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USAID/ARMENIA **STRENGTHENING
ELECTORAL PROCESSES AND POLITICAL
ACCOUNTABILITY IN ARMENIA
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the evaluation was to understand the extent to which the **USAID/ Armenia Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia (SEPPA) project** achieved its planned results, focusing on the project's effectiveness, sustainability, and cross cutting issues. The evaluation team employed a participatory approach, engaging with USAID and implementing partners through ongoing consultation. This method was combined with document analysis, 50 key informant interviews, three focus groups, and an online survey of election commissioners. The team's comprehensive findings and conclusions are summarized below.

SEPPA **enhanced the capacity of Armenia's executive government, electoral integrity, and public participation**, including improvements in public communication, policy drafting, and evidence-based decision-making with public opinion polls. The project encountered challenges in achieving its planned impact on comprehensive policy-making support, including limited success in fostering cross-party cooperation and overcoming barriers to gender equality in politics. Key factors enabling SEPPA's successes were high-level political support and stakeholder receptivity. Contextual factors, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Nagorno-Karabakh war, political instability, and societal norms, challenged the project's outcomes. SEPPA's design and implementation planned for sustainability through institutionalized electoral reforms, communication strategies, and internal party enhancements, which leveraged strategies to engage women, youth, and other marginalized groups. Local partners and civil society organizations (CSOs) could benefit from additional capacity-building assistance for initiatives, including civic education and the design and implementation of opinion polls to ensure a smooth transition of these activities to local ownership.

The evaluation recommends continued focus on the electoral process, democratic representation at both national and local levels, accountability through the National Assembly (NA), and strengthening local political engagement through decentralizing political processes. The team also recommends bridging political divides through engagement with academic institutions, continued political analysis for contingency plans, collaboration across implementing partners (IPs) to foster synergies, and prioritizing sustainability in all project phases. Specific recommendations include operationalizing strategies for the transfer of project initiatives to national entities, institutionalizing training programs, and prioritizing the inclusion of marginalized groups in all project activities, including through public communications campaigns challenging stereotypes.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CEPPS	The Consortium for Elections and Political Processes
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DDL	Development Data Library
DPO	Disabled Persons Organizations
EE/MELDS	Europe and Eurasia/Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning, and Decision Support
EMB	Electoral Management Body
EQ	Evaluation Question
ET	Evaluation Team
EWP	Evaluation Work Plan
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IP	Implementing Partner
IRI	International Republican Institute
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NA	National Assembly
PEC	Precinct Election Commissions
PSA	Public Service Announcement
PwDs	Persons with Disabilities
SEPPA	Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/EE	United States Agency for International Development, Europe and Eurasia Bureau

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In October 2023, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Armenia requested the EE/MELDS team to conduct a performance evaluation of the Supporting Electoral Processes and Political Accountability (SEPPA) project, funded by USAID and implemented by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening, including the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). The SEPPA project was designed to strengthen Armenia’s electoral processes and political accountability by enhancing the capacity of key democratic institutions, including the National Assembly (NA), executive government, Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), and political parties, to address citizens’ needs, build trust in democratic processes, and foster women’s participation and political leadership.

The purpose of the evaluation was to understand the extent to which the SEPPA project achieved its planned results from September 2018 to November 2023, with a focus on effectiveness, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues.¹ The evaluation team (ET) implemented a participatory and utilization-focused approach, conducting extensive consultations with USAID/Armenia and Implementing Partners (IPs), which included a recommendations workshop, and facilitating feedback from USAID, IPs, and other stakeholders at every stage of the process. The team additionally conducted document analysis, 50 key informant interviews across ten stakeholder groups, three focus groups, and an online survey of election commission members to ensure a robust and comprehensive evaluation strategy.

¹ The SEPPA project ends in September 2025. As the evaluation took place, some critical components of the program were still ongoing or were expected to take place. These activities fall outside of the scope of this evaluation and were not assessed. As such, the evaluation team acknowledges that some critical steps taken towards the sustainability in the last year of the project may not be reflected in this report.

KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1 EVALUATION QUESTION

How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA's intended outcomes?

SEPPA was very effective in improving the capacities of Armenia's executive government in the following areas: public communications, policy drafting, and the utilization of public opinion polls for evidence-based decision-making. However, the project's approach to supporting the policy-making process was fragmented, focusing on isolated initiatives rather than comprehensive reforms across government agencies.

The project contributed to the strengthening of the integrity of the electoral process and the capacity of EMBs through operational assistance and training programs at all levels. SEPPA's participatory approach to reforming Armenia's electoral processes aligned with international standards and improved electoral accessibility and inclusivity, especially for persons with disabilities (PwDs), through advocacy, adapted training, voter education materials, and public service announcements (PSAs). Meanwhile, the project did not achieve broad-based citizen engagement or deepen public understanding of key electoral reforms and processes.

SEPPA increased political parties' operational and organizational capacities and enhanced citizen engagement through community outreach and opinion polls to inform electoral strategies. Nevertheless, the project's attempts to foster dialogue and cooperation across political parties had limited success due to the country's deep-rooted political divisions.

The project strengthened the National Assembly's operational efficiency through comprehensive training, improved public engagement strategies, and increased youth participation in the legislative process through internship and fellowship programs.

SEPPA's interventions contributed to women's visibility and participation in political and community spheres, particularly through the Katarine Women's Leadership Program. However, deeply rooted barriers to gender equality in politics limited the project's planned outcomes and ability to scale achievements within targeted women's groups into systemic change.

The project's most effective interventions included electoral reforms, implementing political debates, opinion polls, and increased public communications. The project also advocated for women's political leadership and the participation of PwDs and initiated internships and fellowships to increase youth engagement. At the time of evaluation, the least effective interventions were related to electoral dispute resolution, political finance transparency and oversight, and the establishment of a Women's Caucus in the National Assembly.



Parliamentary interns in a working focus group at the National Assembly

2 EVALUATION QUESTION

What were key enabling and hindering factors that have affected the achievement of outcomes?

Key enabling factors for project outcomes included high-level political support, stakeholder receptivity, trust in implementing partners, impartiality, flexibility, and generally clear roles of IPs. Hindering factors included the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh war, the COVID-19 pandemic, and political instability, including high turnover in partner public institutions, political polarization, and bureaucratic resistance to change. Social and economic barriers included societal norms around gender roles and civic participation, and exchange rate fluctuations. These challenges required the project to implement adaptive strategies to navigate the complex political landscape.

3 EVALUATION QUESTION

To what extent was SEPPA able to steer its strategic approach in response to key developments during the implementation period?

The project demonstrated a high degree of adaptability in steering its strategic approach through various means and measures. The project effectively reallocated funds through ongoing dialogues with USAID. SEPPA also adjusted the scheduling and locations of training and capacity-building activities to align with partners' needs, creatively facilitated cross-party collaboration, and hosted events in neutral venues to promote inclusive participation and dialogue. However, SEPPA faced some challenges in adaptability, particularly regarding overlapping mandates among the three IPs collaborating on the project and missed opportunities for harmonization in interventions, such as opinion polls and the youth internship/fellowship programs.

4 EVALUATION QUESTION

Which elements of the intervention approaches and results achieved by SEPPA are most likely to be taken further and sustained beyond the close of the project? Why?

Several elements of SEPPA's interventions have been institutionalized and provide a strong foundation for sustainability beyond the life of the program due to the legal and procedural obligations, including the Electoral Code, the Central Electoral Commission's new strategic plan, the National Assembly's new public communication strategies, the establishment of the Government Spokespersons' School, the voter education and training programs for EMBs, as well as improvements to internal party structures for one political party.

However, there are barriers to the sustainability of some key initiatives which require further attention. The continuation of opinion polls and research is crucial for Armenia's political landscape. Collaboration with universities to integrate civic education into their curricula also requires further technical assistance. During the evaluation timeframe, SEPPA did not plan for transferring the Katarine program and internship/fellowship programs to competent and independent national entities for long-term viability or formalizing constituency outreach by political parties and Members of Parliament (MPs). While SEPPA has laid the groundwork for more responsive and inclusive governance, sustaining and building upon these gains will require continued efforts.

5 EVALUATION QUESTION

To what extent did the project's design and implementation prioritize/ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women; tackle outreach challenges sensitively; and actively address systemic barriers to ensure equitable participation in electoral processes?

The project focused on the inclusion of marginalized groups in the electoral and political process. SEPPA educated marginalized and first-time voters and supported women and youth participation in governance and politics. SEPPA improved PwDs' access to participate in elections through accessible polling stations, tactile ballots, and specialized training materials for Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). The project also engaged PwD-focused organizations in the electoral reform process.

The Katarine Program stands out as an achievement in promoting women's political participation by improving leadership skills and increasing the number of women candidates in local elections. Youth internship and fellowship programs provided hands-on professional experience in public institutions, which enhanced participants' understanding of the public sector and democratic processes. SEPPA's voter education initiatives specifically targeted marginalized groups by developing materials in accessible formats and tailoring PSAs to these groups. Civic education initiatives targeted first-time voters and aimed to inform and encourage active youth participation in the electoral process.



Town Hall at Art School in Artashat with an MP

However, SEPPA was less successful in integrating inclusivity across all interventions and engaging with women and youth-focused CSOs. The project missed opportunities to include underrepresented groups in trainings, outreach activities, and via public communications materials. Though the project did work well with the Coalition on the Rights of PwDs, the project’s policy-level work did not sufficiently engage with or focus on marginalized groups. SEPPA’s limited engagement with women- and youth-focused CSOs represents missed opportunities for leveraging their expertise and networks to deepen the project’s impact on these groups.

6 EVALUATION QUESTION

What worked well and should be continued? What didn’t work?

A key factor of SEPPA’s success has been the broad and considerable support it has received from a broad range of national partners. Furthermore, external actors, such as USAID, the EU, and the Venice Commission, have played a crucial role by providing resources, expertise, and political influence to advance the project’s objectives.

Despite notable achievements, the project’s design could have focused more on strengthening the local political processes and structures. The ET identified a mismatch between the project’s ambition and the indicators used for monitoring and evaluation. The team noted the need for clearer definitions and consistent tracking of key terms. The evaluation also identified a need to focus on policy implementation as opposed to focusing solely on their formulation. The IPs generally coordinated effectively, though better coordination would have maximized resource utilization. The evaluation also highlighted the need for greater coordination with other USAID-funded projects operating in the same country and more substantial involvement of CSOs in the democratic reform process.



RECOMMENDATIONS

SEPPA **contributed to positive developments** in further consolidating **democratic governance** in Armenia. The program's achievements provide national institutions and international partners with a solid foundation to deepen and expand the project's gains in future interventions. This section of the report discusses recommendations to build on SEPPA's successes, ensure sustainability, and tackle cross-cutting issues.



EFFECTIVENESS

- **Maintain the current focus on the** electoral process and democratic representation, nationally and locally, inclusion, and accountability through the National Assembly.
- Prioritize the interactions between the Executive branch and the National Assembly through a **well-integrated policy process** that promotes democratic representation and accountability.
- Increase the focus on **citizen engagement** with the political process and the **public's understanding** of key reforms and democratic institutions.
- Strengthen engagement with **political processes at the local level** and support local party structures.
- Explore the **role of academic institutions** in bridging political divides.
- Maintain a **high degree of adaptability** and simultaneously develop **contingency plans** that outline critical scenarios.
- **Harmonize** similar activities across IPs, such as NA outreach activities, fellowship programs, opinion polling, etc.



SUSTAINABILITY

- Ensure that explicit **sustainability considerations** guide all major activities during potential follow-up phases of the project.
- Develop a **long-term strategy** for an eventual transfer of the following initiatives to national entities that guarantees initiatives' long-term independence and integrity: (a) public opinion polling; (b) the Katarine program; and (c) youth internship and fellowship programs and networks.
- Strengthen the **sustainability of training programs** by exploring their adoption by local entities, formal accreditation, and broadening the scope of Training of Trainers.



CROSS-CUTTING

- Launch public **awareness campaigns** to challenge stereotypes and cultural norms that limit women's roles in political leadership and participation.
- Promote **stronger engagement of CSOs** in advocacy, policy analysis, and public awareness campaigns.
- **Expand training of trainers** on inclusive pedagogies.
- **Strengthen coordination** with other USAID-funded projects, including regular meetings to discuss ongoing activities and opportunities for collaboration.
- Strengthen the **project's Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL)** plan by simplifying the results framework and identifying indicators that measure more effectively the project's outcomes.

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1 COUNTRY CONTEXT

In 2018, Armenia witnessed a peaceful change of government through a process known as the Velvet Revolution. Following weeks of protests, the incumbent Prime Minister resigned, leading to a notable shift in political leadership. The movement's figurehead, Nikol Pashinyan, emerging from the opposition ranks, ascended to the Prime Minister's role on a pledge to address corruption and improve economic conditions. The snap parliamentary elections of December 2018 cemented this change in leadership, whereby the My Step Alliance (dominated by the Civil Contract political party led by Mr. Pashinyan) secured a majority of the seats. Only a few other political parties secured representation in this new parliamentary configuration.

