilot project "Mobile Civil Registry Office" was implemented from November 22 to December 29, 2021 in remote jamoats of the cities and districts of **Aini, Vakhsh, Vose, Darvaz, Istaravshan, Kulyab, Kabadiyan, Mascho, Nurabad, Penjikent, Farkhor, Rasht, Rudaki, Rushan, Khuroson, Shakhrituz and Shugnan.**



More than 90 people received consultation support by the Mobile Civil Registry Office



1 adoption case was registered by the Mobile Civil Registry Office



279 birth certificates were issued by the Mobile Civil Registry Office



1 paternity case was registered by the Mobile Civil Registry Office



12 marriages were registered by the Mobile Civil Registry Office



3 death certificates were issued by the Mobile Civil Registry Office

3.2 EFFICIENCY & PARTNERHIP

The CRSR Phase II project is being implemented by UNDP staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice of the Government of Tajikistan. UNDP implements this project in a Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) and is responsible for operational management of coordination with national authorities and SDC, facilitating the Steering Committee meetings and joint reporting. UNDP is also responsible and accountable to the Project Steering Committee for delivery and results of the Joint Project. The Steering Committee meetings attendance include high level stakeholders' representatives such as the **Minister of Justice** and the **First Deputy Minister of Justice** of the Republic of Tajikistan, the **UNDP Resident Representative** and the **SDC Country Director**, which has been effective in ensuring that the decisions reached has the support of stakeholders with the capacity to implement them. This fact, however, require that the project team needs to do a lot of preparatory work and share the information and relevant points and alternative courses of action with the Steering Committee members ahead of the meeting date. The reason for this is because such high level Steering Committee meetings often tend to be very formal with a number of interventions and speeches leaving very little room for analysis to iron out issues and reach practical and effective decisions. It should be pointed out that a review of the minutes of the Steering Committee meetings by the evaluator disclose that there have been substantive discussions during the Steering Committee meetings which have resulted in reasonably good decisions.

⇒ The Steering Committee meetings attendance includes high level stakeholders' representatives (Minister of Justice, UNDP Resident Representative, SDC Country Director) which is efficient and effective in ensuring that the decisions reached has the support of stakeholders with the capacity to implement them.

In regards to the management of the project, findings from the evaluation are that there was good communication between the UNDP and donor's representatives. Project Steering Committee reports and other progress reports show that project's progress was monitored on an ongoing basis by project staff, field visits to the different sites of the project activities were conducted, and that data collected was captured in progress reports. This resulted in action-based reporting which described what has been done to deal with different situations encountered in the implementation of the project in terms of 'risks', 'action taken' and 'results'. One of the constraints reported in the risks analysis is the delay by the Senior Management of the MoJ in getting the Minister's signature on the 2021 Annual

Work Plan⁶⁸. Due to other commitments of the Minister of Justice, it took a while before he was able to sign the 2021 Work Plan which can be a problem since it may result in the pausing of activities that are ready to be implemented.

⇒ *There was a delay by the Senior Management of the MoJ to endorse the project's 2021 Annual Work Plan and getting the Minister's signature on the document, which caused an unnecessary delay in the implementation of activities.*

In 2020, Covid-19 global challenge pandemic affected the project both on strategic and operational levels. For example, the work of the working group under the MoJ was frozen during the partial quarantine period implemented at MoJ and UAGS in the first half of 2020. Because of the partial quarantine measures introduced at MoJ, ZAGS and other state institutions a number of activities were delayed, such as: meetings of the interagency working group under the Executive office of the President on CR; capacity building workshops; the development of secondary laws, internal instructions and the Communication Strategy 2021-2023; the mentoring the CR staff; the introduction of OSS concept at newly built ZAGS offices; the conduct of a technical assessment to build interoperability of e-systems of state agencies with CROIS2; the load and stress testing; and part of the communication and outreach activities⁶⁹.

Despite these challenges, the project looked for alternative ways of interventions, such as: **online training** for CR staff; awareness raising of population using social platforms; **mobile applications** to receive notification on the status of registration application in the offices under OSS model; and the establishment of a system to produce distance payment for CR services and others.

The utilisation of funding was on track during 2020. The project regularly conducted monitoring of budget utilization and expenses against the structural changes and beneficiaries' needs. Thus, three new lines with significant expenses under the Output 3 on procuring additional dot matrix printers, their certification and distribution were added. This was required due to the request from MoJ and need to provide each ZAGS office with 3-4 printers. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, supporting CR staff in participation in international and regional workshops on improving service delivery under Output 1 had to be cancelled. The chart below shows the expenses for the year in comparison with the approved revised budget and the budget utilization rate⁷⁰:

⁶⁸ Source: 2021 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2021, p. 22

⁶⁹ Source: 2020 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2020, p. 19

⁷⁰ Source: 2020 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2020, pp. 20-22

Financial Report for the period of January - December 2020

Project title "Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II"							
Activities		Funds from	Revised budget 2020	Expenses for the period	Commitments as of 31 December, 2020	Remaining Balance	Utilization level, %
#	Description		A	B	C	D = A - B - C	D = (B + C)/ A
1	Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured	SDC	\$19,632.66	\$26,495		(\$6,862)	135%
		UNDP	\$5,971.37	\$4,633		\$1,338	78%
2	New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry	SDC	\$113,639.34	\$40,153	\$17,161	\$56,325	50%
		UNDP	\$29,199.76	\$28,170		\$1,030	96%
3	Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ	SDC	\$476,350.50	\$346,830	\$111,363	\$18,158	96%
		UNDP	\$150,649.46	\$150,967		(\$318)	100%
4	Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms	SDC	\$79,112.16	\$48,037		\$31,075	61%
		UNDP	\$23,491.33	\$23,392		\$99	100%
5	Project Support Cost	SDC	\$36,099.40	\$40,155		(\$4,055)	111%
		UNDP	\$149,439.78	151,589.20		(\$2,149)	101%
	Subtotal SDC		\$724,834.06	\$501,670	\$128,523.67	\$94,641	87%
	Subtotal UNDP		\$358,751.70	\$358,752	\$0	(\$0)	100%
Total:			\$1,083,585.76	\$860,421.61	\$128,523.67	\$94,640	91.3%

Note: Data contained in this financial report section is an extract of UNDP financial records.

In 2021 the project went through the audit, resulting in the suspension of the receipt of the tranche for the reporting period and the pausing of almost all activities, which impacted the efficiency in the delivery of the project activities. The Annual Work Plan (AWP) for 2021 was approved at USD 1,573,566, which consisted of USD 1,323,566 donor funds and USD 250,000 of UNDP internal funds. However, due to tranche suspension, the project had only 573,566 USD, where donor funds were 323,566 USD and UNDP 250,000 USD. The amount of SDC funds was a leftover from 2020, which was rolled over to 2021. In October 2021, UNDP in agreement with the donor raised budget with an additional contribution of 250,000 USD to initiate key activities planned in the AWP. As a result, due to budget revision and AWP for 2021, the total amount of donor funds initially budgeted decreased from 1,323,566 USD to 238,680 USD. The total revised budget

by October 2021 was 738,680 USD, where 238,680 USD were donor funds, and 500,000 USD of UNDP⁷¹.

As of December 31, 2021, the project spent 229,831USD of donor's funds and 499,554 USD of UNDP internal funds. As of 11 February 2022, the cash balance of SDC leftover is 94,000 USD and UNDP is 446 USD⁷².

The project regularly conducted monitoring of budget utilization and expenses under the project portfolio. The administrative cost was being covered from the UNDP allocated resources. Taking into account the circumstances which paused the implementation of major activities (i.e. the delay of the tranche) the project requested the SDC to provide guidance on further utilization of the cash balance. Although it was recommended to postpone most of activities, based on the assessment provided by the project to keep on track the achieved results, an agreement was reached to continue the **support to the ICT unit** of the MoJ, the capacity building of CR staff through **development of e-courses**, and **awareness raising activities** among population. The chart below shows the expenses for the year in comparison with the approved revised budget and the budget utilization rate⁷³.

Financial Report for the period of January – December 2021

Project title "Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II"						
Activities		Funds from	Revised budget 2021	Expenses for the period	Remaining Balance	Utilization level, %
#	Description		A	B	C = A – B	D = B / A
1	Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured	SDC	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
		UNDP	6 344,00	2 430,15	3 913,85	38,31%
2	New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry	SDC	70 200,00	37 081,78	33 118,22	52,82%
		UNDP	139 190,08	41 860,57	97 329,51	30,07%
3	Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ	SDC	59 400,00	169 786,51	- 110 386,51	285,84%
		UNDP	132 755,08	110 713,66	22 041,42	83,40%
4	Population is aware of timely registration benefits	SDC	109 080,00	86 251,72	22 828,28	79,07%

⁷¹ 2021 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2021, p. 3

⁷² 2021 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2021, p. 21

⁷³ 2021 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2021, pp. 21-22

	through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms	UNDP	79 604,56	28 030,20	51 574,36	35,21%
5	Project Support Cost	SDC	-	9 184,30	- ⁹ 184,30	#DIV/0!
		UNDP	142 106,28	136 943,48	5 162,80	96,37%
	Subtotal SDC		238 680,00	302 304,31	- ⁶³ 624,31	126,66%
	Subtotal UNDP		500 000,00	319 978,06	180 021,94	64,00%
Total :			738 680,00	622 282,37	116 397,63	84,24%

Note: Data contained in this financial report section is an extract of UNDP financial records.

The evaluator interviewed the key MoJ stakeholders involved in the implementation of the activities of the CRSR Phase II project, such as SEU Qonuniyat and the IT Specialists, the head of the Institute (IALE) and UAGS and was impressed with the project implementation approach. The partnership developed by the project with these stakeholders and the fact that they are state institutions make the project effective and efficient, in the sense that capacity is being built within the institution and not through contracting out private companies that end up disappearing shortly after the end of the project.

⇒ The MoJ is a reliable and trusted partner of the UNDP, SDC and the CRSR Project. One evidence of this is the MoJ ownership of the products and outcomes of the project, ensuring that most of the trainings and technical activities are carried out by MoJ units and departments (e.g. Qonuniyat; IALE) which have secured state line budgets, building their capacity to sustain the results achieved under the project. The implementation partnership with state institutions makes the project effective and efficient.

3.3 RELEVANCE

The assessment of the relevance of the project has been conducted to ensure that the original purpose and objectives of the project are still valid for the country, its national civil registry reform priorities and SDGs. It also assesses whether the logic of intervention and the project design continue to be coherent and consistent.

Consistency between the Project and the national priorities of Tajikistan

The registration of civil acts is based on the *Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan* and regulated by other decrees, such as the *Family Code*, the *Law on State Registration of Acts of Civil Status* (Government Decree N77) and other norms as well as international instruments adopted by the Republic of Tajikistan.

The Civil Registration System (CRS) is a core government structure assigned to record the vital events of citizens such as births, marriages, and deaths. The service provision is complicated by many different factors including a lack of connectivity and interoperability between Civil Registration Offices (ZAGS) and other state institutions; a lack of a digitalized archive and insufficient human resource capacities; and poor internet. Recognizing these and other challenges and their impact on the most vulnerable and at-risk populations, especially women, children and persons with disabilities and rural communities, in 2014 the Government of Tajikistan initiated an ambitious reform of the ZAGS⁷⁴. The project's outputs are aligned with the priorities of the government as detailed in the draft National Civil Registry Office (ZAGS) Reform Strategy and continue to focus on the harmonisation and strengthening of the legislative and policy framework, individual and institutional capacity building, improvements in the working conditions in the civil registry offices and awareness-raising among the population.

