

# M&E CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS & TURKEY

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# Presentation Overview



- **Conceptual background:** what should be monitored in civil service reform and how
- **Common areas** for civil service reform indicators developed under the project
- **Findings** during project implementation

# Civil Service Reform: Fundamentals

- **Assumption**: The civil service is a state institution instrumental for governing a society and for delivering public services, not only a human resource management system.
- **Reform Goals**: Making the institution more democratic by: ensuring the civil servants' professional autonomy, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, impartiality and controllability by elected political representatives and by the courts and other public bodies independent from the executive.
- **Reform Engine**: Technical expertise is necessary but civil service improvement is fundamentally a political effort.

# Civil Service Aspirations:

## The quadruple A

- **Access on merit and fair competition:** the civil service is accessible only or basically through fair competitive procedures where those participating have to demonstrate their professional merits and capacities
- **Accountable:** the civil service system guarantees the accountability of public officials
- **Attractive:** bright citizens consider the civil service as a good employer of choice to develop a lifelong professional career
- **Affordable:** the civil service has reasonable costs commensurate with the fiscal capacity of the country

# International experience speaks to challenge of Civil Service Reform indicators

- Limited Civil Service reform success stories
- External pressure helps reformers, but does not prevent backsliding when pressure loosens
- Measuring civil service reform outcomes and impact is difficult because the effects of civil service reform cannot be isolated (i.e., the “attribution problem”).
- Lack of expert consensus on the factors that contribute to successful civil service reforms (World Bank)
- Lack of consensus on what valid indicators are in civil service /HRM reform.

# How are Civil Service Indicators shaped?

- Information for what? Indicators are selected based on their intended use
- The purpose is country-specific.
- In the countries involved in this project the common context is EU accession and Public Administration modernisation
- Quantitative vs Qualitative
- What to measure?

# Quantitative vs Qualitative indicators

- Are information sources on civil service which provide metrics (numbers) more objective?
- Often quantitative data is an elaboration of qualitative perception-based subjective opinion (e.g. surveys)
- Quantitative data is not necessarily more accurate than qualitative data
- Subjective Perceptions of key stakeholders and informed observers are valid data for Civil Service reform assessments

# How may policy makers use indicators?

- Indicators are designed to provide policy makers with **near to medium term feedback** on CS reforms and policies.
- **Intermediate outcome indicators** reflect information on the level of performance.
- Indicators should be able to capture progress within a **timeframe** that allows for corrective actions.
- Working with a **limited number of indicators** facilitates focus and sustained attention of high level decision makers.
- Facilitate IPA 2 Programming (financing and better alignment with national priorities)



# There is consensus that civil service reform indicators should:

- Demonstrate countries' progress towards better civil services underpinning development goals
- Be relatively easy to collect, and preferably from already existing information sources or datasets
- Make donors' conditionality on aid more objectively grounded
- In EU candidates: Help assess progress towards EU membership
- Assess the quality of the civil service against a set of objectives (EU standards, Development objectives, etc.)
- But regulations are required before certain actions can be enforced and before targets are defined

# Project Findings:

## status of civil service reform

10

- Civil service remains to be a priority for every country;
- Problems are similar for all countries involved in the project;
- Civil service reforms are mostly internationally driven – lack of internalization;
- Some achievements, but the attainment of civil service aspirations (the four A) is still quite far away
- Politicians are not resolute in creating a professional, merit-based state bureaucracy.

# Findings 1: current M&E approach

11

- Countries mostly use process indicators, very few outcome indicators;
- Very few official reports are made public (except those produced abroad) on reform progress;
- The professional autonomy of civil servants— still to be fully developed;
- No culture of Monitoring and Evaluating (M&E) public policies

# Findings 2: current M&E approach

12

- Different strategic documents using different sets of indicators
- Slowly progress is being made in all countries in defining indicators and setting targets
- More commitment and support required from political level to put indicators to use

# Civil Service Indicators proposed

- Shifting from process to more output oriented
- Timeframe for achieving outcomes is 5-7 years and often longer.
- Outputs represent intermediate outcomes
- Limited data availability: indicators should rely on existing data sources, not entail new data collection (data collection is very expensive)
- But some interest does exist in testing new data collection methods (e.g. in Macedonia)
- Expand the interest on CS indicators outside HRM specialists circles

# Indicator examples: Merit based recruitment

- Albania: Implementation of transparent recruitment procedures
- Albania: Number of court decisions in favor of candidates to vacant positions / overall number of complaints related to recruitment procedures in actual year
- Kosovo: Number of appeals from civil servants and other candidates related to recruitment procedures
- BiH: Anonymous correction of tests
- Macedonia: Percentage of merit-based recruitment

# Indicator examples: Performance Appraisal

- Kosovo: Number of civil servants appraised in actual year / total number of civil servants in actual year
- BiH/ Serbia: Civil servants satisfaction with performance appraisal system
- Macedonia: Competence management system becomes integral part of appraisal process

# Lessons from the Project & next steps



- Capable technical staff require support from decision makers and political staff to improve the monitoring and evaluation of civil service reform.
- Further work is required to test methodology & implement proposed indicators.
- Ensure M&E systems are simple and working: do not embark on sophisticated M&E systems
- Contextualize indicators & adapted to country specific conditions.



# Session program

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- Indicators validation – status in each country
- Discussing the use of indicators in policy documents and progress reports
- Options for fostering peer learning going forward