In late September 2020, the region of Nagorno-Karabakh experienced escalated tensions, leading to the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War. This heightened conflict, lasting for several weeks, concluded with an agreement for a ceasefire in early November 2020, paving the way for efforts toward stabilization and peacebuilding in the region. The political crisis following the 2020 war led to a snap parliamentary election in Armenia in June 2021. The elections were held under a revised electoral system. Instead of a two-tier proportional system, in which MPs were elected through a combination of a single national list and 13 open territorial lists, all 101 MPs were elected through a closed-list proportional system in a single nationwide constituency. In order to obtain seats in the parliament, the parties had to pass a five percent threshold, while the alliances were required to garner at least seven percent of the votes.

The June 2021 elections resulted in a decisive victory for the ruling party, Civil Contract, and the reconfirmation of Nikol Pashinyan as Prime Minister. International observers found the election process competitive and well-managed, though marred by polarization and hostile rhetoric. International observers also outlined some recommendations to improve the conduct of elections in Armenia.²

Despite the ceasefire, on 19 September 2023, Azerbaijan launched a military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh, resulting in the displacement of more than 100,000 ethnic Armenians residing in the region.³ The vast majority of them fled to Armenia, adding additional strain on a country with a population of just under three million and a 27% poverty rate.

The Civil Contract's swift ascent to power in 2018 and the subsequent snap election of 2021 offered a chance to empower reform-oriented political activists to guide Armenia through its transition. However, significant challenges still exist, specifically concerning effective governance, citizen engagement, civic education, and gender equality.

² ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/armenia/502416>

³ Samantha Power's Tweet on the Azerbaijani Military Operation in Nagorno-Karabakh and U.S. Support for Displaced Ethnic Armenians <https://twitter.com/PowerUSAID/status/1726952022237397365>

I.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Since 2018, the Consortium for Elections and Political Processes (CEPPS) has actively contributed to Armenia's democratic transition and established more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes through the USAID-funded Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia (SEPPA) project. The project runs from September 2018 to September 2025 and has an estimated budget of \$21.6 million. It is implemented by the International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

SEPPA collaborates directly with Armenia's National Assembly, Government, the Central Election Commission, various political parties, universities, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to enhance their capacity to address citizens' needs and build trust in democratic processes. More specifically, SEPPA engages election management bodies to become more voter-centric and inclusive through its assistance activities. It also delivers professional, non-partisan administration of elections through revised legislation, improved training, practical education, and voter motivation. SEPPA works with political parties to develop issue-based platforms informed by voters' interests and improve their ability to engage citizens through effective advocacy and outreach. SEPPA strengthens public institutions, supports the government and parliament in developing and communicating policies through two-way interactions with citizens, and builds the capacity of the ministries by supporting the development of professional bureaucracy within the executive branch. Through SEPPA, the CEPPS partners enhance the ability of civil society actors to provide government oversight and contribute to decision-making through effective advocacy. Activities maximize inclusion, diversity, access to information, and public ownership of peaceful transitions, which are the stated intentions of the new government.

SEPPA has five mutually reinforcing objectives:

1

The Government's ability to devise and deliver informed and responsive policies is facilitated and strengthened.

2

The institutional capacity of election management bodies and mechanisms for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process is sustained and strengthened.

3

An enabling environment for developing a multiparty system and inclusive and responsive political parties is fostered.

4

Mechanisms for parliamentary accountability and constituent engagement are facilitated and institutionalized.

5

Women's political participation, influence, and leadership are fostered.

SEPPA’s theory of change assumes that for the democratic process to continue, citizens must be engaged in demanding reform from their government and hold the decision-makers accountable. However, citizens will only remain engaged if the elections, political process, and parties are more inclusive and responsive to the challenges they face on a daily basis and if elections offer genuine opportunities for voters to express their will by choosing from a variety of options.

2. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

2.1 EVALUATION PURPOSE

This performance evaluation aims to assist USAID/Armenia (hereinafter referred to as “the Mission”) in understanding the extent to which the SEPPA project achieved its planned results during the five years of the seven-year project. The Mission may use this evaluation’s findings, conclusions, and recommendations to inform future programming and theories of change to maximize development outcomes and achieve the strategic objectives of the U.S. Government in Armenia. The evaluation covered all the activities undertaken under the SEPPA project during the period from September 2018 to November 2023.

2.2 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation assessed the performance of the various USAID activities under the SEPPA project against the following review criteria: effectiveness, sustainability, and other cross-cutting issues. More specifically, the evaluation addressed the following questions:

FIGURE 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS



Effectiveness

EQ1: How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA's intended outcomes?

EQ2: What were key enabling and hindering factors that have affected the achievement of outcomes?

EQ3: To what extent was SEPPA able to steer its strategic approach in response to key developments during the implementation period?



Sustainability

EQ4: Which elements of the intervention approaches and results achieved by SEPPA are most likely to be taken further and sustained beyond the close of the project? Why?



Cross-Cutting

EQ5: To what extent did the project's design and implementation prioritize/ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women; tackle outreach challenges sensitively; and actively address systemic barriers to ensure equitable participation in electoral processes?

EQ6: Lessons Learned - What worked well and should be continued? What didn't work?

3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

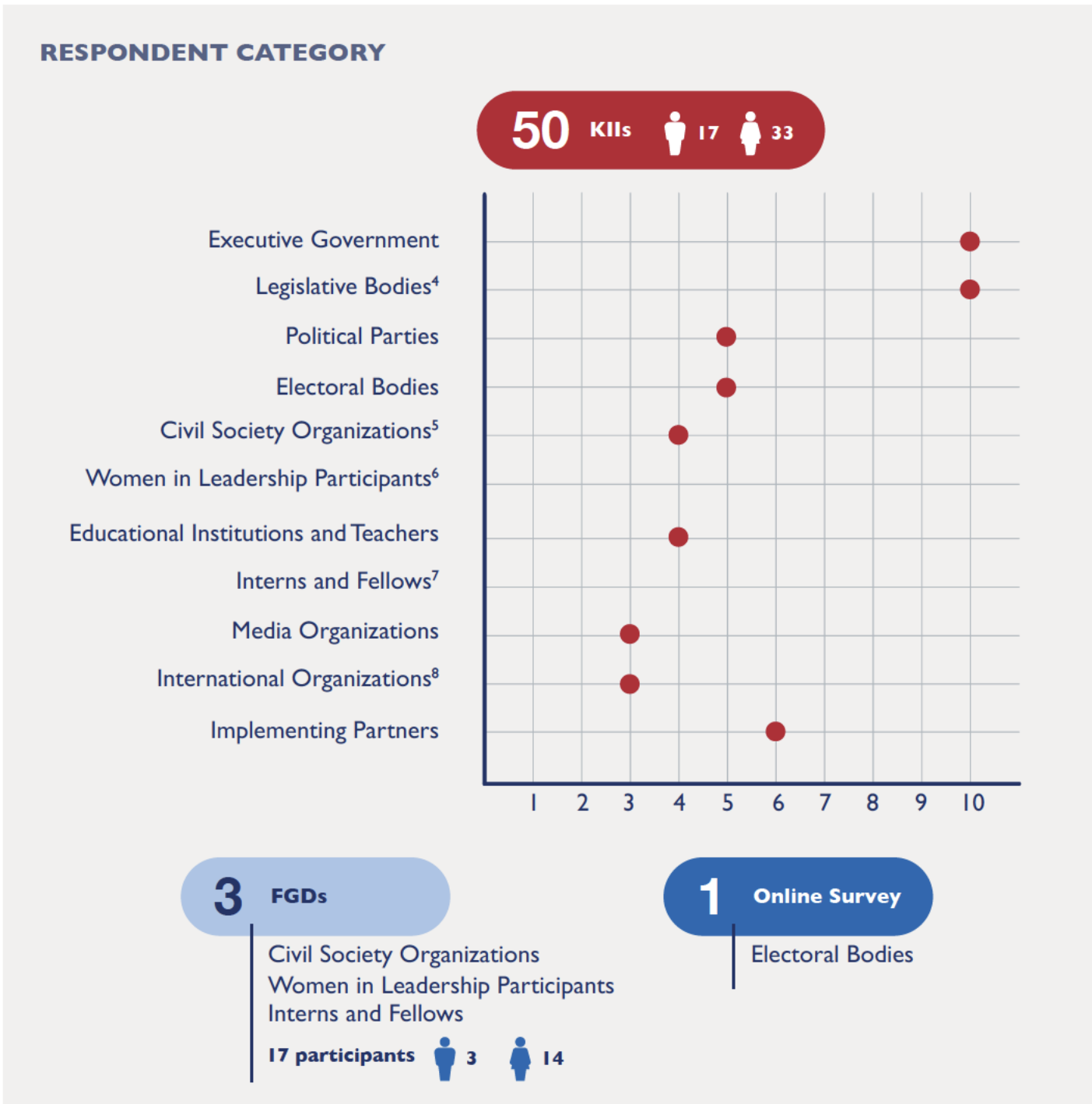
3.1 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

The performance evaluation of the SEPPA project was a comprehensive endeavor, utilizing a mixed-methods framework that integrated both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The Evaluation Team meticulously leveraged quantitative data from available records and databases, including voter turnout data, the rate of political parties that successfully implemented issue-based platforms, indicators of improved policy responsiveness from government entities, and more. To address information gaps, the Evaluation Team administered an online survey targeting the representatives of the Election Management Bodies. The survey, which can be seen in **Annex B**, was designed to assess the effectiveness of project interventions from the perspective of stakeholders who directly participated in its activities.

Qualitative data collection was a vital evaluation component, complementing the quantitative information. This was primarily achieved through key informant interviews (KIIs) with a diverse range of project stakeholders, including implementing partners (IPs), project partners in the executive government, the National Assembly, electoral bodies, political parties, and civil society. KIIs were instrumental in capturing nuanced insights into the project's implementation, the contextual challenges encountered, and the strategies employed to navigate them. Additionally, focus group discussions (FGDs) with project stakeholders provided a deeper understanding of the project's influence on political engagement and institutional capacity building, further emphasizing the importance of their perspectives.



FIGURE 2: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS BY RESPONDENT CATEGORY



⁴ These KIIs targeted MPs, including women MPs.

⁵ KIIs were organized with the project's subgrantees. One Focus Group Discussion was organized with civil society organizations that are active in the area of governance and electoral processes in Armenia.

⁶ Katarina program participants.

⁷ One Focus Group Discussion was organized with interns and fellows.

⁸ This category includes USAID.

The following is a breakdown of the methods employed:

- Comprehensive review of up to 90 SEPPA-related documents, including annual progress reports; annual implementation plans; policy documents, training materials, reports of domestic and international observer groups and previous evaluation reports. The desk review helped ascertain the alignment of SEPPA activities with the stated objectives and the consistency of the project’s messaging across different channels and stakeholders. The full list of documents included in the desk review is attached in **Annex C**.
- Fifty key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with 10 categories of stakeholders, including Executive Government, Legislative Bodies, Political Parties, Electoral Bodies, Civil Society Organizations, Educational Institutions and Teachers, Media Organizations, International Organizations, Implementing Parties, and IP HQs.
- Three FGDs with 17 participants, including Civil Society Organizations (four), Women in Leadership Participants (seven), and Interns and Fellows (six).
- One online survey was sent to all CEC, TEC, and PEC members who participated in the project, and a total of 1413 individuals (18 from CEC, 266 from TEC, and 1129 from PEC). A total of 210 respondents were received (18 from CEC, 145 from TEC, 42 from PEC, 5 - other).

The Evaluation Team adopted a comprehensive approach to data analysis, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a robust interpretation of the data collected. Quantitative data from desk reviews and surveys were meticulously cleaned and analyzed using Microsoft Excel, employing descriptive statistics for a foundational analysis.

Concurrently, qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs underwent thematic analysis guided by a preliminary codebook aligned with the Evaluation Questions. This involved coding and thematizing responses to identify patterns and differences among stakeholder perspectives, utilizing Excel for data management. To bolster the evaluation’s validity and reliability, the Evaluation Team employed data triangulation, cross-referencing findings across data types and sources to validate patterns and conclusions. The final stage involved synthesizing all data to draw comprehensive insights into the project’s effectiveness, sustainability, and inclusivity, integrating various findings to formulate a holistic view of the project’s impact and generate actionable recommendations.

3.2 LIMITATIONS

During the evaluation, the ET encountered the following limitations:

Recall Bias: Individuals may forget some events or details over time, remember events that did not happen, or exaggerate their experiences to fit their beliefs and expectations. This bias may affect the accuracy and validity of the evaluation, especially when comparing situations before and after interventions. To mitigate this limitation, the Evaluation Team selectively compared self-reported data with project and activity reports.