⇒ *CRSR Phase II project is relevant and consistent with the national policy and priorities of the Republic of Tajikistan.*

Several sections of the Tajikistan's *National Development Strategy 2016-2030* (NDS) are relevant to the project. ZAGS and the provision of CR services are directly linked to the National Priority 1 ("Enhancing political and legal institutions to ensure fundamental rights") under Section 3.1 ("Effective Public Administration"). The Regional Policy Dialogue is relevant to NDS Priority 6 ("Enhancing legislation and increasing the quality of the lawmaking process"). The

⁷⁴ Source: ProDoc, p. 2.

public awareness and informational outreach campaigns are relevant to Priority 7 (“Enhancing legislation and increasing the quality of lawmaking process”).

Tajikistan’s *National Development Strategy 2016-2030* calls for “a continuous effort to preserve national unity, implementation of principles of social justice and economic effectiveness, ensuring public security and improving wellbeing of the population.”⁷⁵ Priority 3 under Section 5.5 (“Social Welfare”) calls for “the social protection of vulnerable groups (including Persons with Disabilities). Civil registration is linked to Priority 2 (“Improving access to basic social services”) of Section 5.8 (“Reducing Social Inequality”).

⇒ ZAGZ and the CR system are directly linked to Tajikistan’s National Development Strategy (2016-2030): National Priority 1 (“Enhancing political and legal institutions to ensure fundamental rights”) under Section 3.1 (“Effective Public Administration”); Priority 3 under Section 5.5 (“Social Welfare”) calls for “the social protection of vulnerable groups. The activities in the project with indicators and targets are directly linked to Priority 2 (“Improving access to basic social services”) of Section 5.8 (“Reducing Social Inequality”).

Linkage to the UNDP and SDC Development and Cooperation Strategies

The priorities of the UNDP Country Programme are aligned with those of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2016-2030 and the Tajikistan’s National Development Strategy (2016-2030)⁷⁶ and since the CRSR is directly linked to Tajikistan’s National Development Strategy all these programme documents are interlinked and well aligned.

The CRSR project is connected and directly aligned with 3 of the 4 focus priorities identified in the UNDP country programme. Aiming at transformational development results the UNDP country program focuses in the following priority areas⁷⁷:

1. Improved governance, rule of law and access to justice;
2. Sustainable and equitable economic growth; and
3. Social equity and protection of vulnerable groups from violence and discrimination.

⁷⁵ Mid-Tem Development Programme for the Republic of Tajikistan 2016-2030.

⁷⁶ UNDP Country Programme Document for Tajikistan (2016-2020), p. 4.

⁷⁷ UNDP Country Programme Document for Tajikistan (2016-2020), pp. 4-6.

Equally the CRSR project is connected and directly aligned with the **outcomes of UNDAF** strategic programme framework agreed between the Government of Tajikistan and the United Nations and formulated under the following headings⁷⁸:

- Democratic Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights (**Outcome 1**);
- Sustainable and equitable economic development (**Outcome 2**); and
- Social Development, Inclusion and Empowerment (**Outcomes 3, 4 & 5**).

The project has a direct **link to SDC Cooperation Strategy Outcomes** which is related to *“Public institutions deliver efficient and effective services in an inclusive way and are accountable to citizens. Civil society participates in decision making processes”*⁷⁹.

⇒ *CRSR Phase II project is interconnected and directly linked to the development partners’ cooperation strategies (SDC), UNDAF outcomes and country development programme documents (UNDP).*

Linkage to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals

Strong institutions, justice and rule of law are important areas that are reflected in the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs adopted in 2015 by 193 UN member states including Tajikistan. The respect for human rights, the rule of law and the need to establish accountable institutions are key in building a society that is inclusive and promotes sustainable development based on peace and justice.

All the linkages of the project to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the linkages to the Tajikistan’s National Development Strategy (2016-2030) stated in the ProDoc for the project are still relevant today. The project is also aligned with goals set out in the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 of *“Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”* and *“enhancing people-centered national and regional multi-stakeholder partnerships for improving mutual accountability for the Sustainable Development Goals”*.⁸⁰

The project adopts a **human rights-based approach** and works on both the *supply side* and the *demand side* of civil registration service provision enabling each side to substantively contribute to implementation of the civil registration reform process. It contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular SDG 16 (strong institutions, justice and rule of law), **SDG 10**

⁷⁸ United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2016-2030.

⁷⁹ Source: 2020 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2020, p. 8.

⁸⁰ Source: *UNDP Strategic Plan (2018-2021)* pp. 3-5.

(inequalities), **SDG 5** (gender) contributing to **targets 16.9** (legal identity for all) and **17.19** (proportion of countries that have achieved 100 per cent birth registration and 80 per cent death registration).

The CRSR Phase II project is intrinsically linked to three SDGs: Goal 16, Goal 10 and Goal 5.

Goal 16: It commits Member States to: *“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”* Civil registration is particularly linked to target 16.9 designed to ensure legal identity for all.

Goal 10 is designed to eliminate discrimination in laws, policies and practices and ‘reduce inequality’ in the society and the project does exactly that. The project includes outputs and activities designed to increase access to civil registration services to the population including women, children and vulnerable people.

Goal 5 highlights the need for empowerment of women and girls to overcome the discrimination they suffer in many societies. In that way, Goal 5 promotes gender equality.

⇒ **CRSR Phase II project is intrinsically linked to three SDGs: Goal 16 (*‘inclusive institutions, rule of law and access to justice’*), Goal 10 (*‘reduce inequality and discrimination’*) and Goal 5 (*‘empowerment of women and girls, gender equality’*).**

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

Consultations carried out by the evaluator with GoT government officials, particularly the Ministry of Justice (UAGS, Qonuniyat, IALE), support the finding that the prospects for sustainability in terms of government policy ('policy sustainability') is very promising. In terms of 'institutional sustainability' the situation is more difficult to predict. Like most developing countries, the institutional framework of the GoT is still weak and often depends on the leadership provided by the head of the institution which changes constantly. In terms of 'financial sustainability', so far the Ministry of Justice has been able to get the support of the Ministry of Finance to keep its commitments to building at least 4 Justice Centers each year (which will house ZAGS) and to make financial contributions in support of the implementation of the outputs of the project.

Output 1

Output 1: Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured

Evidence of sustainability of Output 1 includes the following actions and products in place:

- ✓ Implementation of the **MoJ 2021-2022 Action Plan** is sustainable as it is the result of a MoJ decree, and the trainings provided by the project to IALE, UAGS and ZAGS office staff ensures the continued implementation of the civil registry legislation; ZAGS Office staff are capacitated to carry out the implementation of civil registration legislation through the process of data entry for all 7 registration application information, access data, use the 'token' electronic signature and the Heads of ZAGS office (directors) are capacitated to review the work completed by staff and put their final 'token' signature on the registration⁸¹.
- ✓ The MoJ IT capacity has been strengthened by the project through the recruitment and training of Qonuniyat IT specialists and the fact that SEU Qonuniyat is a state enterprise that can access revenues by providing services to other agencies, plus the fact that SEU Qonuniyat is a key element of the MoJ implementation mechanism for the GoT Law on Public Service modernization process (e-PublicService), ensures the sustainability of SEU Qonuniyat⁸².

⁸¹ Source: Interviews with stakeholders, including the MoJ, IALE, Qonuniyat and directors of ZAGS offices.

⁸² Qonuniyat is a state enterprise established by GoT decree and their function is not only partnering with the project or supporting only the MoJ but the whole government and it is funded by the Government. The IT specialists are funded not only by the project but also by State budget. MoJ decided to have Qonuniyat take

- ✓ Provided that GoT enacts the required necessary legislative amendments and by-laws already drafted to implement the CR law (the Government decree #77, including the introduction of Personal Identification; and the law on consular departments of MoFA) and provided that the CROIS2 system is upgraded into a micro-service system e-platform, the Law on Public Service (e-PublicService) will ensure the establishment and the sustainability of interconnectivity and interoperability of CR data with data from other state agencies' electronic systems⁸³.

⇒ ***Output 1 (Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured) is on track to be sustainable but requires development partners' continued advocacy and support.***

Output 2

Output 2: New quality business processes in place and effectively applied in civil registry

Some evidence of sustainability of Output 2 includes the following actions and products in place:

- ✓ The *Analytics Dashboard*, which shows the activity of CR staff in the CROIS2 information system and provides monitoring ability of the work of staff;
- ✓ The OSS model offices are modern with established business procedures in place; citizens at arrival receive a number in the electronic queue machine and on average are attended within 5 to 10 minutes;
- ✓ The rotational work modality with mentoring and on-the-job learning methodology ensures that staff are able to work in any of the 7 areas of civil registration;
- ✓ One of the positive impacts of the Covid pandemic is the development of online courses supported by the project, which contributes towards sustainability of trainings and staff capacity development long-distance and even during catastrophic events;
- ✓ The internal SOP for the CR staff on the use of email which has been developed in Tajik and Russian languages and shared through corporate email with CR personnel.

⇒ ***Output 2 (New quality business processes in place and effectively applied in civil registry): Currently the quality of service at ZAGS offices shows great***

over the role previously provided by other companies (e.g. EPOS) precisely to build the capacity of a state enterprise and to ensure security of data. Source: MoJ.

⁸³ Source: Interviews with MoJ's stakeholders and Qonuniyat IT specialists.

improvement with citizens getting registration of civil acts within reasonable period of time and less visits to the CR office; However, in order to ensure sustainability, business processes need to be formalized into effective operational guidelines or standard operational procedures (SoPs).

Output 3

Output 3: Electronic civil registry system handed over and effectively managed by MoJ

Evidence of sustainability of Output 3 includes the following actions and products in place:

- ✓ Project interventions have transformed SEU Qonuniyat into a key enterprise not only to sustain the electronic civil registry system at the MoJ but potentially capable to support the modernization of the public service in Tajikistan; the fact that it is a state enterprise created by a government decree **and** it can provide pay-for-services to other agencies **and** that MoJ has become the focus point Ministry in the implementation of the Law on Public Services in collaboration with SEU Qonuniyat greatly contributes to the sustainability of SEU Qonuniyat;
- ✓ The increase of the bandwidth of the channel and the use of caching server for the user sessions data, user group and other recommendations implemented as a result of the CROIS2 load and stress test (carried out with the support of the project) reduced costs and allowed greater number of users to simultaneously work in the system making the system more viable and sustainable;
- ✓ The user-friendly CR Website is a successful platform guiding people through civil registration process;

⇒ Output 3 (Electronic civil registry system handed over and effectively managed by MoJ) is on track to be sustainable but the CROIS2 system must be upgraded into a more robust micro-service system e-platform that supports interoperability and guarantees data security.

Output 4

Output 4: Public Awareness by the population on how to have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system

Currently there is little evidence of sustainability of Output 4 since the results of the results of studies and surveys conducted by the project are not available at the time of this evaluation.

