Supporting reforms: the EBRD-UNCITRAL Public Procurement Initiative
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The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative on Enhancing Public Procurement Regulation in the CIS countries and Mongolia (the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative) is a technical cooperation programme that brings together the expertise of both UNCITRAL in international commercial law standard setting, and of the EBRD Legal Transition Programme in supporting reforms of economy in transition countries, in order to encourage the development of modern public procurement policies in those countries.

Through the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative – launched on 19 May 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan, during the EBRD Annual Meeting and Business Forum – the EBRD and UNCITRAL promote the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement, which is a new public procurement policy standard, based on international best practice. The first part of this article describes the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative’s unique formula of international cooperation, and the action plan designed to improve the performance of local public procurement systems.

The second part of the article discusses challenges faced by the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative’s expert team working on the sub-project in Armenia, and how the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law is used as a tool to assist in implementing the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), and the promotion of an understanding of the links between reform of the legislative framework for national public procurement systems and the implementation of electronic procurement (eProcurement) tools in those systems.

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Public Procurement Initiative

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative embraces a series of public procurement reform-related activities, which have been selected based on their potential transition impact and their relevance to the specific procurement problems in particular countries. Following expressions of interest from governments in the CIS region, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative is currently active in Armenia, Moldova, Mongolia, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. The Initiative has also encouraged Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia to reform their procurement systems.

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative advocates the benefits of public procurement reform in an era of fiscal restraint, in order to improve the performance of local public procurement systems. It encourages the use of the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law as a tool to implement the requirements of the current GPA, and of the 2005 United Nations Convention against Corruption. The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative actively involves other international organisations, including the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and
Presently, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative's reform support programme comprises of: (a) comparative legal diagnostics of national public procurement legislation in the CIS and Mongolia region; (b) a regional series of workshops on developing public procurement regulations; and (c) country-specific technical cooperation projects developed with relevant governments in the region to help modernise their public procurement laws and practices in compliance with new policy standards recommended by the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law.

**Why reform public procurement?**

**It involves a strategic government activity.**

- Public procurement has a significant impact on economic performance and national development.
- Public contracts are the basis for the provision of essential everyday services to the public (such as electricity, transport and communication).

**Significant monetary amounts are involved.**

- 10 to 20 per cent of GDP; 45 per cent of government spending (World Bank, OECD).
- Systemic corruption: 20-30 per cent of budgets for public contracts are wasted (World Bank).
- Capacity problems: 80 per cent of waste is due to inefficiency, and not corruption (research on the Italian public procurement system).

**Why use the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law?**

- It was negotiated through intergovernmental meetings.
- All regions and countries of the world shared their experience.
- It reflects global best practice in public procurement, tested by several governments.
- Policy recommendations are suitable for all countries, including transition countries.

The 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law is a modern procurement policy, based on leading international practice, which was built as a template for national procurement legislation. The UNCITRAL Model Law provisions have sufficient detail for national law development and are adaptable to allow for different international obligations and policy goals (WTO, European Union, international financial institutions).

**Benchmarking national laws in the CIS region and Mongolia against new policy standards expressed in the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law**

In 2011 the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative conducted a review of public procurement legal frameworks in the CIS region, in order to provide a comparative gap analysis and identify policy areas which, inconsistently with current public procurement best practice, negatively influence the efficiency of public procurement. The aim of this action was to provide governments wishing to reform their public procurement sectors with current and impartial data on their reform needs and to identify realistic reform objectives.

The analysis commenced in September 2011, and by June 2013 the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative experts had reviewed national laws in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia and Tajikistan, and had benchmarked them against the key principles of the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law.
Diagnostic reports presenting results of the assessments are available on the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative website – http://www.ppi-ebrd-uncitral.com/ (where such publication is permitted by the relevant governments).

This legislation benchmarking identified areas which were inconsistent with leading international practices expressed in the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law, and provided key public procurement reform suggestions for inclusion in the governments’ reform agendas, including those which could be addressed by technical cooperation projects carried out in collaboration with international stakeholders.

**DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS**

**Step 1 – Procurement regulation review**
Each selected country was assessed against the key standards of the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law on Public Procurement and international best practice in public procurement, as recommended in the Guide to the Enactment of the Model Law, adopted in 2012. The assessment was based on data provided by local legal experts. The main tool used for data evaluation was the Quality of Legislation Questionnaire, which, after being completed by local experts, allowed for comparative diagnosis. It is a basis for the identification of gaps and shortcomings in the legal framework compared with the Model Law.

**Step 2 – Legal diagnostics reports**
The diagnostics reports present the results of the legal analysis of the national public procurement legal and institutional framework in each country, based on the results from the questionnaire. The reports provide an overview of the quality of public procurement legislation in each country compared to UNCITRAL best practice and to other evaluated countries. This assessment is also intended to identify which sector needs can be addressed by technical cooperation projects carried out together with international stakeholders.

**Step 3 – Inputs to the reform agenda – country-specific recommendations**
The diagnostics reports include recommendations for local government and key decision makers. The recommendations are oriented towards improvement in the country-specific public procurement regulatory framework. The implementation of recommendations should also improve the framework against international best practice, and open the way to accession to international trade and finance institutions. Key recommendations form an action plan for the implementation of the reform agenda.
Facilitating reforms: regional series of workshops on public procurement policy

With the aim of facilitating interest in reforms, the results of the legal review of national procurement laws and policy development recommendations were discussed with the governments during public procurement policy workshops. The policy workshops were facilitated by the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative, in cooperation with the World Bank, and ran between October 2011 and June 2013. The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative team, the UNCITRAL Secretariat representatives and renowned academic advisers participated in the workshops and contributed to the open and constructive discussions, training materials and publications.

One lesson learned from these discussions was that governments are frequently very interested in learning about issues such as how updating their procurement laws will help their WTO GPA accession, what are the modern standards for public procurement review and remedies, and how the UNCITRAL Model Law can be utilised to provide a basis for the development of eProcurement reform. Consequently, these topics were included in all subsequent workshop discussions, and it is expected that they will be key components of the respective policy reform agendas of the participating governments.

Working with key stakeholders to develop reform agenda: lessons learned

1. Participation and support of key government representatives at the policy workshops is essential for deciding on public procurement reform agendas.

   At the workshop in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, hosted by the World Bank and the EBRD-UNCITRAL initiative on 8 October 2013, the First Vice Prime Minister, Joomart Otorbaev, stated that public procurement reform had become the first priority of the government. The Minister of Finance, Olga Lavrova, informed the audience that the Ministry of Finance established the working group for developing the public procurement reform. Thanks to high-level support for the reform, the Kyrgyz Republic reform project in public procurement is progressing very well, and is being supported by the Asian Development Bank, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative and the World Bank.

2. Working together with international financial institutions is beneficial for facilitating reform progress.

   The workshops in Mongolia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic were organised in close cooperation with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. The message from the EBRD-UNCITRAL initiative diagnostic reports is reinforced by other financial institutions supporting public procurement reforms: at the workshop in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, Majed El-Bayya, the Lead Procurement Specialist, Lisa Miller, the Senior Counsel, and Nagaraju Duthaluri, Lead Procurement Specialist from the World Bank, presented recommendations from country procurement status assessments, which reflected the reform agenda recommended by the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative.

3. The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative partners bring specific expertise and effective support.