Low Response Rate to the Online Survey: The overall response rate for the online survey was 15 percent. Notably, the low response rate primarily pertained to PEC members, with only 4 percent participating, as opposed to 55% of TEC and 100% of CEC members. This discrepancy contributed to the overall low response rate. Despite the team’s efforts to send the survey to PEC members twice, the response rate remained persistently low. Nevertheless, other research methods such as KIIs and document review served to supplement and validate the qualitative data collected.

4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This section presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for each evaluation question.

4.1.1 EVALUATION QUESTION 1

How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA’s intended outcomes?

After conducting a comprehensive analysis of the EQI project outcomes, it became apparent that the number of discrete findings exceeded initial expectations. The ET organized related findings into overarching categories, incorporating relevant data from KII, FGD, and surveys to enhance clarity and coherence. This approach has improved our ability to draw meaningful conclusions and provide actionable recommendations, thereby amplifying the evaluation’s value and impact. Notably, the presentation of EQ 1 findings differs from the other five EQs; nevertheless, we ensured depth and richness across all evaluation questions.

4.1.1 FINDINGS

Finding 1.1. Government representatives reported that SEPPA’s support of executive communication, policy drafting, and the use of opinion polls has improved their ability to respond to and increase transparency regarding public needs.

Under Objective 1, SEPPA aimed to facilitate and strengthen the government’s ability to devise and deliver informed and responsive policies. All interviewed government representatives noted the project’s considerable focus on the communications of the executive government.

They pointed out IRI’s key role in improving the executive government’s communication with the public through training events under the so-called “Government Spokesperson School” (also known as “School of Strategic Communication”) and the formulation of communication strategies for various government agencies, coordinated through a central unit under the Prime Minister’s Office (Information and Public Relations Center).

IRI supported the training of 53 (46 female and seven male) government spokespersons⁹ and the development of 10 communication strategies and related action plans or guidelines (nine for various government institutions and one for the National Assembly).¹⁰ IRI also supported placing 39 young people (30 female and nine male) as fellows in public institutions (33 in executive bodies and 6 in the National Assembly), where they not only gained hands-on experience but also provided valuable support. Also, as of the close of 2023, the project had developed a total of 2,654 products, such as public statements, social media content, and various reports and documents, which represents a considerable accomplishment given the resources at its disposal.



The School of Strategic Communication played a pivotal role. As I have already mentioned, it helped address the atmosphere of mistrust that emerged in the post-war period toward the government and official information in general. This was achieved by assisting spokespersons, press secretaries, and other officials responsible for communication in handling the situation in a more professional manner.

KII, Executive Government Representative



All interviewed government representatives also noted IRI's valuable assistance in preparing seven key legislative drafts¹¹ and two policy documents¹². This targeted support demonstrated the project's ability to respond to immediate and sector-specific policy challenges. Several interviewees from the ministries also noted the importance of opinion polls (both general and thematic), which have played a crucial role in informing policy decisions.

⁹ IRI conducted two iterations of the Government Spokespersons School (GSS), first in 2022 and again in 2023. The 2022 session involved 32 participants (28 female, 4 male) from 22 government agencies, offering a comprehensive curriculum of 15 theoretical courses alongside two intensive decision-making simulation games and a simulation interview, culminating in 18 sessions. This initial round focused on equipping participants with a broad range of communication skills pertinent to their roles. The 2023 program expanded its offerings to include 22 theoretical and practical training sessions, facilitated by a blend of Armenian and foreign experts in the field. Attended by 21 participants (18 female, 3 male) from 18 state agencies, this iteration aimed to deepen the strategic communication expertise.

¹⁰ The strategies and plans supported by IRI are as follows: Communication strategy for the Ministry of Justice, Analysis on the Communication Strategy of the Commandant's Office/Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) Social Media Strategy and Action Plan, Communication Action Plan of Anti-Corruption Strategy and Whistleblowing System, Inventory of Official Social Media Accounts, Social Media Strategy, Guidelines, and Action Plan of the Ministry of Economy, National Assembly Social Media Strategy, Elaboration of Strategy to Fight Disinformation, Institutional Reforms of Strategic Communication of the Government (ongoing), including Expert Discussion and Development on the Government's Strategic Communication Architecture and Institutional Reforms, Development of the New Vulnerability Assessment System Communication Plan (ongoing).

¹¹ IRI has contributed to the following seven legislative initiatives: Draft Amendments and Additions to the Law on Social Assistance and Related Laws; Draft Law on Voluntary Activities and Volunteer Work; Draft Laws on Amendments and Addenda to the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia, Employment Policies, and Laws; Draft Amendments to the Law on Political Parties/Electoral Reform; Draft Amendments and Additions to the Law on Medical Assistance and Service; Draft Law on Domestic Violence; Draft Law on Equality.

¹² IRI also played a notable role in supporting the following National Assembly-related activities: Parliamentary Oversight Strategy over the Actions Stemming from the 2020-2022 RA Human Rights Action Plan (HRAP); and Enhancement of Extracurricular Education in Armenia.



IRI and NDI research and studies helped us a lot to revise the Public Administration Reform (PAR) strategy, which was adopted in 2022 and then revised in 2023 based on the results of these studies. Particularly, we changed the architecture of the Communications Strategy component of PAR.

KII, Prime Minister's Office Representative



Quite large legislative initiatives were implemented: amendments to the Labor Code of the Republic of Armenia, the new law on Volunteer work, which we never had before. The other was the definition of remote work, which previously we had in the labor code only in crisis situations, now everyone can use this clause of the law.”

KII, Executive Government Representative



All government representatives agreed that IRI's contributions have enhanced the executive's responsiveness to public needs and have made the government's actions and decisions more accessible and understandable to citizens.

Finding 1.2. SEPPA's approach to support the policy-making process has been fragmented, focused on isolated initiatives rather than supporting a comprehensive, coordinated policy-making process across government agencies.

For all the contributions noted above, some government officials identified SEPPA's approach to policy development as fragmented, focusing on isolated initiatives rather than supporting a comprehensive policy-making process across the government. They noted that the project delivered support through dispersed initiatives, such as technical support for drafting specific laws (e.g., draft laws on Domestic Violence or Equality) or offering targeted training, without integrating these efforts into a broader policy framework or strategy. While the project effectively addressed several sector-specific policies, it did not leverage these successes to foster broader and systemic improvements in the policy-making process. Furthermore, the project missed opportunities to foster more effective inter-agency and inter-sectoral collaboration by focusing on isolated initiatives. A sound policy-making process requires coordinated efforts across various government departments and agencies; the absence of such coordination within SEPPA's framework limited its potential to contribute to a unified approach to policy development and implementation.

Finding 1.3. EMBs reported that SEPPA’s operational assistance in election management and comprehensive training programs for members at all levels notably enhanced their capacity and the integrity of the electoral process.

Under Objective 2, SEPPA aimed to strengthen the capacity of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs), such as the Central Election Commission (CEC), Territorial Election Commissions (TEC), and Precinct Election Commissions (PEC), and enhance the integrity of the electoral process. The project’s support was particularly instrumental in the operational management of elections and the facilitation of the electoral reform process. Most EMB representatives interviewed for this evaluation noted the crucial support that IFES has provided in the management of the electoral process, including polling operations. As can be seen from the figure below, 91% of all EMB representatives surveyed for this evaluation found SEPPA’s support relevant.



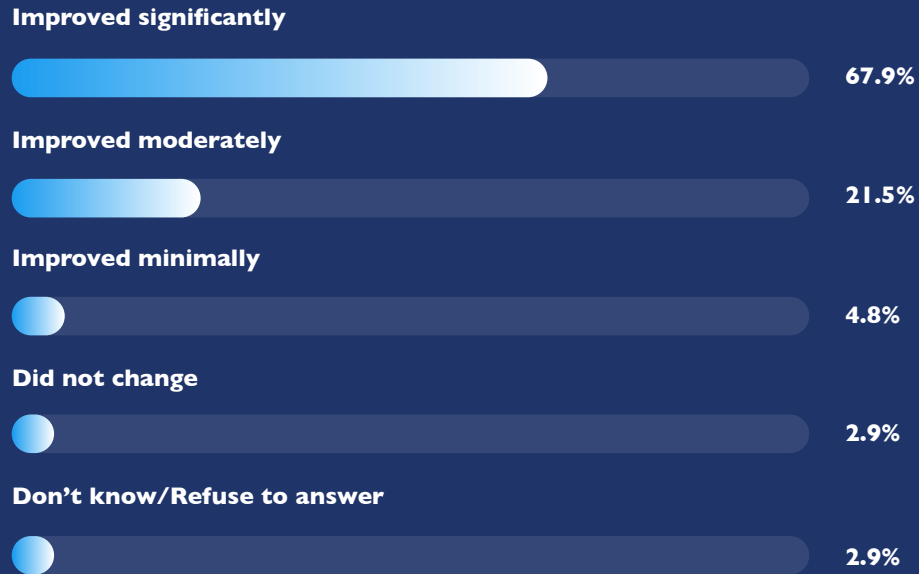
FIGURE 3. HOW RELEVANT WERE SEPPA INTERVENTIONS TO THE NEEDS OF EMB (N=210)



This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B). Participants also had the option to select “not relevant;” however no participants selected that option, which is why it is not shown in this graphic.

As can be seen from the figure below, most EMB survey respondents (68%) observed significant enhancements in the institutional capacity of election management bodies and mechanisms for ensuring electoral integrity over the past 3-4 years, with 22% noting moderate improvements.

FIGURE 4. HOW DID THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES AND MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESSES CHANGE OVER THE LAST 3-4 YEARS? (N=209)

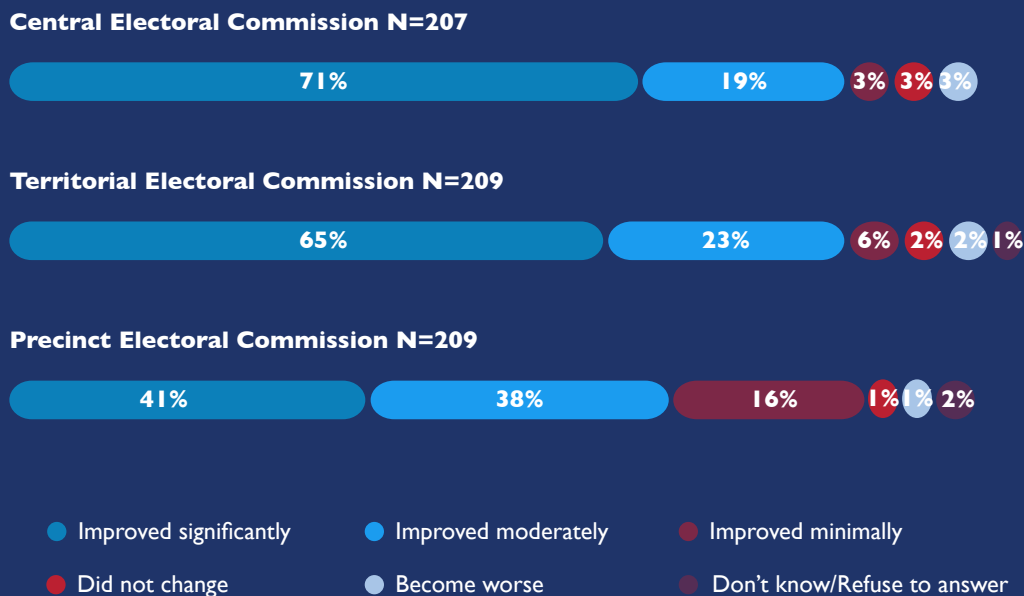


This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B). Participants also had the option to select “became worse,” however no participants selected that option, which is why it is not shown in this graphic.

The chart below illustrates the perceived improvements in the capacity of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), Territorial Electoral Commissions (TEC), and Precinct Electoral Commissions (PEC) to manage and enforce new electoral laws over the last 3-4 years. Vast majority majority of respondents from the CEC (71%) and TEC (65%) reported notable improvements, whereas only 41% of PEC respondents indicated significant enhancement.