⇒ Output 4 (Public Awareness by the population on how to have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system) – Although there are some results and achievements reported under Output 4 in this evaluation, there is not sufficient data available for a full assessment of the sustainability of this output since the results of research and surveys conducted by the project are not available at the time of this evaluation.

3.5 IMPACT: INCLUSION & GENDER

Inclusion and gender aspects of the CRSR Phase II project were partly covered throughout the prior sections of the Report. However, since it is a very important focus of the interventions of the project, further analysis is provided in this section. The project ensured the inclusion of participants working on gender and vulnerable people issues in all its activities. One such example, was the the 5th National Rule of Law Forum conducted on 1st November 2019. An obvious example of this, which was observed by the evaluator in the field, is that approximately 99% of the ZAGS offices **leadership** and staff are women⁸⁴ which mean that most of the training and other project activities benefitted mostly women.

Inclusion and Vulnerabilities

The project adopts a **human rights based approach** to programming which in part responded to the challenges and vulnerabilities that became evident during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic in that many people, particularly vulnerable citizens, were not able to obtain neither paper based nor electronic services from CR offices. The lockdown and social distancing prevented citizens from going to the ZAGS offices. After the lockdown ended, the project in partnership with the MoJ looked at potential solutions to improve services to deal with some backlog that built up during that period. During 2021, the project ensured that human rights-based approach is mainstreamed throughout its components and that it includes vulnerability, disability and gender disaggregated data. To make the civil registration services more accessible to women and persons with disabilities and to simplify civil registration process for the population, **mobile registration** units were used in remote areas and the project is supporting the MoJ in establishing mechanisms and conducting monitoring, mentoring and capacity building activities⁸⁵.

Gender

In 2020, the project ensured that all project activities at outcome and output levels were allocated a gender rating of No 2⁸⁶. This means that the activities have gender equality as a significant objective, although the project is not specifically

⁸⁴ Source: Field mission observations made during visits and interviews conducted at ZAGS office; stakeholders interviews; and comments made during the Evaluation Validation Workshop. One challenge that this situation presents is that, due to the frequency of staff maternity leave, staff shortage is frequently observed in the CR services delivery. To respond to this challenge a staff rotation policy has been implemented, as a protective mechanism to ensure the continued delivery of the CR services to the population.

⁸⁵ Source: p. 2021 Annual Project Report, p. 11

⁸⁶ The UNDP Gender Marker is a tool that rates gender mainstreaming and equality at the activity level on a scale from zero to three.

dedicated to gender, but gender issues are discussed in all sections of it, with inclusion of sex-disaggregated data where relevant. The project continued to monitor implementation of the Gender Marker in its activities and to address gender disparity issues if any is detected. Furthermore, the project communicated to its partners and contractors about the gender objective and keeps monitoring their work against gender equality requirements. The project has also mainstreamed gender within its team by hiring 2 female employees⁸⁷ who along with all other 4 staff members, are dedicated persons to ensure that gender related commitments are translated into action and actual change on the ground⁸⁸.

Project interventions in 2021, that directly contributes to gender equality⁸⁹:

- ✓ Conduction of public awareness activities targeting **women and persons with disabilities**, as the most vulnerable groups of society. With the support of its partner ONG HRC, the project carried out outreach activities on the importance and benefits of timely registration of births in maternity hospitals in the project's target areas, to ensure that young mothers timely receive the important information. **A total of 750 women from rural areas received information through the fabric diaper bags.**
- ✓ Use of the Mobile Civil Registry Office to provide CR services to **women and persons with disabilities** living in rural and remote areas of the country, who due to mobility constraints have problems to apply for civil documents for their children. **A total of 386 people received CR services (60% women), where 296 people received civil registration documents, and 90 people received legal advice.**
- ✓ Development and launch of the **CR Website** to provide first-hand information and guidance to people on civil registration service processes and respond to public queries. After the introduction of the website, the Project made efforts to ensure **women's increased access to the information** by placing several posts about the new website on Facebook women's lead pages.
- ✓ Support to the monitoring and collecting of data on **gender disaggregated statistics/indicators** on timely birth registration and gender-related indicators as well*.

⁸⁷ Project Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Project Associate – Communications, Outreach and Gender.

⁸⁸ Source: 2020 Annual Progress Report for the period of January – December 2020, p. 12

⁸⁹ Source: p. 2021 Annual Project Report, p. 10

* CROIS2 platform can be used to produce reports that show records of births and deaths disaggregated by gender⁹⁰.

Two 6-day *Training of Trainers'* trainings which included gender equality training conducted by **UN Women** to members of the Institute for Advanced Legal Education (**IALE**) was carried out under Phase I. It prepared IALE trainers to address gender issue questions from ZAGS offices and to conduct future gender equality trainings under Phase II of the project⁹¹. ZAGS office leadership (directors) and staff participated in the trainings with a focus on gender equality, domestic violence and citizen-focused services, contributing to skills and lessons that are being applied in the services provided by the CR system⁹². So far, due to Covid-19 restrictions only **online trainings** have been carried out under Phase II of the project.

⇒ CRSR Phase II project continues to place a lot of focus on issues of gender and persons with disabilities (PwDs) and continues to provide support for improvement of the capacity of ZAGS office staff provide citizen-focused services for women, PwDs and other vulnerable citizens of Tajikistan.

⁹⁰ Source: Qonuniak's IT specialists interviews, 22 June 2022.

⁹¹ Source: Stakeholders interviews e.g. IALE's leadership interview 22 June 2022.

⁹² Source: Stakeholders' interviews (e.g. Interviews at Firdavsi district ZAGS office; Rudaki ZAGS office; Somoni district ZAGS office).

4.0 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The CRSR Phase II Project is a complex project with multi-stakeholders and with ambitious set of targets and outcomes. The implementation of the project was significantly influenced by the impact of the Covid-19 Global Pandemic in 2020 and by the Audit in 2021. As well, there was a change in the Senior Management of the Ministry of Justice which took some time to adjust some management aspects and slowed down the process of approval of the 2021 Annual Work Plan. These challenges and constraints resulted in the project efficiency being modest and the project performance being behind the original planned timetable. Given the challenges the project faced in the first two years of operation, the evaluation is **recommending a 'no-cost 1-year extension' of the project** in order to ensure a well-paced and orderly completion of all the activities of the project.

These challenges were mostly out of control of the project team. Nevertheless, the materials and financial resources invested by the project were adequately invested to keep the project on track to achieve its goals and outcomes. It is a reflection of the strong and effective project team that the UNDP has managed to establish for Civil Registry system reform project, which was able to achieve visible results within the short period of time.

The CRSR Phase II Project is highly relevant to national priorities as reflected in the CR system reform legislation and other strategy and policy documents of the Ministry of Justice and the regulatory framework being undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan with the aim to achieve e-government in the provision of public services. The Civil Registration System (CRS) is a core government structure assigned to record the vital events of citizens such as births, marriages, and deaths. The project has responded to its need to digitalize and modernize contributing to reduction in civil registration time and cost which is important particularly for women, children and persons with disabilities and rural communities. The project's outputs respond to the priorities of the government as detailed in the draft National Civil Registry Office (ZAGS) Reform Strategy by focusing on the harmonisation and strengthening of the legislative and policy framework, individual and institutional capacity building, improvements in the working conditions in the civil registry offices and awareness-raising among the population. The project's outcomes and outputs are also contributing to national priorities 1, 2, and 3 in Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (2016-2030) by contributing to enhancing legal institutions to ensure fundamental rights, effective public administration (Priority 1); improving access to basic social services and

reducing social inequality (Priority 2); and in general improving the social welfare system (Priority 3).

The project is also aligned with the SDGs and with UN strategic documents. The CRSR project is contributing to three of the four priority areas identified in the UNDP Country Programme. The project contributes to improved governance, equitable economic growth; and to social equity and protection of vulnerable groups from discrimination. Since the UNDP CPD is aligned with the outcomes of UNDAF the project is also contributing to the outcomes of UNDAF in terms of democratic governance and human rights (Outcome 1); equitable economic development (Outcome 2); and social development, inclusion and empowerment (Outcomes 3, 4, and 5).

The project has a direct **link to SDC Cooperation Strategy Outcomes** which is related to *“Public institutions deliver efficient and effective services in an inclusive way and are accountable to citizens. Civil society participates in decision making processes”*.

The analysis of the outputs of the project under the Effectiveness heading of this report provide sufficient evidence to conclude that, at a reasonably satisfactory level, good progress has been made towards the achievement of Outcomes 1 and 2 at the end of the project.

Key achievements of the CRSR Phase II project in partnership with GoT include:

- **Analytical Dashboard** introduced to monitor timely entering of CR records into CROIS2 – increase in digitalization to 93% vs 7% paper-based in 2021 when compared to 73% (2016-2020)
- New **OSS CR Offices model**⁹³ in the Firdavsi and I. Somoni districts of Dushanbe, Vahdat city of DRS and Norak city of Khatlon (scheduled to open in 2022)
- The project supported the transition to electronic printing of seven types of certificates using matrix printers (versus previous handwritten) in all CR Offices in Tajikistan. It should be pointed out that the format and the process/methodology of printing need review to be simplified and more cost effective⁹⁴.

⁹³ The OSS office model implemented so far by the CRSR project is probably better described as a ‘front-and-back’ office model. It qualifies as an OSS model because the ZAGS offices provide a multitude of civil registration services.

⁹⁴ Although for time being printing has reduced the time for service provision, workload of CR staff and possible errors, The CRSR Phase II project recognizes that it is still not a best solution since it brings

- CROIS2 load and stress test of CROIS2 carried out; Implementation of the major recommendation i.e. increase the bandwidth of the channel and use caching server for the user sessions data, user group and other recommendations reduce costs for system support but increases page loading speed allowing greater no. of users to simultaneously work in the system (now allows 2000-4000 users)
- In 2021 UNDP contracted IT specialists were handed over to IT specialists of **SEU Qonuniyat** under the MOJ, which now is a robust IT entity, with capacity to solve ZAGS' technical problems within minutes online & within 2 hours at ZAGS' offices
- Due to Covid pandemic most formal trainings did not take place. However, during monitoring visits, in-person trainings by Qonuniyat IT specialists and by the project team were provided to 230 CR personnel in Dushanbe, DRS and Khatlon region. Also the expert WG under the MoJ was established to develop **5 e-learning courses** for CR and SALAC staff
- A new friendly user-centered **Website** was developed and launched to guide people through civil registration process – 2,000 persons per month access the website
- Launched a pilot **Mobile ZAGS** (Nov-Dec 2021) registering 386 people (60% women) in 18 districts and 26 jamoats in DRS, Khatlon, Sughd and GBAO
- Conducted outreach sessions with the support of CSO resulting in 700 birth certificates issued and raising awareness of more than 2,000 people in the project target areas (Khuroson, Jayhun, Rasht, B.Gafurov, Farhor, Rudaki, Tursunzade)

CRSR Phase II project placed a lot of focus on issues of **gender and vulnerable citizens**. The design of the OSS model offices and key achievements referred to above, such as the outreach sessions, the design of the **Website** and the piloting of **Mobile ZAGS** were all carried out taking into account women and other vulnerable citizens such as PwDs.