   The discussions at the workshops drew on the expertise of specialists from the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative partners: the OSCE, and the OECD’s Anti-Corruption Network and SIGMA. At the workshop in Baku, Azerbaijan, hosted by the EBRD-UNCITRAL initiative and OECD SIGMA on 28 May 2012, Edelmira Campos Nunez, Economic and Environmental Affairs Adviser, OSCE, Office of Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA), presented the OSCE’s perspective on good governance for public procurement. At the workshop in Chisinau, Moldova, Florin-Bogdan Munteanu, Prosecutor from the National Anti-Corruption Directorate of Romania, explained how the anti-corruption agenda should be integrated into national procurement policies.
Supporting reforms: technical cooperation projects in the CIS region and Mongolia

Based on the policy workshop discussions, an action plan can be developed to provide a basis for a technical cooperation project with the national authorities responsible for public procurement policies. Depending on the particular reform needs in the country, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative technical cooperation projects support:

a) legislative reform

b) regulatory and institutional capacity building

c) public procurement review, and capacity building of the review and remedies system

d) development of a procurement function, including eProcurement.

Based on the public procurement reform agenda shaped at the policy workshops organised under the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative, a public procurement reform agenda, along with proposals for country-specific technical cooperation projects, was developed with the Armenian, Kyrgyz, Moldovan and Tajik governments.

In Moldova the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative will support reform work, cooperating with a project established by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP). The Mongolian government has also expressed interest in cooperating with the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative, and a country project is currently being developed.

In the Kyrgyz Republic the EBRD UNCITRAL Initiative country project will provide policy advice on the development of primary and secondary legislation on public procurement and reform implementation support. The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative will coordinate with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to provide assistance with comprehensive public procurement reform undertaken by the Kyrgyz government, which is to be finalised by January 2015, when the country’s accession to the WTO GPA is due.

In Tajikistan the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative aims to facilitate the cooperation of international donors (the World Bank, UNDP and ADB) in order to assist the Tajik government in modernising its public procurement regulation, and completing the WTO GPA negotiation by 2015. The Tajik reform project is closely linked to the Public Finance Management Modernisation Project, which is currently in progress and is funded by the World Bank. The Tajik reform project under the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative will support the implementation and development of the Tajikistan government’s strategy for eProcurement reform.

In Mongolia the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative will work with the World Bank and the ADB to develop a technical cooperation project supporting comprehensive public procurement reforms currently being undertaken by the Mongolian government. The preparatory phase of the country project is expected to commence in 2014.

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative policy advice work is most advanced in Armenia. The Initiative team assessed the Armenian public procurement legislation in September 2011. The legal diagnostic report was discussed with the Armenian authorities at a policy workshop in October 2011. The workshop helped develop a strategy to finalise public procurement reforms in Armenia and establish effective cooperation among the EBRD, the World Bank and the OECD’s SIGMA. The latter two organisations have both supported reforms in the Armenian public procurement sector since 2006.

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative technical cooperation project in Armenia – established in 2012 and to be completed by 2014 – covers three components: (a) capacity building for the public procurement regulatory agency; (b) support in drafting secondary legislation and standard documents; and (c) policy advice to the Ministry of Finance and the Procurement Support Centre on completing eProcurement reforms. Details of the project can be found at: http://www.ppi-ebrd-uncitral.com/index.php/en/armenia/country-project-armenia.

The project’s preparatory phase provided regulatory capacity building in 2011 and 2012, and support in drafting secondary legislation in 2012 and 2013.
The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative team assisted with the preparation of a reform road map for finalising public procurement reforms in Armenia. This road map was approved by the Minister of Finance, and forms an official reform strategy for public procurement in Armenia for the second stage of the government’s reform project in public procurement, which will be jointly supported by international donors.

The following second part of this article explains challenges faced by the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative’s first technical cooperation project in Armenia, and discusses lessons learned from completed components of the project.

Lessons learned from the first reform support project in Armenia

Challenges of public procurement reform in Armenia

Armenia has been steadily implementing broad reforms in the public procurement sector since 2006, with a view to opening the sector up to competition, and improving efficiency and economy in procurement. The public procurement legislative framework in Armenia includes the Public Procurement Law, adopted in 2010, and several decrees issued by the Ministry of Finance (together, the PPL). The current law came into force on 1 January 2011, and was developed to meet the basic requirements of the 1994 WTO GPA. It includes several legal instruments of the 2004 EU Public Procurement Directives.