FIGURE 5. HOW DID THE CAPACITY OF THE COMMISSIONS TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE AND ENFORCE NEW ELECTORAL LAWS CHANGE OVER THE LAST 3-4 YEARS? (%)



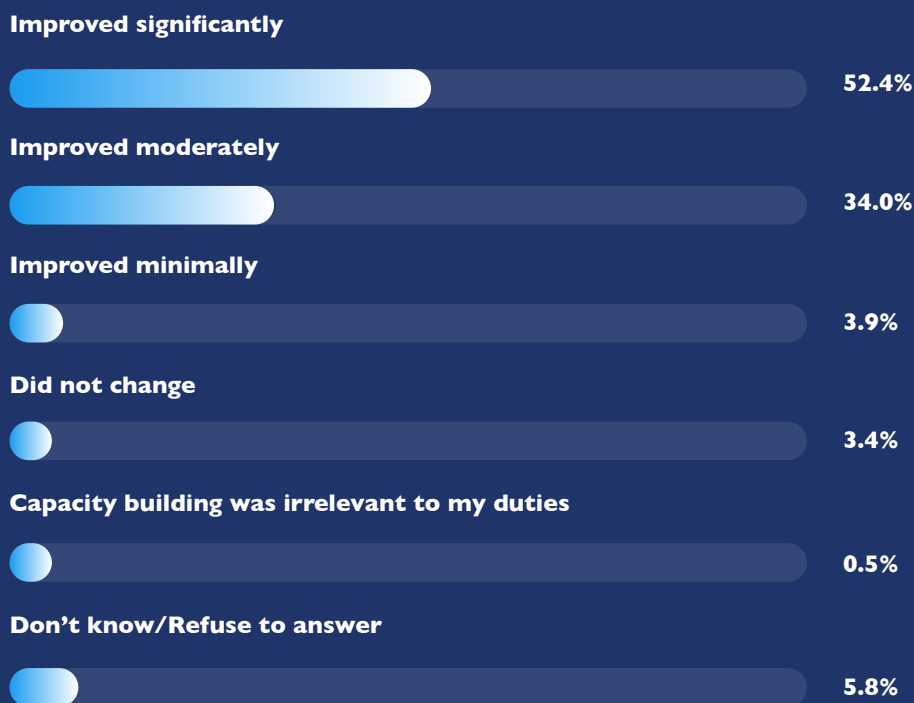
This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B).

EMB representatives emphasized the critical importance of the comprehensive training programs organized by the SEPPA project under the auspices of the CEC. IFES organized 24 training sessions attended by a total of 33,946 individuals.¹³

As can be seen from the figure below, about half of the EMB survey respondents reported a significant enhancement in their current responsibilities following SEPPA’s interventions, while merely 0.5% indicated that the intervention was irrelevant to their duties.

¹³ These trainings included TEC training, Training of Trainers for the CEC, CEC Strategic Planning Workshop, ToT for PEC training, PEC Roving training.

FIGURE 6. TO WHAT EXTENT HAS PARTICIPATION IN SEPPA INTERVENTIONS CHANGED YOUR PERSONAL CAPACITY TO PERFORM YOUR CURRENT DUTIES? (N=206)



This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B).

Most representatives of the TECs praised the induction course provided to new TEC members by SEPPA and the Training of Trainers (ToT) for poll workers. This comprehensive training program marked a notable step towards institutionalizing best practices into Armenia's electoral management framework.

PEC members emphasized the value of training poll workers across all 475 polling stations in Yerevan, which included specialized training for PEC Chairs and Secretaries. They noted that the training had significantly improved the poll workers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities.



In January 2022, we started training courses for TEC members, and later also for PEC members. The composition of all TECs was changed in December, and new commissions were formed. We tried to include new people and also people who were in commissions previously or worked as observers in order to preserve the institutional memory. Before the training of those new commissions, we conducted a trainer’s course, after which the already trained trainers trained the TEC representatives.”

KII, CEC Representative



The successful administration of the 2021 early parliamentary elections and the 2023 Yerevan City Council elections, which received positive recognition from both citizens and international observers, demonstrated the improved professionalism and credibility of the electoral process.¹⁴ IRI’s poll from July 2021 revealed broad public satisfaction with the early parliamentary elections held in 2021. Among those who participated in the polls, 97% reported feeling comfortable while voting at the polling station and affirmed that the voting process was straightforward.¹⁵

Finding 1.4. EMB representatives underscored the project’s vital role in improving electoral accessibility and inclusivity, especially for Persons with Disabilities (PwD).

All EMB representatives emphasized the project’s essential contributions to enhancing electoral accessibility and inclusivity. Noteworthy IFES contributions in this area include the systematic assessment of the accessibility of 1987 polling stations out of a total of 2008, the deployment of tactile ballot guides (TBGs), and the distribution of braille party lists during elections. In addition, with the help of IFES, voter education materials were made available in formats accessible for persons with visual and hearing impairments and intellectual special needs. Additionally, SEPPA’s advocacy initiatives have improved physical access to polling locations for persons with disabilities in key municipalities.

¹⁴ See Final Report of ODIHR Election Observation Mission for 20 June 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in Armenia as well as Report of CoE Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on the elections of the Council of Elders of the City of Yerevan, in Armenia held on 17 September 2023.

¹⁵ IRI Public Opinion Survey, July 2021.



Within the framework of the Agenda for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities NGO, I voluntarily supported IFES in making ballots accessible to blind people. And within the framework of the coalition, I was involved in the discussions of electoral reforms and the electoral code regarding the electoral rights of persons with disabilities.

FGD, Civil Society

As can be seen from the figure below, nearly half of EMB survey respondents noted a significant enhancement in electoral process accessibility for people with disabilities in the last 3-4 years. According to the final report of the ODIHR Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the 2018 Parliamentary Elections, 71% of polling stations out of 975 observed were marked as “inaccessible.” For the 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections, the same figure decreased to 67 percent (out of 1,216 observed).¹⁶

FIGURE 7. COULD YOU PLEASE RATE THE EXTENT OF CHANGE YOU HAVE OBSERVED IN THE ACCESS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN ELECTION PROCESSES OVER THE LAST 3-4 YEARS? (N=207)

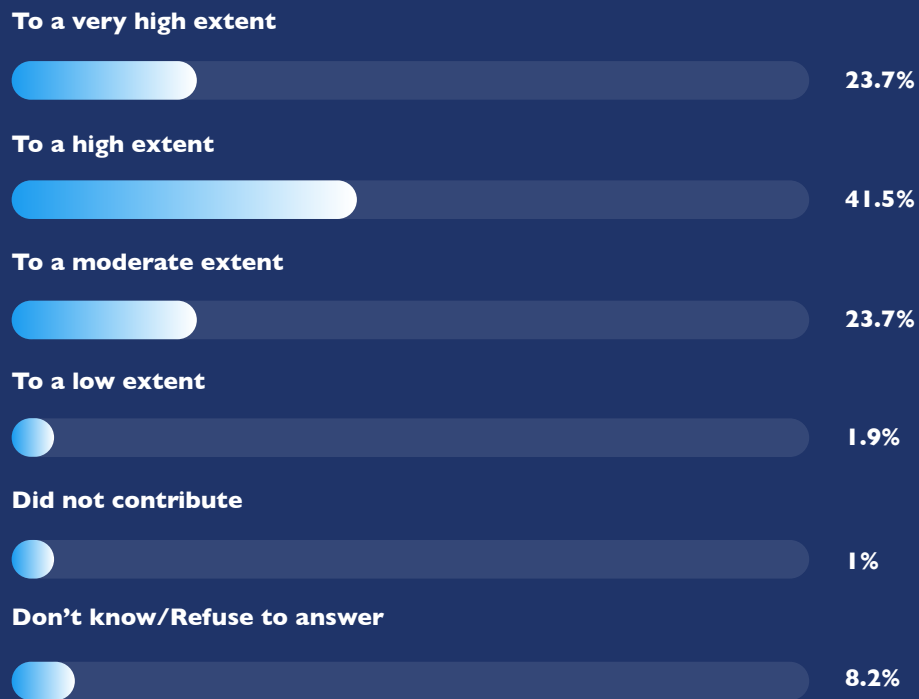


This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B). Participants also had the option to select “no change observed,” however no participants selected that option, which is why it is not shown in this graphic.

¹⁶ See ODIHR EOM Final Report for 2018 Parliamentary Elections in Armenia and ODIHR EOM Final Report for 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections in Armenia.

Furthermore, the figure presented below illustrates that 23.7% of EMB survey respondents noted that SEPPA’s interventions contributed to these improvements to a very high extent, while 41.5% viewed the contribution as high. This suggests that over 65% of the combined responses regard the project’s impact on overall improvement of the access of people with disabilities in election processes as vital.

FIGURE 8. TO WHAT EXTENT DID SEPPA’S INTERVENTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THESE IMPROVEMENTS? (N=207)



This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B).

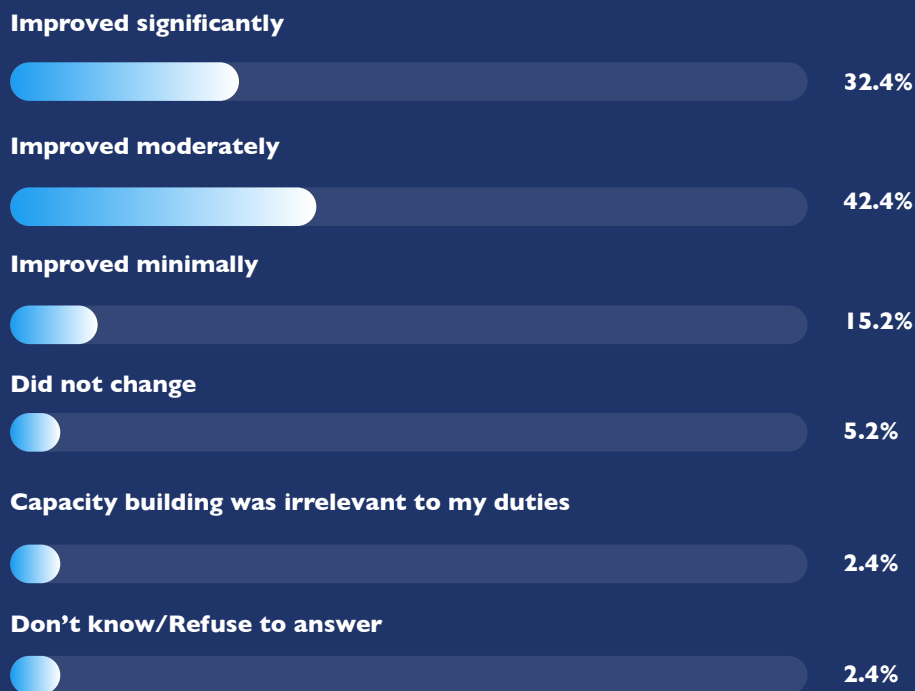
Overall, all EMB interviewees agreed that IFES’s support has been instrumental in strengthening Armenia’s electoral system.



Finding 1.5. Despite initiatives like the “Engaged Citizen” course and public service announcements, SEPPA did not achieve broad-based citizen engagement or deepen public understanding of key electoral reforms and the election process.

Most EMB interviewees recalled key project initiatives, such as the “Engaged Citizen” course and Public Service Announcements (PSAs) targeting general public awareness of voter motivation and participation, particularly among youth and voters with disabilities. However, they also believed that despite these efforts, their joint efforts with SEPPA have not achieved broad-based citizen engagement or in deepening the public’s understanding of key electoral reforms. As shown in the figure below, only one-third of EBM survey respondents observed a significant improvement in citizens’ comprehension of essential electoral reform aspects in the past 3-4 years. In contrast, 42 percent noted moderate improvement, and an additional 15% reported minimal enhancement.

FIGURE 9. DID YOU SEE ANY CHANGE WITH REGARD TO CITIZEN UNDERSTANDING OF KEY ASPECTS OF PRIORITY ELECTORAL REFORMS OVER THE LAST 3-4 YEARS? (N=207)



This graph shows the results from the online survey of Representative of the Central Electoral Commission (Annex B). Participants also had the option to select “not relevant,” however no participants selected that option, which is why it is not shown in this graphic.

This shortfall was also highlighted by the low turnout (28.43 percent) observed in the Yerevan City Council Election, signaling a missed opportunity for widespread civic participation and understanding. Despite the advances in electoral management, policy frameworks, and legislative reforms, these achievements have not fully extended to broadening citizen engagement or deepening the understanding of electoral reforms across the population, especially among marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities, women, and first-time voters.

Despite the joint efforts of EMBs and SEPPA, the challenge of ensuring more active electoral participation among all segments of society persists. Several EMB interviewees noted that this challenge is especially evident among marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities and first-time voters, who face ongoing barriers in accessing elections and fully understanding the complexities of the electoral reform.



Finding 1.6. Political party representatives and MPs have reported that SEPPA’s initiatives bolstered political parties’ operational and organizational capacities. They also enhanced citizen engagement through community outreach and strategically leveraged opinion polls to inform and refine electoral strategies.

Under Objective 3, SEPPA aimed to create a conducive environment for developing a multiparty system and fostering inclusive, responsive political parties in Armenia. In this area, the project has improved political parties’ operational and organizational capacities, as affirmed by feedback from 4-5 political party representatives and MPs. All political party representatives unanimously acknowledged the contribution of NDI’s training programs in enhancing the capacities of their parties. NDI organized 68 distinct training sessions attended in person by 432 party members and a series of online sessions titled the “Art of Campaigning,” which reached approximately 3,000 individuals.