The project ensured that all project activities at outcome and output levels were allocated a gender rating of No 2, meaning that the activities have gender equality as a significant objective, so even if an activity is not specifically dedicated to gender, gender issues are discussed in all sections of it, with inclusion of sex-disaggregated data where relevant. The project supported the monitoring and

additional burden to CR offices to supply special cartridges and seek services to those new printers to deal with technical issues.

collecting of data on **gender disaggregated statistics/indicators** on timely birth registration and gender-related indicators as well. CROIS2 platform can be used to produce reports that show records of births and deaths disaggregated by gender.

While ‘policy sustainability’ of the outputs of the project are in place and the government has taken measures to ensure some ‘financial sustainability’ of the products of the project, technical, financial and institutional sustainability of most of the outputs of the project still depend on further and continued development partners’ support. UNDP’s approach under CRSR Project of reliance on national staff with an in-depth-knowledge of the government bureaucracy and the cultural and development context of the country, coupled with the approach to invest on state institutions (e.g. MoJ’s SEU Qonuniyat), is an added value that will contribute towards sustainability of the products and outcomes of the project.

4.2 LESSONS & BEST PRACTICES

L1. Human resources training and institutional capacity development project targeting priority areas of a key beneficiary (i.e. MoJ’s SUE Qonuniyat, UAGS, IALE) is more effective if it is comprehensive and developed in a way that the project becomes a strategic partner of the target institution. When a project addresses the beneficiary institution’s key priorities and needs, it fosters teamwork and buy-in (i.e. ownership) and results in a more effective implementation of the activities of the project.

L2. Strengthening the capacity of a state enterprise such as SEU Qonuniyat not only contributes to sustainability of products and outcomes of the project but also ensures readily available and provided services to ZAGS offices (i.e. prompt online service and an average of 2-hour on-site service) since it is an in-house state service provider.

L3. Lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic include: the need to increase connectivity of UAGS and ZAGS offices through **better internet and fiber-optic lines**, implement tools such as online notification and/or registration and the introduction of cashless payment for the services, innovative training methods such as online learning, integrated systems for inter-agency coordination and interoperability of systems. The challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the importance to accelerate the digital transition of Civil Registry System registry offices along with other public services.

L4. Implementing institutional changes must be flexible and adaptable to the needs and work environment of each beneficiary, instead of adopting a *one-size-fits-all* approach. The OSS model concept may not be fully applicable to all ZAGS office. For example, infrastructural limits or staff shortage may limit the application of new working models and require different support approaches to such ZAGS offices.

L5. The Project supported the training of trainers on gender where IALE instructors were trained by UN Women on the understanding that IALE would incorporate such trainings to ZAGS offices' directors and staff. '*Cascading training modality*', where training participants are required to develop and implement trainings on their own, produces a more robust result of the project intervention. Actually some new ZAGS offices staff are being trained by staff that had received training on CROIS2 system. Any director or other staff receiving specialized training should be required to replicate the training to other staff that was not a beneficiary of the same training.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations (directed to the project team, national partners and international development partners)

R1. It is recommended that the national partner (MoJ), starting immediately as a priority in the short term, demonstrates strategic leadership in the continuation of the implementation of the project by undertaking clear actions with specific and substantive recognizable results in reforming the civil registry system.

Short explanation/further action:

The national partner ought to move forward quickly with legislation and policy reforms that will support the implementation of the project activities and outputs and ought to take operational steps to raise the effectiveness and the efficiency of the CR system. Reforms must undertake key critical steps in the process of reforming the CR system such as, for example, the abolishment of paper-based certificates, starting with birth registration.

R2. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization needs to be re-activated and operationalized to deal with integration and interoperability issues, and protocols and security guidelines need to be put into place. Clear actions and results goals should be established for the operationalization of this WG. It is crucial that MoJ takes a significant responsibility and leadership in the re-activation and operationalization of this WG with immediate and short-term concrete results.

Short explanation/further action:

The Executive Office of the President assigned the Consular Department under the MoFA as coordinator/lead for data collection and arrangement of meetings with all state institutions involved. The Consular Department expressed its readiness to support with coordination of actual technical integration and data exchange. Although in the past, MoFA decided not to proceed due to concerns about the CROIS2 security of data and its capacity to operate existing systems, if the recommendation to update/replace the CROIS2 system is adopted it would respond to MoFA's concerns. The CRSR project and the GoT should now re-activate and operationalize the Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization with a mandate to study and implement a system to integrate the Civil Registration system with other relevant government agencies' systems (i.e. health, pension system, statistics and the national ID/passport system) with security protection of data and information shared electronically. MoJ needs to take a significant responsibility and leadership in this process and present immediate and short-term results in the re-activation and operationalization of this WG.

R3. Improve the preparatory work ahead of the Steering Committee meeting. The project team needs to do a lot of preparatory work and share the information with the Steering Committee members ahead of the meeting date, highlighting relevant points of concern, alternative courses of action and practical recommendations.

Short explanation/further action:

The Steering Committee meetings attendance includes high level stakeholders' representatives (Minister of Justice, UNDP Resident Representative, SDC Country Director). Committee meetings are very formal which is important at the political level but hard to get work done. In such environment, the meeting time can end up being filled with a number of interventions and speeches leaving very little room for analysis to iron out issues and reach practical and effective decisions. It is recommended that extensive preparatory work is done by the project team in the days leading to the meeting and communicated to the meeting participants in preparation for the Steering Committee meeting. The project team would be in a position to present concrete recommendation which the Steering Committee members would review and reach decisions at the meeting.

R4. Streamline the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan so that, once presented and approved by the Steering Committee, its implementation can proceed without the need to have the Minister sign the Work Plan document.

Short explanation/further action:

The requirement of the Minister of Justice to sign the project's 2021 Annual Work Plan caused some delay in the implementation of activities and it is ineffective. Often, activities are in the process of being implemented and to pause them during the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan causes unnecessary delays. The main purpose of the Steering Committee meeting is the approval of the Annual Work Plan and, once this takes place, its implementation should proceed without the necessity of waiting for the signature of the Minister on the document. Often the Minister is busy with other more urgent matters and cannot deal with the signing of the Work Plan within a reasonable period of time.

R5. Proceed aggressively with the implementation of the MoJ Action Plan by enacting legislative amendments and by-laws (regulations) necessary to implement the original CR legislative package (Government decree #77).

Short explanation/further action:

Now that the MoJ has been selected by the GoT as the lead Ministry in the implementation of the Law on Public Services, it has an opportunity to be bold in pushing forward the necessary legislation to move forward to fully implement the digitalization and modernization of the CR system in Tajikistan. The digitalized CR system, with its model office design, should be showcased as the model for the e-government and modernization of public service delivery in Tajikistan.

R6. Revise the OSS concept in order to adapt it as a front-and-back office model and proceed with the roll out of the remaining OSS/front-and-back ZAGS offices (outputs/key activities of the project).

Short explanation/further action:

Formalize the front and back-office model (e.g. by developing and adopting operational guidelines and SoPs) and apply them to all 10 project-supported CR offices (with adaptation where

necessary) with assistance in internal renovation, including accessibility for persons with disabilities. Continue to support capacity building activities to those Civil Registry Offices on the front and back-office model and on soft skills to improve their interface with citizens, particularly women and PwDs (citizen-friendly services).

R7. Upgrade or replace the CROIS2 system by a robust micro-service system e-platform, capable of interconnectivity and interoperability, which can be integrated with other relevant government agencies' systems (i.e. health, pension system, statistics and the national ID/passport system) with security protection of data and information shared electronically (based on national security standards).

Short explanation/further action:

The problem with CROIS2 is that it is a monolithic system making it hard to integrate with other agencies' systems. Now there are micro-service systems which are designed for interoperability with greater security of information shared electronically. It will also require some legislative and policy groundwork to implement this recommendation. The instruction/by-law on consular departments of MoFA needs to be enacted and a personal electronic identification needs to be established. Continue the process of e-government in the CR system so that citizens can carry out civil registration acts through a Web Portal without the need for physical signature, and to be able to make payment for the service online i.e. online application and registration process.

R8. Provided that the MoJ and the project develop and agree on a sustainability strategy for the gradual withdrawal of the project funding of Qonuniyat, continued support to SEU Qonuniyat and its IT Specialists in terms of capacity building, technical equipment and case management should be considered.

Short explanation/further action:

Supporting and building capacity of Qonuniyat, a state institution, is more sustainable than contracting a private company to do the technical work of supporting the CR system platform. However, gradually the project support for the salary of the IT specialists should be withdrawn as planned while ensuring that the MoJ honours its commitment to keep the number of IT specialists that are required to manage the system and respond promptly to service requests by the ZAGS offices. This support must be conditional upon the national partner (MoJ) producing and agreeing on a sustainability strategy with a clear vision and specific actions the national partner is taking and plans to continue to take to ensure sustainability of these investments when the project exits its support (exit strategy). Without a clear strategy with actionable sustainability strategy agreed to by the national partner this recommendation should not be adopted.

R9. MoJ/UAGS to adopt standard operation procedures (CR instruction) to streamline homogenous standards of service delivery in all CR offices.

Short explanation/further action:

UAGS and ZAGS business and operational processes need to be formalized and operationalized into effective operational guidelines or standard operational procedures (SoPs) resulting in homogeneous standards of service delivery in all CR offices. Clear actions and results goals should

be established for the development and implementation of these guidelines and there should be evidence of results being accomplished uniformly across all CR offices. Currently legislation and by-laws (regulations approved by decree of the MoJ) are the only guidance that ZAGS office staff receive in order to carry out their services to the public. Legislation and regulations (by-laws) should be supplemented by operational guidelines (usually issued by the Ministry or by the department (i.e. UAGS) and reviewed and approved by the legal department of the Ministry) explaining in plain language how to implement the legislation and the by-law. Output 2's implementation is dedicated to the development of operational guidelines and SoPs and it should be implemented effectively.

RI0. A strategy or a concept note to be developed for the digitization of archives with multiple options to be selected and endorsed by the MoJ and donor.

Short explanation/further action:

A strategy for the digitalization of archives should consider different options, including:

4. Training of archivists with salary increase for them by MoJ as a part of their responsibility. MoJ shall regulate this task internally. If the option is selected, the target has to be revised due to inability of the project to achieve 1,000,000 archives digitalized;
5. Creation of the data center under the Qonuniyat with MoJ responsibility to cover the expense of the staff; this option contributes to sustainability. If the option is selected, the target has to be revised due to inability of the project to achieve 1,000,000 archives digitalized;
6. Fully outsource the digitization task to achieve the target. This approach is not sustainable but will allow the project to achieve its target.

RI1. Improve the quality and quantity of outreach activities in order to improve the rate of timely birth registration at ZAGS. Consider engaging, in addition to NGO HRC, other NGOs that work with women and PwDs in the rural areas and jamoats.

Short explanation/further action:

From January to December 2021 there were 271,221 birth registrations, of which only 218,206 or 80% were timely registrations (i.e. registered under 1-year-old). During field mission consultations the evaluator reviewed the radio, video and other podcasts and social media products which were reasonably good but designed more to reach people who have access to such media. More grassroots dissemination of information to create sensibility about the importance of the CR services and how to access them is necessary to increase awareness and NGOs that work with women and PwDs in the districts, rural areas and jamoats outside Dushanbe could be engaged using small-scale grants or contracts to do this work (e.g. CSO Network on RoL and Human Rights).