Despite these reform efforts, in the EBRD’s 2010 assessment the PPL in Armenia scored 73 per cent compliance, placing Armenia in medium compliance with international best practice. In addition, an analysis of the institutional framework revealed that there are areas with significant regulatory gaps that need to be improved. The assessment also revealed that there is a shortfall in both performance and regulation: improvements in the integrity and accountability of public procurement were needed.

To help address these needs, cooperation with the Armenian government was established in 2011, when, under new primary legislation, the government decided to decentralise the public procurement system and introduce eProcurement procedures. As a result of this ambitious agenda, the public procurement regulatory authority in the Ministry of Finance
found itself overwhelmed with reform implementation problems, a lack of regulatory capacity, and difficulties in developing secondary legislation and operational policies.

The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative prepared a detailed legal analysis of the Armenian public procurement laws in September 2011, and discussed it with the government at the policy workshop held in Yerevan in October 2011.

The Initiative experts discussed with government officials the regulatory shortcomings of the existing framework, and made recommendations about how to deal with these problems, in order to further progress the public procurement reform strategy adopted by the Armenian government in 2006. The workshop discussions focused on an action plan for finalising public procurement reforms in Armenia, and established effective cooperation among the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative, the World Bank, the OECD’s SIGMA and the EU delegation.

Based on the workshop outcomes, and following a preparatory mission to Armenia in November 2011, a country-specific technical cooperation project was developed in order to assist the public procurement regulatory authority in the Ministry of Finance in implementing the reforms.

Armenian public procurement reform strategy: combine decentralisation with introducing eProcurement tools

Before the reforms, all public contracts in Armenia were procured by a specialised central purchasing agency, and were conducted traditionally, in paper-based procurement procedures, except for contract notices that were published on the web site of the Ministry of Finance. The 2006 Armenian reform strategy advocated a new institutional framework and full decentralisation, with contracting entities in full charge of their individual public budgets, and conducting their public procurement procedures in the eProcurement system. It was considered that this radical change – from total centralisation to decentralisation – would be possible due to the introduction of an eProcurement platform available to all contracting entities, and supporting the entire procurement procedure: from the preparation of the procurement, notices, selection of suppliers and contractors to be awarded public contracts, contract award, and through to contract performance review.
The 2006 reform strategy envisaged the adoption of the new public procurement regulatory framework, which would be compliant with the GPA standards, and the introduction of the eProcurement reform in two phases: the implementation of both e-tendering and e-purchasing tools. However, while the reform strategy described eProcurement tools as supporting the entire cycle of the public procurement process, the e-tendering and e-purchasing functionalities listed in the same strategy did not cover the entire procurement process. This omission in the reform planning caused serious problems at a later stage. Also, to allow for the phased implementation of eProcurement, the 2006 strategy decided on the optional use of eProcurement tools throughout the first two years, with mandatory use of the eProcurement procedures by all contracting entities following full implementation of the eProcurement reform strategy. Within the first two years newly appointed contracting entities could elect to either use procurement procedures available on the eProcurement platform or to conduct their procurement in paper-based format.

While this process is reasonable in principle, this decision caught newly appointed contracting entities unprepared: government entities and municipalities had never before conducted their own procurement, and their personnel had no experience in conducting procurement procedures. While some training on how to use new eProcurement tools had been envisaged in reform planning, and would be delivered to contracting entities by 2011, decentralisation of the public procurement system was not supported with a government-sponsored training scheme for public procurement officers, and, as such, contracting entities had no trained procurement officers to conduct their procurement procedures, either in paper-based or electronic format. To support decentralisation, a public procurement training unit was created in the Procurement Support Centre, working on the assumption that contracting entities would send their personnel to be trained and would self-fund this training. In 2011, when the new primary law entered into force, no official training curriculum had been developed for procurement officers, and no guidelines for contracting entities were readily available.