A political party representative noted that NDI had supported them in catalyzing structural changes, including establishing youth and women’s branches, which helped them broaden participation and strengthen internal democracy. Several party representatives (MPs) also noted that SEPPA had supported political parties in aligning their charters with the latest legal requirements. Through various platforms like town halls, grassroots outreach, social media targeting, and the strategic use of opinion polls and focus group data, NDI has enhanced the parties’ responsiveness to the electorate’s needs, fostering more dynamic and informed political dialogue between political parties and citizens. Several party representatives also noted that NDI’s Public Opinion Research¹⁷ had provided them with valuable insights into citizen perspectives, shaping their policy discussions and informing their electoral strategies.

“

When the Law on Political Parties was enacted, and we had to adjust the charter of the party in accordance with the law, NDI helped again, the law became accessible because the new laws are not so understandable if you are not an expert. In that sense, they explained it very clearly and supported us during the adjustment.

KII, Political Party Representative

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I can state that from the point of view of the party, the conducted polls were extremely interesting. They were very important to us. We receive them, later we work on them, we highlight the points that are relevant to us, and they play a role in further policy development.

KII, Political Party Representative

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¹⁷ NDI has carried out 15 qualitative public opinion studies using focus group discussions and 4 quantitative research projects through polls and surveys.



Survey affects the rhetoric of heads of the party – we combine it with our own surveys, and the findings have an impact on, if not on our strategy, at least on tactics. How we talk about issues.

KII, Political Party Representative



Finding 1.7. SEPPA’s attempts to foster cross-party dialogue and cooperation have met limited success due to deep-rooted political divisions.

IFES organized forums intended to foster dialogue on electoral reforms. However, participation was often limited to parties aligned with the government, with opposition parties either boycotting or minimally engaging in the discussions. Workshops aimed at developing consensus on specific policy issues (e.g., forums for policy discussion, workshops for legislative drafting) had limited participation from opposition parties or were marked by skepticism regarding the motives behind these efforts. Furthermore, opposition MPs interviewed for this evaluation were unaware of some key policy initiatives pursued under the SEPPA project, indicating a lack of close engagement with these activities.

“

I think that if there were problems, they were mostly related to political actors. A solution could be that from the development of the program to the selection of the schedule, they should take into account that there is currently unprecedented polarization and instability in the political field of Armenia. In other words, being as flexible as possible and sensitive to this polarization and instability as much as possible can help.

KII, Political Party Representative

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Katarine 2022 cohort holding sessions amidst covid

The primary cause for the challenges encountered in this area is the profound political polarization in the country. These political divisions manifest in the form of boycotting parliamentary sessions, public disagreements on policy reforms, and a general reluctance to engage in dialogue with perceived political adversaries. Despite SEPPA's efforts to facilitate cross-party

interactions through women MPs or using neutral venues, these divisions ultimately hampered the development of a collaborative atmosphere necessary for constructive policy discourse and joint problem-solving among different political parties. The magnitude of this challenge has exceeded the scope and resources of SEPPA, necessitating the exploration of more radical strategies beyond SEPPA's means that can foster a more cooperative political landscape.



KATARINE 2022 Women's Political Leadership program

Finding 1.8. Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff reported that SEPPA has enhanced the operational efficiency of Armenia’s MPs and parliamentary staff through comprehensive training programs, the development of improved public engagement strategies, and the facilitation of increased youth participation in parliamentary processes.

SEPPA aimed to strengthen the capacities of Members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary staff to carry out functions and engage constituents. In this area, the project has supported Armenia’s National Assembly with MPs and parliamentary staff training, constituent outreach, and youth engagement with parliamentary affairs. All MPs interviewed for this evaluation noted that SEPPA’s tailored training has enhanced the ability of MPs and parliamentary staff to fulfill their legislative duties more effectively. By organizing 77 training sessions¹⁸ for MPs and parliamentary staff focused on critical skills such as social media communication, data visualization, legislative drafting, public speaking, and speechwriting, NDI has contributed to the overall efficiency of parliamentary operations. Targeted workshops have complemented these capacity-building efforts to produce effective press releases and enhance the clarity and reach of parliamentary communications. Based on project assessment, a remarkable 90% of parliamentary staff reported that the skills acquired were directly applicable to their roles. Also, adopting a social media management strategy and key legislative amendments by the National Assembly, as a result of IRI-supported consultative processes, demonstrated the project’s contribution to fostering legislative responsiveness and improving parliamentary practices.



After completing the communication school, we realized that many changes should be made to the website, starting with the way to write a press release (for a very long time, it was written very formally in the National Assembly). We tried to break the stereotypes a bit. We also developed our social media strategy and ethics through IRI.

KII, NA staff



MPs also highlighted the important role of IRI and NDI in supporting engagement initiatives in the regions, such as listening tours, town halls, and committee sessions. NDI, for example, supported 61 community engagement events for MPs and representatives of political parties. These community consultations have emerged as a new fixture of the Armenian political landscape, directly linking parliamentarians with the needs and concerns of local communities. This has effectively bridged the gap between national legislators and their constituents, thereby bolstering the democratic process.

¹⁸This does not include the consultations and individual assistance provided to MPs, particularly regarding citizen outreach activities.

MPs underscored the notable success of SEPPA in increasing youth involvement in parliamentary affairs. For example, 97 young professionals have participated in NDI's parliamentary internship/fellowship program, with 21 of them continuing their careers in the public sector. These programs, specifically designed to introduce young people to the legislative process and parliamentary functions, have not only provided valuable educational experiences but have also fostered a sense of civic engagement among the youth. All relevant KII respondents noted that, as a spillover effect, the introduction of a new cadre of qualified and educated interns and fellows has also contributed to the NA's and MPs' abilities to perform their functions better.

“

With NDI, we had interns who conducted their paid internships at the National Assembly at NDI's expense. In the last 2-3 years, there have been about 15 students in our department, they have integrated very well; they have helped the work of the department; and we learned a lot from them.

KII, NA staff

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Finding 1.9. Political party representatives highlighted the Katarine program’s effectiveness in empowering women and increasing their engagement in political and community affairs.

Under Objective 5, SEPPA aimed to promote and foster women’s political participation, influence, and leadership. The Katarine Program, including the Women Political Leaders School and Community Bridgers, has been instrumental in this endeavor by fostering self-confidence and leadership skills among participating women and empowering them to navigate the political landscape and ascend to leadership positions.

Three female MPs interviewed for this evaluation noted the Katarine Program’s success in training over 133 women in political leadership and community engagement, leading to tangible achievements in women’s political participation and leadership. They noted that the Katarine Program, including the Women Political Leaders School and Community Bridgers, has been instrumental in increasing self-confidence and leadership skills among women participants. The trainings provided women with the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate the political landscape and assume leadership positions. A notable feature of the Katarine Program was the regional inclusion of women— 40% of its participants were from Yerevan, and 60% were from the regions. The MPs highlighted the project’s impact during the televised candidate debates and strategic campaign planning, where Katarine candidates demonstrated substantial involvement. Several interviewees also noted that women MPs led the changes in legislation that marked notable progress towards gender inclusivity.



NDI has many programs for women. The Katarine School has produced serious and professional graduates. I myself participated as a speaker, which was very interesting and important. Women are more involved in politics now; the situation is changing in marzes as well.

KII, Political Party Representative



Interviewees also noted that NDI has contributed to greater visibility of women in political and community spheres, as well as greater female leadership at the local level. Graduates of the Katarine program demonstrated considerable achievements, including increased representation in local councils and involvement in political campaigns. This culminated in the election of three out of seven Katarine candidates to the Yerevan City Council, with two achieving deputy president positions in standing committees. Furthermore, seven Katarine alumni ran in local elections, with five securing elected positions. These achievements demonstrate SEPPA’s substantial contribution to enhancing women’s participation in local governance.



The Katarine project was of great importance to me. I made the decision to participate in the electoral process after Katarine. Then, when I took part in local government elections, I was the first woman on the electoral list. I was elected to be a member of the community council. Now, I work as the Chief of Staff for the Municipality of Tatev.

FGD, Katarine Graduate



Finding 1.10. Despite notable successes in empowering women within targeted groups, SEPPA has encountered challenges in achieving broader systemic change toward gender equality in politics.

Despite the successes noted in the previous section, the broader impact of SEPPA initiatives on gender parity within political institutions has remained limited. The project encountered specific challenges in extending women’s influence and leadership roles beyond direct participants. While project participants, such as graduates of leadership programs, have shown increased activity and visibility, this has not translated into greater representation or leadership roles for women in political parties, parliament, or executive bodies.

For example, data from the most recent Yerevan council elections confirm the low representation of women as office runners. Among the 14 political parties/coalitions that participated, only two were headed by women. Furthermore, of these 14 parties, only two featured an equal number of male and female members.¹⁹ Furthermore, according to IRI’s 2020 survey, only 7 percent of women, compared to 14 percent of men, expressed an interest in running for political office, while an equal percentage of men and women (15 percent each) reported their interest in joining a political party.²⁰

Institutional barriers within political parties and government structures continue to limit women’s leadership roles. Many evaluation interviewees pointed out that there is a persistent lack of genuine institutional support for gender parity, including resistance to adopting policies that would facilitate greater representation of women in leadership positions. Political parties do not seem very interested in ensuring the public visibility of women in their electoral lists, referring to the potential lack of political readiness, awareness, and media interaction skills among women candidates.²¹

¹⁹ WomenNet. Elections of the Yerevan City Council: Female Candidates on Party Lists, September 14, 2023.

²⁰ International Republican Institute. Public Opinion Survey on Women’s Issues: Residents of Armenia, September 2020.

²¹ National Democratic Institute, Oxygen. Coverage of Electoral Processes from a Perspective of Gender Equality, 2022.

Furthermore, according to the “Analysis of Armenia Political Party Platforms” 2022 report, political parties’ agendas and platforms lack gender sensitivity. These platforms lack a dedicated section for the advancement of women or any affiliation with gender equality issues. The majority of parties tend to refer to the topic of gender equality as “women’s issues.”

Women MPs interviewed for this evaluation noted that deeply rooted cultural and societal norms continue to pose considerable obstacles to women’s political participation. These norms often dictate perceptions of women’s roles within society, limiting their opportunities for leadership in the political sphere. The project’s inability to effectuate broader systemic changes and cultural shifts necessary for facilitating greater gender parity points to the need for strategies that address these underlying issues more directly and comprehensively.

Finding 1.11. The most effective SEPPA interventions include supporting electoral reforms and operations, facilitating political debates and polling-informed policy-making, enhancing government communications, promoting women’s political leadership and participation of persons with disabilities, and providing capacity-building opportunities through internships and fellowships.

Following up on the analysis of the previous findings, the evaluation found the following to have been the most effective interventions in achieving SEPPA’s intended outcomes:

- **Electoral Reform Process:** IFES’s support for the electoral reform process, especially the amendment of the Electoral Code, has contributed to the modernization and strengthening of Armenia’s electoral system, ensuring elections are more transparent, fair, and in alignment with international standards.
- **Practical Support for the Conduct of Elections:** By providing logistical and operational support for elections, SEPPA has enhanced the efficiency and credibility of the electoral process, ensuring smoother election-day operations and greater public confidence in electoral outcomes.
- **Political Debates on National TV:** NDI’s support for political debates²² on national television has played an essential role in allowing for issue-based discussions and informing the electorate, enabling voters to assess candidates and their platforms critically.
- **Public Opinion Polling:** SEPPA’s polls, comprising both general and thematic surveys, have emerged as one of the project’s flagship products, providing government representatives, MPs, political parties, and researchers with valuable data and insights into citizen perspectives, shaping policy discussions, and informing electoral strategies. Its widespread use by officials and media demonstrates its influence on policy formulation and public discourse.

²² Since 2018, NDI has supported Public TV Armenia to conduct 10 live televised election debates.