RI2. ZAGS offices staff trainings ought to include online trainings to ensure regular engagement of all CRR staff in capacity development opportunities and the annual training programs ought to include sessions/components for sharing experiences and lessons and deal with technical glitches and other problems in the electronic registration system.

Short explanation/further action:

Staff training programs are more effective if regional ZAGS offices' staff are encouraged to submit their lessons learned and issues they have faced in their work and have sessions that allow them to present such issues and encourage the sharing of experiences and concerns. This modality would be able not only to improve the quality of the training making it more focused in problem-solving modality but also allow UAGS to identify technical issues that need to be corrected. For example, during the evaluation visits to ZAGS office, staff complained that the system does not alert the director that documents are waiting for her electronic token signature, resulting in staff having to come one after another to remind the director to apply her electronic signature to complete the registration.

R13. Support training for UAGS on improvement of maintenance and repair logistics and on procurement processes for machines' parts and supplies. Clear actions and results goals should be set for the establishment of these systems and processes and there should be evidence of results being accomplished.

Short explanation/further action:

UAGS need training to improve the logistics of ZAGS offices' maintenance and repair services (e.g. air condition repairs) and on procurement processes for supplies (e.g. printer's ink and printer parts, paper and other office supplies). The issue of logistics (rules and SoPs) ought to be raised with the MoJ to identify whether each office has financial means to carry out this function or if central logistical support is to be provided in timely manner.

R14. A no-cost project extension of 12 months (1-year) is recommended to allow the project implementation to be completed at a reasonable pace and achieve its planned goals/outcomes.

Short explanation/further action:

The Covid pandemic prevented many planned activities from taking place during the 2020 and the Audit process denied the project team access to most of the project funds during 2021. Although the project team worked very hard to overcome these major constraints in 2020 and 2021, there is still some catch up work to ensure effective implementation of all planned activities. Consultations carried out with the project team and review of the documentations and project funds lead to a conclusion that it is not reasonable to expect that available project funds can be spent with effectiveness and efficiency unless there is a 12-month 'no cost' extension of the project. In principle, SDC and the MoJ are not objecting to such an extension. Considering all above, particularly the extraordinary circumstances faced by the project (i.e. Covid and Audit), it can be argued that the project meets all required pre-requisites for a no-cost extension. **If an extension is granted, the project should hold a retreat with all the relevant stakeholders** to conduct a thorough situation analysis of the changes that may be advisable to make in terms of activities, methodology, approaches and timelines for the completion of the project activities in the time horizon of an additional year.

General framework of the recommendations

The table presents the general responsibility framework of the MTE recommendations.

Rec. #	Recommendations	RESPONSIBILITY: Project Team/ DP/ National Partner (MoJ)
<i>B. Strategic Recommendation</i>		
<i>Rec. 1</i>	<i>National Partner demonstration of strategic leadership in the implementation of the project.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>B. Operational Recommendations</i>		
<i>Rec. 2</i>	<i>Re-Activate and Operationalize the Inter-Agency Working Group on Digitalization with MoJ taking significant responsibility and leadership role in the process.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 3</i>	<i>Improve the preparatory work ahead of the Steering Committee meeting</i>	Project Team
<i>Rec. 4</i>	<i>Streamline the process of approval of the Annual Work Plan.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 5</i>	<i>Aggressive implementation of the MoJ Action Plan.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 6</i>	<i>Roll out of the remaining OSS/front-and-back ZAGS offices.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 7</i>	<i>Upgrade or replace the CROIS2 system by a robust micro-service system e-platform.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 8</i>	<i>Continued support to Qonuniyat provided that the MoJ and the project develop and agree on a sustainability strategy for the gradual withdrawal of the project funding of Qonuniyat.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>Rec. 9</i>	<i>MoJ/UAGS to adopt standard operation procedures to streamline homogenous standards of service delivery in all CR offices.</i>	National Partner & PT
<i>Rec. 10</i>	<i>A strategy or a concept note to be developed for the digitization of archives with multiple options to be selected and endorsed by the MoJ and donor.</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)
<i>Rec. 11</i>	<i>Improve the quality and quantity of outreach activities in order to improve the rate of timely birth registration at ZAGS.</i>	Project Team
<i>Rec. 12</i>	<i>Adoption of online training and inclusion of experience sharing and lessons learned during annual ZAGS offices staff trainings.</i>	Project Team & NP
<i>Rec. 13</i>	<i>Improvement of procurement, maintenance logistics for ZAGS.</i>	National Partner
<i>Rec. 14</i>	<i>No-cost project extension of 12 months (1-year).</i>	National Partner & PT (and DPs)

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

[Project team: please insert a link to the ToR for the evaluation]

#	Name	Institution	Contact Info	Gender
1	Alizoda Nigina	Ministry of Justice	tel: +992 372 21-99-54	Female
2	Samadzoda Iftikhor	CR Department under the MoJ	CRD Building, Rudaki ave., 36 tel: +992 918735552	Male
3	Isfandiyor Sobirzoda	Institute of Advanced Legal Qualification under MoJ	tel: +992 908 08 22 66 +992 93 808 22 66	Male
4	Akmal Kholiqzoda			Male
5	Akmal Nazarov			Male
6	Faridun Sharipov	SEU "Qonuniyat"	tel: +992 935722772 call-centre: 5566	Male
7	Shohrukh Qudratov			Male
8	Firuz Sodiqov			Male
9	Hakimiyon Sarvina			Male
10	Shahzod Kholiqzoda			Male
11	Bahodur Ramazonov	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	-	Male
12	Pulatov Ismoil	State Committee for National Security	-	Male
13	Latofat Sherzoda	ZAGS Office in Firdavsi district	tel: +992 907331661	Female
14	Muzafari Nodira	ZAGS Office in I. Somoni district	tel: +992 937 85 85 60 +992 905 05 59 09 +992 907 98 62 12	Female
15	Saidzoda Malikabonu			Female
16	Saidalizoda Bibisanam			Female
17	Mirzoahmadzoda Sarvinoz	ZAGS Office in Rudaki district	735100, Rudaki district, I. Somoni jamoat tel: +992 888 84 99 44	Female
18	Tagoymurodzoda Umed			Male
19	Mirzoeva Muborak			Female
20	Lutfullozoda Farzona	ZAGS Office in Nurek district	Nurek city, Rudaki str. 16. tel: +992 938 90 34 34 +992 938 99 25 65	Female
21	Abdullozoda Zebuniso			Female
22	Samadzoda Savlatbi			Female
23	Hakimzoda Shoira	ZAGS Office in Vahdat city	Vahdat city, Rudaki ave. tel: +992 939 99 96 96	Female
24	Saidova B.			Female
25	Nabizoda Z.			Female
26	Abdulozod Sadoqat	ZAGS Office in Guliston city	Guliston city, Istiqlol str., №73 tel: +992 929 09 00 15	Female
27	Nasrulloeva Nigora			Female
28	Abdulatifzoda Mutribakhon	ZAGS Office in B. Gafurov city	B. Gafurov district, Gafurov village, Musobekov str. №19. tel: +992 927 16 44 44 +992 92 894 00 22	Female
29	Sayohat Naimzoda			Female
30	Maryam Saymuminzoda	ZAGS Office in Kulob city	Kulob city, I. Somoni ave., 9 tel: +992 985 95 95 66	Female
31	Umarzoda Ilhom			Male
32	Bakhtiyor Mirzoev			Male
33	Fayzullozoda Mavluda	ZAGS Office in Vose city	Vose district, Jumaev str.	Female

34	Rahimov Khayriddin		tel: +992 918 50 68 63	Male
35	Farzonai Emomali			Female
36	Davlatova Dilorom			Female
37	Saidzoda Omina			Female
38	Khurshed Shodiev	Agency on social protection of the population (IT Dept.) under the Ministry of health and social protection of the population of the RT	tel: +992 37 227-01-56	Male
39	Suhrob Tojiddinov			Male
40	Manucher Asomiddinov			Male
41	Khalilov Nurmahmad	NGO Human Rights Centre	Valamatzade str. 8/1 apt. 30 tel: (+992) 37 221 51 87	Male
42	Zulfikor Zamonov	"CR Reform" Phase II Project Team (UNDP)	tel: +992 949999159 E-mail: zulfikor.zamonov@undp.org	Male
43	Anvar Aminov			Male
44	Firuza Sharipova			Female
45	Yunus Qurbonov			Male
46	Alisher Karimov	UNDP	UNDP Office, Ayni str. 39. Tel: 949999078 (Mr. Alisher Karimov) Tel: 949999565 (Ms. Adolat Ismailova, Assistant of the Permanent Representative of the UNDP in Tajikistan)	Male
47	Zarina Mavlyanova			Female
48	Daria Zybeleva			Female
49	Thomas Piras	SDC	Email: thomas.piras@ecta.admin.ch	Male
50	Niyatbekov Shakarbek		-	Male

ANNEX C: EVALUATION MISSION WORK SCHEDULE

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20 June 2022 (Monday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	SEU “Qonuniyat”	10:00 – 11:00	1. Mr. Faridun Sharipov - Head of the SEU Qonuniyat	Tel: +992 935722772	In person	Conducted
2.	Meeting with the Project team	14:00 – 15:00	1. Mr. Zulfikor Zamonov – Project Manager 2. Mr. Anvar Aminov – Project Officer 3. Ms. Firuza Sharipova – Project Associate 4. Mr. Yunus Qurbonov – Project Associate	Tel: +992 949999159 E-mail: zulfikor.zamonov@undp.org		Conducted
3.	SDC	15:30 – 17:00	Mr. Thomas Piras - Programme Officer for Governance	Email: thomas.piras@ecta.admin.ch		Conducted

21 June 2022 (Tuesday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	ZAGS Office in Firdavsi district	9:00 – 10:00	1. Ms. Latofat Sherzoda - Head of the office	Tel: +992 907331661	In person	Conducted
2.	ZAGS Office in I.Somoni district	10:30 - 11:30	1. Ms. Muzafari Nodira Muzafar - Head of the office 2. Ms. Saidzoda Malikabonu – Inspector 3. Ms. Saidalizoda Bibisanam – Inspector	Tel: +992 937 85 85 60 +992 905 05 59 09 +992 907 98 62 12		Conducted