The reform created new regulatory institutions: a regulatory authority, a Procurement Support Centre, and a review body. However, the primary legislation left the roles of these bodies to be prescribed in the secondary legislation, and did not provide procedures for them to perform their new duties in the decentralised procurement system. In addition, newly appointed institutions, without their own capacity building programmes, were struggling to perform their functions, and did not have the regulatory capacity to fully implement the reforms or to address the operational needs of contracting entities.

In addition, while the 2006 strategy established a reasonable legal and institutional framework, it did not consider the issue of the eProcurement platform business model: whether it would be government owned, managed or a mixed system. A single point of access, government-owned platform was selected without clear planning about how the eProcurement system would be purchased and owned, or about how maintenance and future development, or the purchase of additional modules, would be financed. In the eProcurement reform process key issues relating to the selection of the software appropriate to market needs were considered, and decisions concerning the ownership of the eProcurement platform, as well as maintenance and development costs, were made.

In addition, best practice requires ensuring interoperability (a supplier registered in one country is enabled to submit tenders and proposals in another country) and publishing procurement opportunities, not only in the official national language, but also in languages of international trade (providing wider access to procurement information, including procurement opportunities, and opportunities for online tender submission). In Armenia, following cooperation with the World Bank, a licence for an e-tendering module, and arrangements for its implementation, were purchased in 2008, and this contributed to the implementation of Phase 1 of the reform strategy. However, only one module in the complete eProcurement system offered by the supplier was purchased, and the 2006 strategy did not foresee how to continue eProcurement implementation, how to purchase further modules, or how the system would be maintained and developed.
To help address regulatory gaps and shortcomings in reform planning, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative team prepared an analytic report on reform implementation problems, and conducted practical regulatory training for the newly appointed regulatory authority in the Ministry of Finance and for the Procurement Support Centre. In addition to the regulatory training, the Initiative experts worked with specialists from the regulatory authority in the Ministry of Finance to prepare a road map for finalising public procurement reforms in Armenia.

The road map recommended refocusing back on the 2006 strategy and its objectives, and proposed a comprehensive action plan for the government of Armenia and IFI stakeholders to fully implement reforms within the following two years for several key operational components: electronic tendering, the introduction of procurement planning, basic framework agreements and online framework agreements with e-catalogues, reporting, monitoring, and contract management.

In particular, the road map set out the scope of the secondary legislation, and described standard documents and operational policies needed to complete the implementation of Phase 1 of the reform project, and to prepare the implementation of Phase 2 of the reform strategy. This included actions that would be necessary to upgrade the eProcurement platform purchased in 2008 to accommodate electronic procedures prescribed in the new legislation, and training and capacity building activities for stakeholders that would be necessary in a decentralised public procurement function. The road map also recommended balanced decentralisation, with central purchasing based on framework agreements – compliant with current best practice – as successfully implemented in the eProcurement environment across the EU member states.

In parallel with working on the road map, the drafting of secondary legislation for completing Phase 1 of the reforms continued, and in December 2012 draft laws covering a range of topics – procurement planning, e-tendering procedures, and framework agreements establishing the terms of use of the eProcurement platform and prescribing roles and responsibilities of the platform operator, contracting entities and tenderers in electronic procurement procedures – were ready to be circulated to local stakeholders.

While new draft laws were discussed with stakeholders, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative expert team focused on working with the Procurement Support Centre in preparing an upgrade of the eProcurement platform, in order to accommodate the electronic procedures prescribed in the new legislation. To benefit from the experience of EU
member states and from best practice in eProcurement, the Initiative experts suggested cooperation with the governments of Cyprus and Portugal, which had already successfully implemented structural public procurement reforms, including introducing eProcurement tools. Through the support of the EU delegation to Armenia, the EBRD UNCITRAL Initiative, in cooperation with the European Commission’s Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX), organised capacity building sessions, and Cypriot and Portuguese colleagues shared their practical experience from eProcurement reform implementation in their countries with Armenian specialists.