- **Community Outreach by MPs:** SEPPA’s support for MPs’ community outreach has helped bridge the gap between elected officials and their constituents. SEPPA has enabled MPs to tailor their communication with constituents by leveraging public opinion and research. Such data-driven community outreach has improved dialogue, enhanced accountability, and ensured that legislative actions are more responsive to community needs and priorities.
- **Legislative Consultations:** SEPPA’s support for legislative consultations has contributed to more inclusive and participatory policy-making processes, integrating diverse perspectives and expertise into formulating laws and policies. This is evident in the case of the Labor Code and Volunteering Law, which were amended through a participatory and evidence-based process.
- **Spokespersons’ School, Strengthening Political Accountability through Reform Communication (SPARK), and Ministries’ Communications Strategies:** Training programs such as the Spokespersons’ School and SPARK, along with the development of comprehensive communications strategies for ministries, have notably improved the executive government’s ability to communicate effectively with the public, enhancing transparency and public engagement.
- **Katarine (Women Political Leaders School and Community Bridgers) Program:** This is another flagship initiative that has played an important role in promoting women’s political engagement and leadership, contributing to increased female representation in local councils and legislative bodies.
- **Internship and Fellowship Programs:** The programs have offered young professionals practical experience in parliamentary and policy-making processes, preparing a new generation of civic leaders and enhancing the experience of parliamentary democracy.
- **Facilitation of Participation of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) in the Electoral Process:** IFES has supported the participation of PwDs in the electoral process through accessibility campaigns, informational materials, and adaptive technologies. Innovative tools like the “My Right to Choose” app and tactile ballot guides have been particularly effective in improving inclusivity and accessibility. By facilitating a more inclusive voting environment, IFES has helped PwDs exercise their democratic rights and participate more effectively in the electoral process.



PEC members





It is important for us to have a clear understanding of public opinion and the needs of the people. Surveys help us understand the demands of the people on specific issues: the peace agenda, peace process with Azerbaijan, and opening the borders with Turkey, who are allies of Armenia.

KII Respondent, MP, NA



Finding 1.12. SEPPA’s least effective interventions were those aimed at electoral dispute resolution, political finance transparency and oversight, and establishing a Women’s Caucus in the National Assembly.

The evaluation found the following interventions to have been the least effective in achieving SEPPA’s intended outcomes:

- **Electoral Dispute Resolution:** IFES’s efforts to enhance the effectiveness of electoral dispute resolution mechanisms have faced notable resistance from key stakeholders. Despite attempts by IFES to streamline processes and improve transparency, feedback from stakeholders indicates that these interventions have not substantially increased trust in the electoral system’s ability to adjudicate disputes fairly. This shortfall suggests a need for alternative reform strategies that are better able to achieve consensus among relevant stakeholders.
- **Political Finance:** IFES’s interventions to improve the transparency and regulation of political finance had limited success due to insufficient interest by the key entity in this area – the Corruption Prevention Commission (CPC). Incomplete legal frameworks and the absence of a comprehensive reform agenda further compound this challenge. Stakeholders pointed out persistent issues with compliance and monitoring, highlighting a gap between the regulatory framework and its practical application. Despite increased local stakeholder engagement and facilitation of multi-stakeholder discussions by IFES, efforts to streamline the oversight architecture in line with best practices met resistance from political actors. Recommendations by the Venice Commission to reconsider the proposed split oversight architecture highlight the need for a coherent approach to political finance oversight. The lack of substantial progress in this area underscores the need for alternative strategies, including enhancing oversight capabilities and public awareness of the issue.

- Establishment of Women's Caucus in the National Assembly: NDI's efforts to establish a Women's Caucus within the National Assembly aimed at promoting gender inclusivity and advocacy for women's issues have not met expectations. Challenges in mobilizing support across party lines and institutional barriers have hindered the establishment of the caucus. This situation reflects broader issues related to gender representation in politics and the need for strategic approaches to overcome political divisions and institutional barriers.



TEC Training - checking candidate list

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IFES dedicated considerable effort to address political financing and strengthen the Corruption Prevention Commission. However, it appears that these endeavors did not yield the desired outcomes. This aspect could have been better planned from the start, which would have facilitated the establishment of a more refined staff and methodology for control.

KII, CEC Representative

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4.1.2 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1.1.

SEPPA has demonstrated effectiveness in strengthening key aspects of Armenia's democratic processes, including government communications, electoral operations, public debates, and opinion polling. However, its impact has been uneven across interventions, indicating varying levels of success in achieving intended outcomes.

Conclusion 1.2.

While SEPPA succeeded in improving the executive's public communication, policy drafting, and use of opinion polls, its fragmented approach limited its ability to drive systemic policy-making reforms across government agencies.

Conclusion 1.3.

Conclusion 1.3. Despite improvements in the electoral process and increasing citizen awareness, SEPPA has not fully bridged the gap between systemic enhancements and broad-based public understanding and engagement in the democratic process.

Conclusion 1.4.

The effectiveness of interventions related to electoral dispute resolution and political finance varied, underscoring their complexity and political sensitivity. Addressing such challenges requires a more nuanced approach that navigates the political landscape and builds consensus among stakeholders.

4.1.2 EVALUATION QUESTION 2

What were key enabling and hindering factors that have affected the achievement of outcomes?

4.2.1 FINDINGS

Finding 2.1. High-level political commitment was essential for advancing SEPPA's objectives.

The commitment from the country's high-level political figures, noted by all IPs, two Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and one media representative, has been instrumental in advancing SEPPA's objectives. This political will has ensured the necessary support and legitimacy for the project's activities, enabling smoother implementation and a more considerable impact.



Training on coordination of Government's communication in emergency situations

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This was a revolutionary government, and we thought this was our chance, and we tried to push for the reform.

KII, Civil Society

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Finding 2.2. Stakeholder receptivity facilitated a conducive implementation environment.

Some respondents noted that stakeholders' receptivity and openness to the project's objectives facilitated a conducive environment for its implementation. The stakeholders' positive disposition has been crucial in aligning efforts and ensuring collaborative progress towards shared goals.



And in a narrow sense, when we just entered the National Assembly, this cooperation was thanks to the leaders of the political team, and when we also understood that there is a lot to learn and cooperation can be effective, so we continued cooperating with them on our own. In other words, the political team encouraged us to cooperate. The team has decided that this cooperation can be effective both for our work and for the country.”

KII, MP



Finding 2.3. Implementing Partners' visibility and trustworthiness were key.

The absolute majority of evaluation interviewees highlighted the visibility of IPs and partners' trust in them as a key factor in SEPPA's success. Trust in IPs has facilitated the stakeholders' cooperation and participation across various project components.



I attach great importance to the mutual understanding, the atmosphere of trust, which is formed as a result of personal contacts, meetings, and contacts with party representatives or leading bodies or factions and NDI officials. After that, it is obvious that cooperation in all directions becomes much easier and is achieved much faster.

KII, Political Party Representative



Finding 2.4. Impartial and unbiased support enhanced project credibility.

Some respondents noted that stakeholders' receptivity and openness to the project's objectives facilitated a As pointed out by some respondents, the project's commitment to unbiased and impartial support has reinforced its credibility and legitimacy among stakeholders. This impartiality has been essential in maintaining a neutral stance and fostering an environment of trust and collaboration among diverse political actors. aligning efforts and ensuring collaborative progress towards shared goals.

Finding 2.5. USAID and project team flexibility responded to evolving challenges.

The majority of interviewees emphasized the importance of the flexibility and adaptability demonstrated by USAID and the project teams. This flexibility has allowed SEPPA to respond dynamically to evolving challenges and opportunities, ensuring that interventions remain relevant and effective in Armenia's rapidly changing context.



Thank you to the staff of NDI and IRI. They are inclusive; we never face problems with their political engagement; and are very flexible and accommodating to our schedules.

KII Respondent, MP, NA



During the process, there was flexibility on the part of the project implementation team according to the situation and the outcome of discussions. Flexibility has made it possible to resolve the problems that have arisen in the process.

KII, CEC Representative



Finding 2.6. A clear division of labor among IPs was reported as a key element of operational effectiveness.

All three teams reported that a generally clear division of labor was instrumental in enhancing SEPPA's operations, preventing competition and confusion, and optimizing resource allocation based on each partner's strengths and expertise.

Finding 2.7. War and a volatile political environment posed major challenges.

Most interviewees identified the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, the volatile political environment, and geopolitical tensions as the most essential factors that have posed major challenges to SEPPA's implementation. The war and the ensuing humanitarian crisis drastically shifted political priorities and diverted the attention of political actors and society. Executing a project dedicated to political processes is inherently challenging in the context of ongoing war in any country, not only Armenia. Furthermore, political instability undermined SEPPA's efforts by injecting a layer of uncertainty, which distracted key project partners from staying focused on project goals. Both factors have affected stakeholder engagement and the feasibility of planned interventions.



The main hindering factor was the security situation in the Republic of Armenia (RA) and Artsakh, which led to the interruption or postponement of some projects.

KII, Executive Government Representative



Finding 2.8. Political polarization and the opposition's boycott hindered bipartisanship

Several KII respondents highlighted political polarization and the opposition's boycott of the National Assembly as notable obstacles. The polarization limited the scope for bipartisan collaboration and dialogue, essential components of effective governance and policy-making. The boycott created a gap in political representation and dialogue, which hindered the project's ability to foster cross-party collaboration.

Finding 2.9. Entrenched power structures and bureaucratic resistance impeded SEPPA's reform initiatives.

Two KII respondents reported that resistance from entrenched power structures and bureaucratic inertia has been a key barrier to SEPPA's pursuit of reforms and new approaches. This resistance slowed down and, in some cases (e.g., electoral dispute mechanism, political finance), even blocked the adoption of necessary changes, limiting the project's results in these areas.



Perhaps at times, it was challenging to reconcile the expectations of IFES with the conservative and inertial nature of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and other state institutions. However, overall, collaboration with IFES proceeded smoothly without significant hindrances or problems.

KII, CEC Representative



Finding 2.10. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated engagement challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic, with its restrictions on gatherings and public events, further challenged citizen engagement and the implementation of SEPPA's objectives. The health crisis also shifted public and governmental priorities towards immediate health concerns and economic recovery, further diverting attention and resources away from political reforms and civic participation.

Finding 2.11. Deeply ingrained perceptions and norms undermined engagement.

Two KII respondents and discussions with IPs brought up the challenge of pervasive negative perceptions towards politics among the general public, fueled by disillusionment with political processes and skepticism towards political actors, which undermined efforts to enhance citizen engagement and promote women's political activism. According to IRI's 2023 opinion survey, only 47 percent of males and 40 percent of females are somewhat or very interested in politics.²³ Within the younger demographic, individuals expressing no interest in politics at all are predominantly women aged 18-29 with pre-university education living in Yerevan.²⁴ They also noted deeply ingrained societal norms, particularly those related to inclusivity and gender equality, as key factors that negatively affected SEPPA's objectives related to citizen engagement and women's activism. KII respondents noted that low political participation and representation is specifically evident among women from ethnic minorities, indicating that cultural norms and traditions within these communities impede women's engagement.²⁵ Overcoming these cultural barriers requires longer-term strategies that extend beyond the timeline of this project.

²³ International Republican Institute. Public Opinion Survey: Residents of Armenia, January-March 2023.

²⁴ Vermishyan H., Balasanyan S., Darbinyan T. Youth Study Armenia: (In)dependence Generation, 2023.

²⁵ There are clearly several factors at play here. The 2020 study "Women's Political Participation in the Republic of Armenia" conducted by the National Democratic Institute suggested that low representation of women in political processes is caused by intense competition for access to power and resources, limited availability of resources necessary for nomination (such as financial means and social connections), cultural norms and stereotypes, the shortage of institutional mechanisms and programs specifically for women's advancement, lack of political experience among women, and their low self-esteem.

Finding 2.12. The high turnover rate in national institutions affected continuity.

The high turnover rate within national institutions, noted by two KII respondents, has hindered the development of sustained relationships and continuity of project initiatives. The turnover disrupted the flow of activities and required additional capacity-building efforts for new staff. It also complicated the process of building institutional memory and capacity, which are critical for the long-term success of capacity development efforts.



More internally, I can just add the high turnover in the executive branch of government, which is a hindering factor for the institutional continuation of the projects and reforms.

KII, Executive Government Representative



Finding 2.13. Currency exchange rate fluctuations impacted the project’s resource allocation.

Select KII respondents (as well as the IPs in their reporting) reported that currency exchange rate fluctuations impacted the project’s financial management. These fluctuations complicated budgeting, planning, and the overall allocation of resources, limiting the speed and scale of some interventions to some extent.

4.2.2 CONCLUSIONS

Findings 2.1 to 2.6 presented above collectively support conclusion 2.1, while findings 2.7 to 2.13 reinforce conclusion 2.2, demonstrating a range of critical challenges impeding the project’s progress and effectiveness.

Conclusion 2.1.

High-level political support, stakeholder receptivity, trust in partners, impartiality, flexibility, and clear roles were identified as key enabling factors that have affected the achievement of outcomes. These elements not only facilitated effective collaboration and consensus-building among diverse political entities but also ensured the legitimacy and credibility of the project’s efforts.

Recognizing and sustaining these factors will be essential for the continued success and scalability of efforts to strengthen electoral processes and political accountability.

Conclusion 2.2.

The key factors that hindered SEPPA’s success were identified as the Nagorno-Karabakh war, political instability, institutional turnover, polarization, resistance, the COVID-19 pandemic, entrenched norms, and currency fluctuations.