3.	Civil Registration Department	13:30-15:00	Mr. Iftikhor Samadzoda - Deputy Head of the Department	Civil Registration Department Office, Rudaki ave., 36. Tel: +992 918735552		Conducted
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22 June 2022 (Wednesday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	- Ministry of Justice - Ministry of Foreign Affairs - State Committee for National Security	9:00 – 10:30	1. Ms. Nigina Alizoda - First Deputy Minister of Justice; 2. Mr. Bahodur Ramazonov – Head of the Department (MFA); 3. Mr. Pulatov Ismoil - Representative of the State Committee for National Security	Tel: +992 372 21-99-54	In person	Conducted
2.	Meeting with the UNDP representatives	14:00 - 15:00	1. Mr. Alisher Karimov - Head of the Programme 2. Ms. Zarina Mavlyanova – M&E Analyst 3. Ms. Daria Zybeleva – M&E Analyst	UNDP Office, Ayni str. 39. Tel: 949999078 (Mr. Alisher Karimov) Tel: 949999565 (Ms. Adolat Ismailova , Assistant of the Permanent Representative of the UNDP in Tajikistan)		Conducted
3.	Visit to the SEU “Qonuniyat”	15:00-16:00	1. Mr. Shohrukh Qudratov – Call center’s leading specialist (1 st level) 2. Mr. Shahzod Kholiqzoda – Head of the technical department (1 st level) 3. Mr. Firuz Sodiqov – 3 rd level IT specialist 4. Ms. Hakimiyon Sarvina – 3 rd level IT specialist	Call-center: 5566		Conducted
4.	Capacity Building Institute of the Ministry of Justice	16:00 – 17:00	1. Mr. Isfandiyor Sobirzoda – Principal of the Institute 2. Mr. Akmal Kholiqzoda – Vice Principal of the Institute 3. Mr. Akmal Nazarov - Trainer	Tel: +992 908 08 22 66 +992 93 808 22 66		Conducted

23 June 2022 (Thursday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	Agency on social protection of the population (IT Dept.) under the Ministry of health and social protection of the population of the RT	10:00 – 11:30	1. Mr. Khurshed Shodiev – Chief IT Specialist 2. Mr. Suhrob Tojiddinov – Software Maintenance Specialist 3. Mr. Manuchehr Asomiddinov – Database Specialist	Tel: +992 37 227-01-56	In person	Conducted
2.	NGO Human Rights Center	15:00 - 16:30	Mr. Nurmahmad Khalilov - Head of the Center	Valamatzade str. 8/1 apt. 30 Tel: (+992) 37 221 51 87		Conducted

24 June 2022 (Friday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	ZAGS Office in Rudaki district	9:00 – 10:00	1. Ms. Mirzoahmadzoda Sarvinoz – Chief Specialist 2. Mr. Tagoymurodzoda Umed – Inspector 3. Ms. Mirzoeva Muborak - Inspector	735100, Rudaki district, I. Somoni jamoat Tel: +992 888 84 99 44	In person	Conducted
2.	ZAGS Office in Norak district	13:30 - 15:00	1. Ms. Lutfullozoda Farzona – Leading Specialist 2. Ms. Abdullozoda Zebuniso – Inspector 3. Ms. Samadzoda Savlatbi – Inspector	Nurek city, Rudaki str. 16. Tel: +992 938 90 34 34 +992 938 99 25 65		Conducted

3.	ZAGS Office in Vahdat city	15:30-16:30	1. Ms. Hakimzoda Shoira - Head of the Office 2. Ms. Nabizoda Z. – Inspector 3. Ms. Saidova B. - Inspector	Vahdat city, Rudaki ave. Tel: +992 939 99 96 96		Conducted
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27 June (Monday) departing to Khujand city

28 June 2022 (Tuesday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	ZAGS office in Guliston city	08:30 – 09:30	1. Ms. Abdullozod Sadoqat – Leading Specialist 2. Ms. Nasrulloeva Nigora - Inspector	Guliston city, Istiqlol str., №73 Tel: +992 929 09 00 15	In person	Conducted
2.	ZAGS office in B. Gafurov city	10:00 - 11:00	1. Ms. Abdulatifzoda Mutribakhon - Director 2. Ms. Sayohat Naimzoda – Leading Specialist	B. Gafurov district, Gafurov village, Musobekov str. №19. Tel: +992 927 16 44 44 +992 92 894 00 22		Conducted

29 June 2022 (Wednesday)

#	Agency	Time	Interviewee	Contacts	Type of interview	Status
1.	ZAGS office in Kulyab city	10:00 – 11:30	1. Ms. Mariam Saymuminzoda - Director 2. Mr. Umarzoda Ilhom – Leading Specialist 3. Mr. Mirzoev Bakhtiyor – Inspector	Kulob city, I. Somoni ave., 9 Tel: +992 985 95 95 66	In person	Conducted
2.	ZAGS office in Vose city	13:30-14:00	1. Ms. Fayzullozoda Mavluda - Director 2. Mr. Rahimov Khayriddin -	Vose district, Jumaev str. Tel: +992 918 50 68 63		Conducted

			Inspector 3. Ms. Saidzoda Omina – Inspector 4. Ms. Davlatova Dilorom – Inspector 5. Ms. Farzonai Emomali – Inspector			
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30 June – Preparation of the presentation based on the received information

1 July 2022 (Friday)

#	Agency	Time	Type of event
1.	Validation Workshop to present the preliminary results of evaluation	10:00 – 12:00	In person
2.	Meeting with the Permanent Representative of UNDP and the Head of the Programme	14:00-16:00	

ANNEX D: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

III

1. Project Document “Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan” Phase II, ENG.
2. Terms of References for the Mid-Term project evaluation of the “Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan”, Phase II
3. United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Tajikistan (2016-2020)
4. Final Evaluation Report of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2016–2022 for Tajikistan (UNDAF), July 2021
5. UN Country Programme Document for Tajikistan (2016-2020)
6. UNDP project “Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan - Phase II”, Annual progress report for the period of January - December 2020
7. Civil Registration Reform System In Tajikistan – Phase II (2020-2023): Project Progress Review January – June 2020, Steering Committee Meeting 8 October 2020
PowerPoint Presentation
8. UNDP project “Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan - Phase II”, ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT for the period of January – December 2021
9. UNDP project “Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan - Phase II”, Annual Work Plan for 2020
10. UNDP project “Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan - Phase II”, Annual Work Plan for 2021
11. UNDP project “Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan - Phase II”, Amendment #1 to Annual Work Plan for 2021
12. Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee of the UNDP Civil Registry Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II meeting of 8 October 2020
13. Progress Review January-October 2021 PowerPoint Presentation to the Meeting of Steering Committee of the UNDP Civil Registry Reform Project in Tajikistan – Phase II (2020-2023) on 19 November 2021
14. UNDP report “Combined Delivery Report by Project” January – December (2020)
15. UNDP report “Combined Delivery Report by Project” January – December (2021)
16. Final Evaluation Report, Support to Civil Registration System Reform in Tajikistan Phase I: January 2016- December 2018.

Criteria 1: RELEVANCE

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p>Relevance: <i>the extent to which the project strategy, proposed activities and expected outputs and outcome are justified and remain relevant to the Government of Tajikistan in its efforts to advance public access to civil registration services. <u>More specifically, the relevance of the project should be assessed through the following guiding questions:</u></i></p> <p>I. Assess to what extent has the Project contributed so far towards the achievement of national objectives and the Outcome of UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2022.</p> <p>II. Assess to what extent the stated outcomes and outputs of the Project are on track.</p> <p>III. Identify factors that have contributed to achieving or hindering achievement of the project intended results.</p> <p>IV. Assess the extent to which the approach adopted, and inputs identified, realistic, appropriate, and adequate for achieving the stated results.</p> <p>V. Analyze whether the project's overall human rights-based approach addresses the needs and demands of the beneficiaries in gender disaggregated manner (i.e. for men and women, girls and boys).</p> <p>VI. Assess the partnership approach and its appropriateness and effectiveness</p>	<p>Evidence of links between the project priorities and the UNDP strategic documents.</p> <p>Degree of consistency of the project with Government / national priorities and SDGs.</p> <p>Output performance indicators & Stakeholder opinion.</p> <p>Specific key factors identified in the WP; factor analysis.</p> <p>Gender factors.</p> <p>Partnership arrangements.</p>	<p>Prodoc, baseline survey, feasibility studies, progress and monitoring reports.</p> <p>Prodoc, UNDP CPD, UNDP Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Prodoc, logframe, UNDP guidelines on HRBA and RBM.</p> <p>MJ, project partners, national and international consultants, project team, ZAGS, progress reports other project documents.</p> <p>Prodoc, SDGs, Governmental strategies and policies on CRR.</p> <p>Publicly reported records.</p>	<p>Desk review and key informants' interviews</p> <p>Documentation, project and public records (government, civil society and media reports and research).</p>	<p>Ensure access to documents, and key informants interviews (KII)</p> <p>This assessment includes a primary stakeholder's perspective. Care will need to be taken in determining what constitutes a significant gap</p> <p>Relevance & importance to be assessed Quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed</p>

Criteria 2: EFFECTIVENESS

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p>Effectiveness: <i>the extent to which the project 's expected outputs and outcomes are being achieved or are expected to be achieved. Factors contributing to or detracting from the achievement of the project desired results and objectives should also be included in the assessment. <u>More specifically, the effectiveness of the project should be assessed through the following guiding questions:</u></i></p> <p>I. Assess the progress made towards achievement of project outputs against baselines and indicators specified in the project's results framework.</p> <p>II. Assess project management strategies and their effectiveness in delivering planned results</p> <p>III. Analyze the underlying factors that affect Project effectiveness (including analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).</p> <p>IV. Assess the monitoring</p>	<p>Outcome 1 Indicators: 1.1 No. of ZAGS offices with One-Stop-Shop (Front and Back offices) model in Tajikistan ; 1.2 No. & quality of reports produced with use of CR electronic data; 1.3: % of population satisfied with delivery of civil registration services, (disaggregated by gender) (→SDG 16.6.2/16.9.1);</p> <p>Output 1 Indicators: 1.1 Status of implementation of the new CR Law, the Government decree #77 and the law on consular departments of MFA. 1.2 Status and number of agencies connected to the data exchange with CR electronic system;</p> <p>Output 2 Indicators: 2.1: Status of internal rules, regulations and SOPs adopted and implemented (guiding day-to-day working procedures and practices of the civil registry offices in line with the relevant national legislation). 2.2 Number of visits to CR Office by citizens required for the registration of civil acts ;</p> <p>Output 3 Indicators: 3.1: % of the civil registry records timely entered into the electronic system (with further break down by type of registrations and office geographic location); 3.1. Number of paper-based archive records digitalized into an electronic format.</p>	<p>MoJ reports/ Project data; Agency on Statistics and Pensions;</p> <p>Agency reports; Project Baseline Survey;</p> <p>Legal expert report on the compliance of legislation;</p> <p>MoJ agreements;</p> <p>Decrees of the Ministry of Justice</p> <p>MoJ reports, project reports, M&E</p> <p>CROIS2 Data</p> <p>Feasibility studies on electronic registration and archiving of civil acts; Project monitoring and</p>	<p>Project operational and monitoring reports. Agency on Statistics and Pensions Agency reports; M&E reports, mid-term and final evaluation surveys; National gazette, project reports, HR Treaty reports; Monitoring reports. CR information reports. Decrees of the Ministry of Justice; ZAGS assessments in 2019 and 2023; Monitoring reports; Mid-term and final evaluation reports, customer satisfaction surveys, project M&E;</p> <p>CROIS system information analysis; Government decree on adoption of new registration and archiving systems; Annual records from ZAGS;</p>	<p>Ensure key informants interviews, sites visits and FGDs</p> <p>National context is relevant in assessing the importance of supporting this type of project. Also it will be relevant in assessing the difficulties in achieving its expected results.</p>