At the time of writing, the preparation of the platform upgrade was being finalised, and the technical specification for the contracting for the upgrade of the platform had been completed. The World Bank agreed to provide another grant to fund an upgrade of the platform. When upgrade work on the platform is completed the ADB will sponsor a pilot of new eProcurement procedures with selected contracting entities, while the OECD’s SIGMA, USAID and the World Bank will develop a dedicated training programme for contracting entities and suppliers, to be made available from January 2014. The EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative policy experts will continue advising the Armenian government in order to address any implementation problems with the new electronic procedures. The project in Armenia will conclude in mid-2014, through the preparation of recommendations for amendments in the primary public procurement legislation, which are necessary in order to adjust the primary law to the new standards of the revised 2012 GPA, and to the results of a feedback session with stakeholders on the performance of the new regulatory framework in practice.

Lessons learned

Through the country project in Armenia, the EBRD-UNCITRAL Initiative team learned several lessons – and tested the 2011 UNCITRAL Model Law’s recommendations – concerning framework agreements and electronic communication and submissions in particular, as well as the Multilateral Development Bank standards for implementing eProcurement reform in the public sector.

1. **Policy choices in the public procurement primary legislation should be consistent, and be based on current best practice.**

In Armenia the new primary law envisaged a fully decentralised system, incorporating framework agreements. However, a balanced decentralisation, with central purchasing based on framework agreements, represents current procurement best practice, which has been successfully implemented in the eProcurement environment across the EU member states.

2. **Decentralisation of a public procurement function requires a new institutional framework and new, efficient, operational procedures.**

Prior to the reforms – when the procurement function was centralised and was delivered by an internal department of the Ministry of Finance – there was no need for laws regulating the allocation of roles and responsibilities in the procurement process, procurement planning, or reporting on the procurement results, because all of these matters were internal matters of the Ministry of Finance, and were regulated by internal procedures. In this centralised system public procurement officers were personnel of the Ministry, accountable to the department director, and their management reported on their performance directly to the Minister.

In a decentralised procurement system secondary legislation must prescribe how contracting entities should perform the procurement function, what their planning and reporting obligations are, and how they should report to the national regulatory authority. Without these regulations the national regulatory authority has no access to information
about how the procurement function is conducted. In a decentralised system the national regulatory authority does not conduct public procurement, but rather ensures that the procurement procedures of individual contracting entities are compliant with the law.

This is achieved through monitoring and audit procedures, which need to be prescribed by the law and must be efficiently implemented. The experiences of several countries demonstrated that, in a decentralised system, efficiency of monitoring is a key policy question. In order not to create unnecessary bureaucracy, delays and massive costs of human resources allocated to reviewing reports submitted by contracting entities upon the completion of procurement procedures, governments should employ more transparent and less expensive computerised systems, with real-time, online reporting conducted at the central level by a few, well-trained and well-paid analysts of the national regulatory authority.

3. **Decentralisation of a public procurement system can be combined with the implementation of eProcurement tools, if newly appointed contracting entities are trained in both how to conduct procurement and how to use eProcurement tools.**

There is a high risk of irregularities and non-compliance if insufficient training is provided in conducting procurement processes, and where there are no professional procurement officers at contracting entities. In addition, if the eProcurement system is not implemented in tandem with sufficient support for how to conduct procurement procedures on the eProcurement platform, the contracting entities will experience operational difficulties, since they have no previous procurement experience and skill, and are learning both how to conduct procurement procedures and how to use new IT systems with which they are unfamiliar.

The story of public procurement reform in Armenia clearly demonstrates that high-level political support is essential in order to initiate reforms in the public sector, and sufficient and well-prepared human resources are necessary to implement them. If reform is ambitious, and will affect the entire public procurement sector, it should be very well thought through, and necessary change management instruments must be put in place – and be made effective – well in advance of the entry into force of the new primary legislation. In the case of Armenia the political objective of the reforms – accession to the WTO GPA – has been accomplished, but the goal of a more efficient and modern public procurement system will take longer to achieve.

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