The hindering factors illustrate SEPPA’s complex and multifaceted challenges in achieving its intended outcomes.



4.3 EVALUATION QUESTION 3

To what extent was SEPPA able to steer its strategic approach in response to key developments during the implementation period?

4.3.1 FINDINGS

In evaluating SEPPA's capacity to adjust its strategic approach in light of developments during its implementation period, the following evidence-based findings, as reported by distinct groups of stakeholders, underscore its adaptability.

Finding 3.1. SEPPA showcased financial adaptability through effective fund reallocation.

SEPPA effectively reallocated funds through ongoing dialogues with USAID, as noted by 4-5 interviewees. This flexibility in financial management allowed SEPPA to respond to emerging needs and priorities, ensuring that resources were directed towards areas with the most substantial potential impact.



NDI's research topics and frequency has changed according to the situation. If it was stipulated that the research should be done once a year, but there was a tense situation in the country, more research was done so that we could understand the situation and adapt to it.

KII, MP



Finding 3.2. SEPPA adjusted training and capacity-building to align with partners' needs.

The majority of KII respondents highlighted SEPPA's ability to adjust its training and capacity-building activities to better align with the partners' needs and schedules. This responsiveness ensured that interventions remained relevant and effective.



Or there was no need for intensive campaign training, we changed to communication training or social media training and adapted to what is needed in the country and what those representatives of the political party need. In other words, there is flexibility in this aspect as well, and that is good.

KII, Political Party Representative



Finding 3.3. SEPPA employed creative strategies to enhance cross-party collaboration.

SEPPA employed creative strategies to foster cross-party collaboration, as two women MPs and the IP teams noted. For example, the strategic use of women MPs as intermediaries in facilitating inter-party collaboration was a creative solution to the atmosphere of distrust among different political factions. Such approaches enabled SEPPA to bridge political divides and promote a degree of constructive dialogue among political actors.

Finding 3.4. SEPPA utilized neutral venues to foster inclusive participation and dialogue.

Hosting events in neutral venues, as reported by the IPs and an MP, was another strategic approach used by SEPPA to facilitate inclusive participation and dialogue. This tactic minimized potential biases and barriers to engagement, creating a more open and accessible environment for stakeholders. In addressing the question of SEPPA's ability to steer its strategic approach in response to key developments during the implementation period, it's important to note the areas of high adaptability and aspects where adaptability was less pronounced, as reported by specific stakeholder groups.

Finding 3.5. Implementing Partners' mandate shared a notable overlap.

Two KII respondents noted a degree of overlap in IPs' mandates within the National Assembly component. This overlap indicates a potential area for improvement in ensuring a more streamlined and efficient division of labor among IPs.

Finding 3.6. There are enhancement opportunities in IP harmonization and synergy.

Three KII respondents indicated an opportunity for greater IP harmonization and synergy of activities. They noted that activities such as opinion polls and internships/fellowship programs, both conducted separately by different IPs, presented opportunities for collaboration and further integration. Addressing this issue could further enhance the coherence and collective impact of SEPPA's interventions.

4.3.2 CONCLUSIONS

Findings 3.1 to 3.4 led to conclusion 3.1, illustrating SEPPA’s adaptability and strategic flexibility in response to evolving challenges and opportunities during its implementation period, while findings 3.5 and 3.6 support and reinforce Conclusion 3.2, highlighting areas of less adaptability in SEPPA.

Conclusion 3.1.

SEPPA has exhibited a high degree of flexibility in adjusting its strategic approach, including the scope and schedule of activities and the strategic reallocation of funds in dialogue with USAID. SEPPA’s adaptability was crucial in maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of the project’s interventions. It also allowed SEPPA to optimize its resource allocation and intervention strategies in line with changing priorities and needs. These achievements reflect SEPPA’s capacity to respond proactively to emerging challenges and opportunities, reinforcing its role as a catalyst for improvements.

Conclusion 3.2.

While the project benefited from good coordination among implementing partners, there remains potential for greater harmonization and collective action. Specific areas needing improvement include the overlap in Implementing Partners’ mandates and opportunities for enhanced synergies among activities. By addressing these challenges and fostering deeper integration, operational efficiency and the overall outcome of the efforts can be considerably bolstered, highlighting the importance of strategic adjustments to optimize collaboration and maximize the effectiveness of interventions.

Mock Hearing on the Law on Medical Assistance 2022



National Assembly Committee Staff Exchange Official Congressional Delegations (CODELs) Visit 2022



4.4 EVALUATION QUESTION 4

Which elements of the intervention approaches and results achieved by SEPPA are most likely to be taken further and sustained beyond the close of the projects? Why?

4.4.1 FINDINGS

The evaluation found several elements of intervention approaches and results of the SEPPA project that are most likely to be sustained beyond the close of the project.

Finding 4.1. Amendments to the Election Code and other laws are poised for long-term sustainability.

With a legal obligation to implement, amendments to the Election Code and the other laws or draft laws are highly likely to be sustained. These legal frameworks provide a strong foundation for continued enforcement, ensuring the long-term impact of these reforms.



It is important to emphasize their initiative to amend the Electoral Code. It was a very important initiative. We have invited all the parties, the representatives of the National Assembly, the Ministry of Justice, civil society, and all the state bodies that are involved in one way or another— including the police, the Central Bank.

KII, CEC Representative



Finding 4.2. The CEC's Strategic Plan embodies a commitment to continuation.

All respondents noted that the adoption of the CEC's strategic plan implies a commitment to sustained implementation. This plan is crucial for guiding the commission's activities and priorities, making it essential for sustained effort and focus by CEC's leadership.

Finding 4.3. The adopted communication strategies suggest institutional continuity.

All government and National Assembly respondents noted that the adoption of communication strategies created obligations for the respective institutions to implement them. These strategies are essential for maintaining these institutions' transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

Finding 4.4. The Government Spokespersons' School indicates sustainable communication enhancement.

One respondent noted that establishing the Government Spokespersons' School, in partnership with the Information and PR Center under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Yerevan State University, represents a crucial effort to enhance government communication capacities. This structured approach to train government spokespersons, grounded in existing structures, is likely to ensure the sustainability of improved public sector communications.



As a follow-up to the memorandum of cooperation between YSU, IRI, and the Institute of Public Relations and Information signed last year, a corresponding program has already been implemented at Yerevan State University. This program aims to qualify communication specialists as professionals, which, in my opinion, is a crucial step in institutionalizing the school.

KII, Executive Government Representative



Finding 4.5. Voter education and EMB training programs are institutionalized for ongoing delivery.

All EMB respondents noted that the CEC's voter education and training programs are critical for ensuring informed electoral participation and effective election administration. Institutionalizing these programs within the CEC is a self-sustaining mechanism that ensures their continued delivery and potential expansion. Also, the fact that the CEC Commissioners directly led the training for TECs and poll workers for the first time demonstrated the improved capacity of the CEC resulting from IFES interventions.

Finding 4.6. Public Debates on National TV are established for sustained open political discourse.

Select media representatives noted that the institutionalization of public debates on national television has been a notable step towards establishing a culture of more open political discourse. These debates are very likely to be sustained not only because of their public appeal but also because the Electoral Code now contains a clause that obligates the Public Television Company to organize electoral debates²⁶.

Finding 4.7. Internal Party Structures (such as Outreach, Youth Wings, and Women’s Wings) demonstrate potential for lasting development.

Political party representatives noted the development of internal party structures, such as outreach, youth wings, and women’s wings, as an example of sustainability. These structures will likely be maintained and further developed due to their inherent value in party operations and image. At the same time, the evaluation also identified sustainability aspects of the project that require further attention.

Finding 4.8. Transitioning opinion polls and research to National Institutions requires careful planning.

The continuation of opinion polls and research, particularly the widely recognized IRI public opinion poll, is crucial for the political landscape in Armenia. These polls have emerged as a key resource, yet their continuity under implementing partners (IPs) cannot be indefinite. Transitioning these functions to a national institution is necessary, but that should be done in a way that ensures their quality, integrity, and independence. All evaluation interviewees agreed that such a transfer would compromise the impartiality of the polls.

However, this should not deter IPs from planning for a future handover when the conditions are right. All relevant KII respondents noted that developing a sustainability or exit strategy for the polling function, including potential scenarios and conditions for their transfer to an impartial national entity, is necessary at this point.

Finding 4.9. Uncertainty surrounds the longevity of Civic Education Initiatives.

Fourteen universities have already delivered SEPPA’s civic education initiatives. Nevertheless, eight KII respondents expressed concerns regarding the sustainability of these programs. Despite their successful execution, there remains uncertainty about the universities’ commitment to ongoing delivery. To enhance the likelihood of continued implementation, the project must engage in further discussions with these institutions, advocating for the incorporation of civic education into their curricula.

²⁶ Armenia’s Electoral Code: Article 20 (on mass media).

Finding 4.10. Further institutionalization is required for training programs.

SEPPA has delivered a range of training programs across various sectors and institutions. Most KII respondents noted that there are opportunities to institutionalize these training programs further. The goal of such institutionalization should be to secure the sustainability of these trainings beyond the project's lifespan. This necessitates transferring training responsibilities to local entities equipped for their delivery (as in the case of CEC's takeover of the training function from SEPPA). This highlights the importance of Training of Trainers. The SEPPA project could have had a greater focus on the training of trainers as a way of building national training capacities that are permanent.

Finding 4.11. Strategies for the permanence of Internship, Fellowship, and Katarine (Leadership and Bridger) Programs are essential.

All FGD participants from the Katarine program emphasized the importance of ensuring the sustainability of this program. This will require an eventual transfer of this program to a competent and independent national entity. Similarly, focus group participants from the internship and fellowship programs highlighted the necessity of embedding these initiatives within the National Assembly and executive government structures to ensure they become enduring components of Armenia's institutional framework. Achieving this permanence involves forging collaborations between local educational institutions, government bodies, the National Assembly, and political factions within the National Assembly, a process in which SEPPA can play a facilitating role. Moreover, establishing a formal alumni network is crucial for strengthening these programs. An effective exit strategy by SEPPA is essential for the long-term institutionalization of the Katarine program and internship/fellowship programs.



This [the Katarine Program] is an example of how parliament and NDI can cooperate. Not all young people have opportunities to use their skills. NDI is a bridge. We need this type of project.

FGD Participants, Intern



Finding 4.12. Political entities need formalized structures in public outreach.

Between five and six KII respondents highlighted the importance of formalizing public outreach activities conducted by political parties and MPs. This requires developing engagement guidelines and frameworks within party structures and parliamentary procedures.

4.4.2 CONCLUSIONS

Findings 4.1 to 4.7 support and substantiate Conclusion 4.1, while findings 4.8 to 4.12 reinforce Conclusion 4.2.

Conclusion 4.1.

SEPPA has institutionalized key initiatives such as amendments to the Electoral Code, communication plans, training programs, and enhancements to internal party structures. These elements have a strong foundation for sustainability due to their embedded nature within institutions and the legal or procedural obligations for their continued implementation. Prioritizing the sustainability of project outcomes through integrating best practices, capacity building, and strategic planning is crucial for ensuring the long-term impact and continuity of reforms.

Conclusion 4.2.

The sustainability of some initiatives, such as opinion polls and research, various training programs, internship and fellowship programs, and regular public outreach by political parties and MPs, requires further attention. These areas require a thoughtful transition to local ownership without compromising their integrity and quality. The evaluation underscores the critical role of strategic exit planning and local capacity building in ensuring an orderly and effective transfer of these initiatives to local stakeholders.



4.5 EVALUATION QUESTION 5

To what extent did the project design and implementation prioritize/ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women; tackle outreach challenges sensitively; and actively address systemic barriers to ensure equitable participation in electoral processes?

4.5.1 FINDINGS

The findings presented below illustrate the multifaceted approach the project took to ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women within the electoral process.

Finding 5.1 SEPPA introduced measures to improve election accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

The project has improved the accessibility of PwDs in elections as voters, as reported by most KII respondents. Although two CSOs noted no considerable progress, the overall response indicated a positive contribution towards inclusivity. Improvements included accessible polling stations, tactile ballots, and specialized training materials for Precinct Election Commissions (PECs). Also, the engagement of PwD-focused organizations in the electoral reform, as mentioned by five CSOs and one CEC respondent, ensured that the reform considered the unique needs and perspectives of PwDs. Most interviewees concurred that SEPPA has generally ensured that PwDs can exercise their voting rights with greater ease and dignity.



Provisions on inclusiveness changed. We needed new tools, and IFES helped us to develop new tools for the electoral process.

KII Respondent, EMB



Finding 5.2 The project supported skill development and increased political participation among women.

The five women MPs interviewed for this evaluation emphasized SEPPA's key role in improving their skills. They made the case for more dedicated support to women MPs, building on the foundations established thus far.