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p>and evaluation framework of the project and its effectiveness in achieving project results</p> <p>V. Assess the extent to which COVID-19 pandemic has affected project implementation and delivery.</p> <p>VI. Analyze the effectiveness of the partnership strategy with the Government and other key stakeholders.</p>	<p>3.2: Number of queries dealt by the MoJ IT Unit (*precise technical parameters will be developed during initial project imp. period- e.g. length of time to resolve queries, successful resolution, customer service etc.).</p> <p>Outcome 2 Indicators:</p> <p>2.1 % of children under 5 years old with birth certificates (disaggregated by gender);</p> <p>2.2 % of timely birth registrations in ZAGS (disaggregated by gender)</p> <p>Output 4 Indicators:</p> <p>4.1: Number and quality of campaigns carried out to cover various groups of people and the most vulnerable. (disaggregated by gender).</p> <p>4.2: % of adult population of Tajikistan (16 years old and above) that are aware of the benefits of free of charge timely birth registration and reduced waiting time.</p> <p>4.3: % of adult population (16 years old and above) that know how/where to obtain information in selected 4 big areas (Rudaki district, B. Gafurov, Bokhtar city and Dushanbe city) how registering their civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act)</p>	<p>evaluation reports;</p> <p>MoJ documents, project reports, customer (ZAGS) satisfaction reports</p> <p>Demographics and Health Survey; Official Government statistics (MoHSP, MoJ, NGO reports);</p> <p>Health statistics and CR office reports on free of charge registrations;</p> <p>MoJ Reports Baseline survey, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports.</p> <p>2019</p>	<p>MoJ documents, project reports; Capacities of IT Unit to fulfil its mandate, financial commitment of MoJ to establish and capacitate IT Unit</p> <p>Demographic and Health Survey;</p> <p>CR system data, Demographic and Health Survey</p> <p>MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports;</p> <p>MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports</p> <p>MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports.</p>	

Criteria 3: EFFICIENCY

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p>Efficiency: <i>the extent to which the project resources (funds, expertise/human resources, time, etc.) are optimally used and converted into intended outputs. More specifically, the efficiency of the project should be assessed through the following guiding questions:</i></p> <p>I. <i>Assess the extent to which project funds and activities have been delivered in a timely manner.</i></p> <p>II. <i>Assess the extent to which the project implementation has been efficient and cost-effective.</i></p> <p>III. <i>Assess visibility and communications strategy of the project and extent to which it has been cost-effective in terms of promoting the project and its achievements.</i></p> <p>IV. <i>Analyze the role of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and whether this forum is optimally used for decision making purposes.</i></p> <p>V. <i>Assess the timeline and quality of the reporting followed by the Project.</i></p> <p>VI. <i>Assess the qualitative and quantitative aspects of management and other inputs (such as equipment, monitoring and review and other technical assistance and budgetary inputs) provided by the project vis-à-vis achievement of outputs and targets.</i></p> <p>VII. <i>Identify factors and constraints, which have affected Project implementation including technical, managerial, organizational, institutional and socio-economic policy issues in addition to other external factors unforeseen during the Project design.</i></p>	<p>Project delivery rate and budget compliance. Evidence of followed annual work plans and respected budgets.</p> <p>Stakeholder opinion.</p> <p>Discrepancy between the planning schedule of annual work plans and progress reports.</p> <p>Number of project outputs delivered in a timely manner.</p> <p>Evidence of coordination mechanisms and practices facilitated.</p>	<p>Prodoc, Monitoring & Evaluation Plans, Monitoring and financial reports. Key Informants: UNDP, MJ, M&E unit, project partners</p> <p>Project document, Progress reports, annual work plans Key informants: project team, UNDP CO, UN FPA, UN Women, EPOS, MJ, SDC.</p> <p>Project financial records; Stakeholder interviews.</p> <p>Steering Committee minutes, progress and monitoring reports.</p>	<p>Desk review of project implementation documents.</p> <p>Project financial records; Stakeholder interview records</p>	<p>Access to key stakeholders and project documents, particularly financial reports and analysis.</p>

Criteria 4: SUSTAINABILITY

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p>Sustainability: <i>analyzing whether benefits of the project are likely to continue after the project cycle</i></p> <p>I. Assess likelihood of continuation and sustainability of the project outcome and benefits after completing the project</p> <p>II. Assess the effectiveness of the exit strategies and approaches to phase out of the Project including contributing factors and constraints.</p> <p>III. Identify the key factors that require attention to improve prospects of sustainability of the Project outcomes.</p> <p>IV. Assess the extent to which capacities are strengthened and sustained at the individual and institutional level (including contributing factors and constraints). Provide recommendations for strengthening sustainability.</p> <p>V. Identify significant lessons or conclusions which can be drawn from the Project in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability.</p> <p>VI. To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?</p>	<p>Stakeholders level of technical and administrative capacity.</p> <p>Evidence of the approved (amendments to) policies/laws/regulations/budgets and developed capacities.</p> <p>Evidence of MJ political, technical and financial commitment to support the results of the project. Continued national and international support.</p> <p>Evidence of rights-based and gender responsive orientation in the project at the policy level, institutional and financial levels.</p>	<p>Project and other stakeholders budget information.</p> <p>Results Framework, progress and monitoring reports, plans and budgets to support the project.</p> <p>Project progress and monitoring reports. Key Informants interviews: UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women, MJ, SDC, MF. Agreements of continued financial support.</p>	<p>Desk review of project documents.</p> <p>Interviews with donors and key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Access to documents, and key stakeholders.</p> <p>Also important to assess the organizational, financial and administrative capacity to operate the CR system in a way that it provides effective delivery of services.</p>
<p>Impact: <i>The extent to which the project 's is expected to contribute to longer term outcomes/results. The impact or effect of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target institutions or direct beneficiaries</i></p> <p>I. Does the overall project intervention contribute to longer-term outcomes/results?</p> <p>II. What is the impact or effect of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target institutions and direct beneficiaries?</p>	<p>Stakeholders level of technical and administrative capacity.</p> <p>Degree of changes in power relations between "rights holders" and "duty bearers".</p>	<p>Progress and monitoring reports, MoJ plans and budgets to support project results</p> <p>Key CR system stakeholders</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Interviews with key stakeholders</p>	

Criteria 5: GENDER

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p><u>Gender:</u></p> <p>I. <i>To what extent has gender been mainstreamed, in addition to sufficient consideration provided for its intersectional effects within the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?</i></p> <p>II. <i>Is the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality?</i></p> <p>III. <i>To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and advanced the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects and what were its impact on the project and the community of engagement?</i></p> <p>IV. <i>Were sufficient resources made available for gender mainstreaming?</i></p> <p>V. <i>What are the avenues for improvement in considerations for gender and its intersectional effects across the project?</i></p>	<p>Participation trends. Perception of access to supply chains and other resources.</p> <p>No. of mechanisms and measures to reach marginalized groups.</p> <p>Access and control of resources and benefits of development (M/F).</p> <p>Evidence of rights-based and gender responsive orientation in the project at the policy level, institutional and financial levels.</p>	<p>Surveys and studies done by national and international agencies; ZAGS records; Structured interviews and focus groups</p> <p>Prodoc, Results Framework, Progress and Monitoring Reports, adjusted legal and regulatory framework</p> <p>Key Informants: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP.</p>	<p>Desk review.</p> <p>Research of surveys and studies done; Interviews with stakeholders and gender specialists.</p>	<p>Access to documents and key stakeholders.</p> <p>There may be surveys done by the project on legal awareness and on access to CR and human rights in Tajikistan (men and women and PWDs) which will be useful.</p>

Criteria 6: PARTNERSHIP / COHERENCE

Key Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods	Comments
<p><u>Coherence:</u></p> <p>I. Identify if the project activities overlap and duplicate other similar interventions.</p> <p>II. To what extent has the project complemented work among different entities, including development partners and civil society, with similar interventions? To what extent do other or similar interventions or policies support or undermine the project? To what extent were the project design and delivery coherent with international obligations?</p>	<p>Work relationship among project partners; level of cooperation; synergies</p>	<p>Project partners and documentation; Progress reports; project steering committee minutes; project semi-annual and annual reports</p>	<p>Documentation review; Interviews with project partners and project management</p>	<p>The partners in Phase II have some historical record of working together in Phase I and in working collaboratively in past projects which will be useful in this area.</p>

Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework: People in Tajikistan have their rights protected and benefit from improved access to justice and quality services delivered by accountable, transparent, and gender-responsive legislative, executive and judicial institutions at all levels.											
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: CPD Indicator 1.2.1: Number of strengthened operational institutions supporting the fulfillment of nationally and internationally ratified human rights obligations											
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Citizen expectations for voice, development, rule of law and accountability are met by stronger institutions of democratic governance; Countries have stronger institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services;											
Project title and Atlas Project Number: Civil Registry System Reform Project in Tajikistan – <i>Phase II</i> , Atlas No: TBC											
Project goal: Women’s, men’s and children’s human rights (civil, social, political and economic) are better protected through the strengthened provision of civil registration services and increased public access to the system											
EXPECTED OUTCOMES/ OUTPUTS	OUTCOME/OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)						DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
			Value	Year	Year 1 2020	Year 2 2021	Year 3 2022	Year 4 2023	Year ...	FINAL	
Outcome 1: The reformed civil registry system of Tajikistan is effectively managed and provides quality and affordable services to the population and qualitative vital statistical data for the State.	1.1 No. of ZAGS offices with One-Stop-Shop (Front and Back offices) model in Tajikistan	MoJ reports/ Project data	2 ZAGS Offices	2019	+2 ZAGS Offices	+2 ZAGS Offices	+2 ZAGS Offices	+2 ZAGS Offices		10 ZAGS offices in total	Project operational and monitoring reports. / Lack of financial means and political will to continue/finalize the reform initiative
	1.2 No. & quality of reports produced with use of CR electronic data	Agency on Statistics and Pensions Agency reports	0 reports	2019	1 report	3 reports	5 types of reports	7 reports (1 per type of civil act)		7 reports generated using CR electronic data	Agency on Statistics and Pensions Agency reports Ability and willingness of institutions to use CR electronic data

	1.3: % of population satisfied with delivery of civil registration services, (disaggregated by gender) (→SDG 16.6.2/16.9.1)	Project Baseline Survey	48% (M/F)	2016		Target 2021: 64% (M/F);		Target 2023: 70% (M/F)			M&E reports, mid-term and final evaluation surveys; Capacities of service providers are sufficient,
Outcome 2: The population of Tajikistan know how to and timely have their vital events recorded in the civil registry system.	2.1 % of children under 5 years old with birth certificates (disaggregated by gender)	Demographics and Health Survey; Official Government statistics (MoHSP, MoJ, NGO reports);	91% of children under 5 years of age have birth certificates ⁹⁵	2019	92% (M/F)	93% (M/F)	94% (M/F)	95% (M/F)		95% of children have birth certificates (disaggregated by gender)	Demographic and Health Survey; Vulnerable and marginalised individuals timely access the civil registry services
	2.2 % of timely birth registrations in ZAGS (disaggregated by gender)	Health statistics and CR office reports on free of charge registrations	85%* births are registered on time. (M/F)	2019	87% births are registered on time. (M/F)	90% births are registered on time. (M/F)	93% births are registered on time. (M/F)	95% births are registered on time. (M/F)		95% births are registered on time. (M/F)	CR system data, Demographic and Health Survey Free of charge birth registration stimulates people interest to register on time.

