

Brief
on Local Self-governance Programme

Objective: To improve the quality of services provided at the local level through strengthening capacity of local self-governance bodies and improving the legal and policy environment for further development of local governance.

Implementing partner: Mejlis (Parliament) of Turkmenistan

Duration: 2007-2009

Regions: Ahal, Balkan, Lebap velayats, 6 Gengeshi (village councils)

Areas of assistance:

- i) Improvement of legal and policy framework for self-governance through provision of international expertise with immediate objective to support Parliament in the elaboration of the legislative acts that strengthen political and financial capacities of local governments in the country
- ii) Institution and capacity building to promote effective local governance system through the capacity development of local government and elected authority and by forging partnership with local communities and other local actors
- iii) Participatory local development planning with the objective to promote more effective, participatory and inclusive planning and budgeting systems which are developed and used by local governments
- iv) Social mobilization and partnerships for quality service delivery to promote social mobilization and partnerships at local level through limited financial support for the realization of the socio-economic projects and initiatives identified, planned and prioritized by the local governments in partnership with communities based on the local needs of the people
- v) Scaling up through advocacy and communication to inform national policy on the results and lessons learned derived from the programme.

The progress made since the project started

The project started from the inception phase in 2007, which embodied a number of preparatory activities for full-fledged project to be started in 2008. Thus, to increase the awareness of the existing options and initiate the willingness for change towards an improved system of local government as well as learn best practices and experience of Latvia in local government system, a study tour for Turkmen delegation was organized. To facilitate multi-sectoral approach in addressing local governance issues an Inter-ministerial Working Group was established. As part of preparatory activities, office premises of six pilot Gengeshi were renovated, furnished and equipped.

As one of the priorities, a comprehensive training programme for heads and members of local councils on participatory local development planning, social mobilization and building partnerships with local actors and communities as well as legislation and local taxation has been designed. For this, two international missions have been deployed to prepare training modules to meet current training needs of local administrations. Likewise, to facilitate delivery of the training programme, a national team of trainers has been established and trained with support of international consultants. Currently a round of trainings is being delivered in pilot villages.

In addition, a team of national experts are currently reviewing the existing legislation on local governance to prepare recommendations on the introduction of the administrative mechanism for implementation of laws at the local level.