⁹⁵ Democratic and Health Survey Tajikistan 2017, available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR341/FR341.pdf>

<p>Output 1: Newly adopted civil registry legislation is implemented and interagency coordination is effectively ensured.</p>	<p>1.1 Status of implementation of the new CR Law, the Government decree #77 and the law on consular departments of MFA.</p>	<p>Legal expert report on the compliance of legislation</p>	<p>Relevant legislation still needs to be harmonized in line with the new CR law..</p>	<p>2019</p>				<p>Implementation of legislation and regulations on civil registration is regularly monitored</p>	<p>All laws and by-laws are in compliance with the new CR law.</p>	<p>National gazette, project reports, HR Treaty reports</p> <p>Government is committed to continuing with the reforms</p>
	<p>1.2 Status and number of agencies connected to the data exchange with CR electronic system</p>	<p>MoJ agreements</p>	<p>0</p>						<p>At least 5 agencies exchange data with CR system</p>	<p>Monitoring reports. CR information reports</p>
<p>Output 2: New quality business processes are developed and effectively applied in the civil registry.</p>	<p>2.1: Status of internal rules, regulations and SOPs adopted and implemented (guiding day-to-day working procedures and practices of the civil registry offices in line with the relevant national legislation).</p>	<p>Decrees of the Ministry of Justice</p>	<p>Internal rules and regulation are to be developed</p>	<p>2019</p>				<p>The implementation of internal rules regularly monitored</p>	<p>All internal rules and SoP are adopted and applied regularly</p>	<p>Decrees of the Ministry of Justice</p> <p>ZAGS assessments in 2019 and 2023</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p>

	2.2 Number of visits to CR Office by citizens required for the registration of civil acts	MoJ reports, project reports, M&E	Up to 5 visits	2019	3-4 visits	2-3 visits	2 visits			2 visits	Mid-term and final evaluation reports, customer satisfaction surveys, project M&E
Output 3: Electronic civil registry system and digitalized archives are handed over and effectively managed by MoJ.	3.1: % of the civil registry records timely entered into the electronic system (with further break down by type of registrations and office geographic location)	CROIS2 Data	60% of all offices register data on time.		80%	90%	100%	100%		100% of records are timely entered into the system.	CROIS system information analysis
	3.1. Number of paper-based archive records digitalized into an electronic format.	Feasibility studies on electronic registration and archiving of civil acts Project monitoring and evaluation reports	178,000 records transferred to electronic archive	2019	350,000 records	350,000 records	300,000 records			In total 1,178,000 civil registry acts ⁹⁶ are digitalized.	Government decree on adoption of new registration and archiving systems Annual records from ZAGS;

⁹⁶ Subject to outcomes of the feasibility study, 2020 will mark the beginning of digital archives of all new registration acts. Digitalisation of archives from 1991 – to 2001 is an estimate from the current project resources. If more resources are mobilized, it may be possible to close the gap from 2001 to 2019.

	3.2: Number of queries dealt by the MoJ IT Unit (*precise technical parameters will be developed during initial project imp. period- e.g. length of time to resolve queries, successful resolution, customer service etc.)	MoJ documents, project reports, customer (ZAGS) satisfaction reports	No. of queries dealt with effectively by IT Unit = 0	2019	50% of queries dealt with in a timely and effective manner	70% of queries dealt with in a timely and effective manner	90% of queries dealt with in a timely and effective manner	100% of queries dealt with in a timely and effective manner		MoJ IT Unit is fully staffed and functioning to fulfil its mandate	MoJ documents, project reports Capacities of IT Unit to fulfil its mandate, financial commitment of MoJ to establish and capacitate IT Unit
Output 4: Population is aware of timely registration benefits through MoJ communication strategy and supported by selected CSO to bolster civil registration, and the public contributes to improving the quality of the system through enhanced feedback mechanisms.	4.1: Number and quality of campaigns carried out to cover various groups of people and the most vulnerable. (disaggregated by gender) ⁹⁷	MoJ Reports Baseline survey, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports	Communication strategy 2019 - 2020 developed and adopted by MoJ;	2019	## ⁹⁸ (M/F)	Communication strategy is revised	## (M/F)	## (M/F)	## (M/F)	Communication strategy 2019 - 2020 is fully implemented; New Communications Strategy 2021 - 2022 is developed & adopted	MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports Capacity and interest of government in using new communication strategies and tools;

⁹⁷ For awareness raising on timely birth registration reproductive health centers will be used as additional platform for information dissemination. This will ensure that women and young mothers receive important information on birth registration

⁹⁸ * Data will be updated as a result of the Ethnographic and Behavioral Insight Research (Action Research) for Civil Registration to be completed by April 2020.

	<p>4.2: % of adult population of Tajikistan (16 years old and above) that are aware of the benefits of free of charge timely birth registration and reduced waiting time.</p>	2019	<p>XX %⁹⁹ of population are aware of the benefits of registering civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act)</p>	2019	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC		<p>YY% of population aware of the benefits of registering civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act)</p>	<p>MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports</p> <p>Responsiveness of population to media campaigns and awareness raising activities</p>
	<p>4.3: % of adult population (16 years old and above) that know how/where to obtain information in selected 4 big areas (Rudaki district, B. Gafurov, Bokhtar city and Dushanbe city) how registering their civil acts (disaggregated by type of civil act)</p>		59 %	2019	70%	80%	90%	100%		100%	<p>MoJ Reports, annual impact assessments, project evaluation reports</p> <p>Responsiveness of population to media campaigns and awareness raising activities</p>

⁹⁹ * Data will be updated as a result of the Ethnographic and Behavioral Insight Research (Action Research) for Civil Registration to be completed by April 2020.

ANNEX G: PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES

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As part of project risk management, the following measures are envisaged to overcome the above constrains:

Constrain:	<p>COVID-19 pandemic and likelihood of future outbreak and partial quarantine measures implemented by the government at state institutions including ZAGS offices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced numbers of visits by clients to CR offices has a negative impact on timely registration of civil acts. • Delay in implementing many activities of the project. • Part of awareness raising activities planned for 2021 may be delayed.
Measures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project initiated the development of a mobile application for submission of CR applications on birth and death to CR offices and distance payment for CR services • The project will support CR offices to improve response mechanism communication with customers and between CR staff through corporate office email for each CR office. • The website was developed and introduced in September 2021 that contains information on application procedure on 7 types of certificates and service fees to be paid.
Result:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The corporate office email for each CR office was created to improve response mechanism communication with customers and between CR staff. • The website was finalized and launched which contains information in user-friendly format about application procedure and documents to be applied on 7 types of CR registration and contact information of CR offices. • Depending on the epidemiological situation in the country, the remaining results are expected to be achieved in 2022.
Constrain:	Lack of ownership by the SM of MoJ to endorse project AWP for 2021
Measures:	UNDP CO and project will initiate meetings to discuss the progress of the annual work plan for 2021 to be further updated and agreed if needed and endorsed by MoJ and will conduct series consultation meetings to improve communication and coordination.
Result:	The annual work plan for 2021 has agreed and endorsed by MoJ.
Constrain:	Insufficient coordination among state institutions due to lack of understanding of importance of CR reforms.
Measures:	An inter-ministerial meeting with participation of key state and non-state agencies to discuss integration and interoperability of state e-systems with CR e-system is envisaged for second half of 2021.
Result:	<p>Despite a number of attempts and interventions by the project, the MoJ was not able to hold an inter-agency coordination meeting due to commitments to host a few high-level events in 2021. However, during the last SMC held in November, the MoJ has promised to hold a coordination meeting on mid-level management to present the outcomes of the technical assessment of integration and interoperability in the first half of 2022.</p> <p>The project will follow-up in 2022.</p>
Constrain:	Issues with network/internet connection in Civil Registration Offices.

Measures:	The issue was raised during the project steering committee meeting and partners' meetings during Project Phase II. The Communication Service under Government of the Republic of Tajikistan was requested to provide information on fiber-optic connection.
Result:	During reporting period, the fibre-optic internet was connected in Kulyab and Rudaki CR offices operating under OSS service delivery model. Project will continue support MoJ in 2022 with connecting to fiber optic internet in Civil Registration Offices under OSS service delivery model.

Constrain:	Deficient implementation of OSS model by Kulob CR office and lack of UAGS involvement in overseeing the work process, low level of capacity of CR staff.
Measures:	The issue was raised during meetings of UNDP held in 2021 with the Ministry of Justice about holding UAGS accountable for results. The project experts will develop internal instructions and SOPs to standardize and simplify civil registration procedures for better client orientation services and provide mentoring to the staff operating under OSS model.
Result:	During reporting period, dashboard and analytics platform within CROIS2 were developed and introduced to monitor and evaluate activities of ZAGS offices. As a result, at the end of 2021 the MoJ conducted award ceremony of 15 best CR personnel. It is planned that a comprehensive assessment of operating business models and processes of CR system and services will be conducted in 2022 (HR, workload, revenues, cost of services etc.). The assessment will also cover inventory and review of SOPs to standardize and simplify civil registration procedures for better client orientation services.

Constrain:	Costly and lengthy certification process of IT equipment by the Main department for the protection of state secrets under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan.
Measures:	During the steering committee meeting held in November 2022, First Deputy Minister of Justice ensured that the Ministry is still negotiating with the relevant authorities to resolve this issue. It was also informed the cost and conditions of certification process will be revised by the relevant authority.
Result:	It was agreed that certification process and its cost should be continue envisaged, discussed and negotiated during the planning stage of procurement of software and hardware in 2022.

Constrain:	CROIS2 is not introduced in jamoats, thus producing a report with the use of CROIS2 that meets all quality standards is not possible.
Measures:	According to the MoJ's plan, additional CR employees will be hired to deal with civil registration duties and enter the records on jamoats into CROIS2. During the meeting with UNDP representatives, MoJ had pointed out the importance of supporting jamoats by engaging additional staff.
Result:	Depending on financial allocations by the Ministry of Justice, deployment of new data entry employees is envisaged.

Constrain:	Delay in opening of CR offices operating under OSS model delivery services
Measures:	UNDP CO and project will initiate meetings/consultations to discuss the progress of implementing OSS model delivery services and construction of new Justice Centers/CR offices in accordance with and commitments indicated in the ProDoc.
Result:	During the reporting period there was no progress in introducing the so-called OSS

	<p>mechanism in other districts where CR offices located. However, the MoJ has opened new Justice Centers in September 2021 where the CR Offices to be located in Darvoz, Roshtkala, and Rushon districts (GBAO), Temurmalik and Baljuvon districts (Khatlon).</p> <p>Instead, the MoJ has requested the project to support in procurement of built in a light furniture for Civil Registry Offices in Firdavsi district of Dushanbe city and in Nurek city of Khatlon oblast both of which planned to operate under back and front offices in 2022.</p>
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Constrain:	Changes of software architecture of Certification Authority (under Ministry of Finance) who provide certificates for digital signature for CR staff for digitally signing CR Records
Measures:	UNDP CO and project will initiate meetings/consultations with the Ministry of Justice and probably with other agencies (Ministry of Finance) to discuss impact of change and possible feasible solutions
Result:	Results are expected to be achieved by the beginning of first half of 2022.