Also, some participants in the focus group discussion with Katarine program graduates noted the project's role in increasing the number of women candidates in local elections, particularly among Katarine program graduates. Overall, the Katarine program is a considerable achievement in promoting women's political participation. Improving skills, particularly in leadership and public speaking, has enabled program graduates to advocate more effectively for gender-sensitive policies. Furthermore, the involvement of women in leading legislative changes for gender diversity in media governance and their active participation in televised debates and campaign planning highlights women's growing influence and visibility in politics. These achievements demonstrate SEPPA's contributions towards enhancing women's political participation and addressing gender disparities in the political arena.



NDI not only establishes effective communication channels within the political sphere but also equips participants with essential communication tools. Based on my observation, women who engage in this program exhibit more impactful public speaking. This also contributes to their career advancement.

KII, Woman MP



Finding 5.3 Internship and fellowship programs provided youth with public sector experience.

SEPPA included internship and fellowship programs facilitated by NDI and IRI, each with distinct approaches. NDI's program focused on the National Assembly, placing interns and fellows with committees and MPs to support legislative work, offering structured recruitment annually for nine months. IRI's fellowships, targeting both the National Assembly and executive government, were offered on an as-needed basis for specific legislative or communication tasks, acting more like junior researcher roles. IRI's program supported 39 unique fellows— 30 women and nine men— with six positioned within the parliament and 33 across various government agencies. NDI supported the placement of 97 young professionals in the National Assembly as interns or fellows. All the youth who participated in the focus group discussion for this evaluation emphasized that these programs have provided youth with valuable hands-on experience in public institutions, facilitating their employment within these sectors and enhancing their understanding of the public sector and democratic processes²⁷. At the same time, all interviewed MPs and government officials acknowledged interns' and fellows' considerable research and practical contributions to legislative and policy development.

²⁷ For example, 21 participants of NDI's parliamentary internship/fellowship program out of a total of 97 have continued their careers in the public sector.

Finding 5.4 Voter education initiatives targeted marginalized groups with tailored materials.

SEPPA's voter education initiatives specifically targeted marginalized groups. This included developing voting instructions in sign language and materials suited for those with special intellectual needs. Additionally, Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were tailored to these groups, demonstrating a focused approach to inclusivity in the electoral process. These education efforts, acknowledged by the majority of KII respondents, have helped underrepresented segments of the population understand the electoral process better and have facilitated their participation in elections.

Finding 5.5 Civic education programs for first-time voters were integrated into educational curricula.

SEPPA launched civic education initiatives targeted at first-time voters, seeking to integrate these programs into the curriculum of educational institutions to cultivate a new generation informed about democratic processes. All CEC respondents noted that this effort has contributed to an informed and active youth participation in the electoral process.

While making progress in enhancing electoral integrity and public trust, the project also faced several challenges in ensuring an inclusive governance process beyond the election discussed below.

Finding 5.6 SEPPA faced substantial challenges in fully integrating inclusion principles across all components.

Several KII respondents noted that the project had more considerable opportunities for mainstreaming and including underrepresented groups across all its components, not just those designed to target inclusion. These opportunities were particularly evident in training, outreach activities, and communication materials, where several respondents noted a lack of comprehensive integration of inclusion principles. For example, several government respondents noted that the project's training components generally exhibited limited attempts at including underrepresented groups. For example, there was no deliberate outreach made for the inclusion of marginalized groups in the training components, nor was it made clear that additional accommodation could be provided during the training upon a need/request. They pointed out that the project's overall approach did not consistently integrate their perspectives or needs across all training modules. Similarly, the outreach efforts, though effective in reaching out to respective constituencies, did not specifically focus on underrepresented groups. Also, the development and dissemination of communication materials failed to adequately represent and address the concerns of underrepresented groups. These limitations indicate a gap in the project's systematic approach to embedding inclusivity across all activities.

Finding 5.7 Marginalized Groups were insufficiently engaged in the project’s policy-level work.

Several KII respondents noted that with the exception of the Coalition on Rights of PwDs, the project’s policy-level work did not sufficiently engage with or focus on marginalized groups. These respondents pointed out that the project did not adequately engage these groups in policy development processes or tailor policies to address their unique needs and challenges directly. They suggested a lack of depth in policy development and implementation processes that consider the unique challenges and perspectives of these groups.



We need more confidence-building programs for PwDs as they are not sure of themselves. We need to encourage PwDs to be not just voters, but observers, candidates, and poll workers.

KII Respondent, Civil Society



Finding 5.7 Engagement with Civil Society Organizations that focus on women and youth was limited.

Several KII respondents highlighted the project’s limited engagement with CSOs focused on women and youth. This limited engagement represents missed opportunities to leverage these organizations’ expertise and networks to deepen the project’s impact on these crucial segments of the population.

4.5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Findings 5.1 to 5.5 led to Conclusion 5.1, illustrating the type of interventions that ensured marginalized groups, youth, and women’s participation in the electoral process. Findings 5.5 to 5.8 guided Conclusion 5.2 highlight SEPPA’s challenges with inclusion in governance processes beyond electoral activities.

Conclusion 5.1.

Through targeted voter and civic education programs, increased accessibility for PwDs, and efforts to boost women’s political participation, SEPPA has contributed to a more equitable and participatory electoral environment. The Katarine program has been particularly effective in strengthening women’s political engagement and visibility.

Conclusion 5.2.

While the project has made progress in promoting inclusive electoral processes, it faced challenges in systematically integrating inclusivity across all its activities, especially in policy development and engaging with women- and youth-focused CSOs. These limitations highlight the need for a more comprehensive and systematic approach to embedding inclusivity across all project activities, as well as targeted efforts to engage and address the needs of marginalized groups in policy development and implementation processes.



4.6 EVALUATION QUESTION 6

Lessons learned - what worked well and should be continued? what didn't work?

4.6.1 FINDINGS

This evaluation has drawn several lessons and insights into what worked well under the SEPPA project.

Finding 6.1 A broad spectrum of interventions characterized SEPPA's approach to electoral reform and democratic representation.

Most KII respondents identified SEPPA's comprehensive approach to electoral reform and promotion of democratic representation as a key factor for the project's success. This approach, encompassing a broad spectrum of interventions from legal reforms to capacity building, has effectively strengthened the electoral process and enhanced democratic governance.



The trainers are very knowledgeable. For every type of question you raise, you receive a competent answer. IRI chose strong trainers, who are well-educated and full of knowledge. They are a group of people who know everything. I don't know where these trainers come from, but they are very good.

KII, NA Staff



Finding 6.2. Diverse stakeholder engagement is marked by participation from Government Agencies, Civil Society, and International Partners.

Most KII respondents also attributed the project's success to its engagement with a diverse array of stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, research and academic institutions, international organizations, and experienced and unbiased staff and experts. This wide-ranging engagement has ensured that the reforms supported by the project received broad support and benefitted from various perspectives and expertise.



The involvement component (involving all political forces, civil society, etc.) that IFES was able to facilitate in the electoral code review process was very successful. That platform enabled all interested parties to openly discuss the changes to the electoral code because, without communication and debate, amendments and changes cannot be the best

KII, CEC Representative



Finding 6.3. International support from entities like USAID, the EU, and the Venice Commission provided resources, expertise, and political influence for democratic transition.

Many KII respondents identified the role of external support, including USAID, EU, Venice Commission, and other international partners, in facilitating the democratic transition as another area of strength. This support provided not only the necessary resources and expertise but also, more crucially, political influence and legitimacy to advance the project's objectives and foster a conducive environment for the reforms that were pushed forward with the project's support.

The evaluation also identified aspects of the project that did not work as well as expected. In this regard, the feedback received from project stakeholders is crucial for refining strategies and ensuring that future efforts are more aligned with the goals of strengthening democratic processes and inclusion. The following are the main aspects that would have required greater attention.

Finding 6.4. The project demonstrated insufficient emphasis on local-level political processes.

The discussion with IPs revealed that, if resourced properly, the project could have had a greater focus on the decentralization of the political process at the local level. Strengthening local political structures is crucial for enhancing democratic participation and representation at all levels.

Finding 6.5. SEPPA experienced challenges in mainstreaming the participation of marginalized groups.

As noted previously in this report, several KII respondents highlighted the need to fully integrate the participation of marginalized groups throughout project activities. Such a level of inclusivity requires a deliberate approach to engage these stakeholders more systematically in all aspects of the project.

Finding 6.6. The project's ambitions and indicators were mismatched.

The analysis of the project's MEL plan revealed that the project's level of ambition and the indicators used for monitoring and evaluation (M and E) do not match. Furthermore, the MEL framework is overly elaborate and too hard to read and comprehend. A simpler MEL framework and more relevant and robust indicators are required to measure the project's impact and progress accurately.

Finding 6.7. The project did not clearly define or consistently track "capacity," or, "citizen engagement."

Discussions with IPs and KII respondents and analysis of project documentation revealed the need for more precise definitions and consistent tracking of key terms such as "capacity" and "citizen engagement." Precise definitions are essential for effective communication and assessment of project outcomes.

Finding 6.8. Respondents highlighted the importance of policy implementation in addition to policy formulation.

Several KII respondents also mentioned the need for greater emphasis on policy implementation rather than formulation. While the development of sound policies and legislation is crucial, ensuring their effective translation into practice is equally vital for achieving tangible improvements in governance and service delivery.

Finding 6.9. Implementing Partners identified opportunities for enhanced collaboration.

While overall, the three IPs coordinated very effectively, and there have been many instances of effective joint work among them, discussions with IPs also revealed room for further enhancing synergies to improve resource utilization efficiency and maximize impact. For example, the IPs could have pooled expertise and resources to develop joint training programs or organize joint outreach activities.

Similarly, the IPs working on related themes, such as women’s political participation or youth engagement, could have cross-promoted their initiatives to maximize participant recruitment and impact. Also, a more harmonized approach to the internship/fellowship programs offered by NDI and IRI would have provided participants with a more consistent experience, a more structured pathway for professional development in the public sector, and a more efficient use of resources²⁸. In general, greater integration and synergies would have resulted in more efficient use of resources and more substantial results.

Finding 6.10. More coordination with other USAID Projects is needed.

Two KII respondents pointed out the need for greater coordination of SEPPA with other USAID-funded projects, such as the project in support of media or the project in support of civil society. A greater coordination of efforts among these projects will foster a more integrated and efficient approach to democratic reform.

Finding 6.11. The democratic reform process needs to involve CSOs more.

Several KII respondents raised the need for more substantial involvement of civil society organizations in the democratic reform process. This will ensure a more inclusive approach and enhance the legitimacy and sustainability of reform efforts.



Since this is a non-election year, IFES, which specifically deals with election processes, or the CEC can make awareness, for example, with the local government, most of whose members are usually part of the local election commissions, can organize meetings with different groups with disabilities about their needs, about awareness, about making elections more accessible, they can initiate a series of such meetings, awareness, with an educational component, which will be effective.v

FGD, Civil Society Representative



²⁸ There are some stark differences between the programs offered by NDI and IRI. NDI’s internship program followed a structured approach, with recruitment taking place in October for a 9-month period. Interns are assigned to work with committees and factions within the National Assembly. They receive a stipend from NDI and participate in monthly training sessions (one or two per month) to enhance their skills and knowledge. Upon completion, the interns attended a graduation ceremony. NDI offered both internship and fellowship opportunities, but these were limited to the National Assembly. IRI’s fellowship program operated on an ad hoc basis, recruiting individuals for specific needs, such as working on a particular piece of legislation. The assignments were shorter, typically lasting 4-5 months. IRI fellows can be thought of as junior researchers. IRI offered fellowships for both the National Assembly and the executive government. However, the fellowships within the executive government were specifically focused on communications.

4.6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 6.1 summarizes Findings 6.1 to 6.3 and highlights key elements of the project that worked well. Conclusion 6.2 draws on Findings 6.4 to 6.11 and identifies areas for improvement along with strategies to boost future effectiveness.

Conclusion 6.1.

The evaluation attributes SEPPA's success to its comprehensive approach to electoral reform and democratic representation, supported by diverse stakeholder engagement and external assistance. The project's comprehensive and multifaceted approach to electoral reform and promoting democratic representation has been crucial for enhancing electoral integrity and governance. SEPPA has set the stage for further consolidation of Armenia's democratic governance. Its achievements provide national institutions and their international partners with good foundations to further deepen and expand the project's gains in the coming years.

Conclusion 6.2.

Despite notable achievements, the evaluation identified a need for greater focus on strengthening local-level political processes, mainstreaming participation of marginalized groups, aligning project ambitions with indicators and clear definitions, emphasizing policy implementation, fostering synergies among implementing partners and USAID projects, and involving civil society organizations.



5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Evaluation Team presents a set of detailed recommendations based on the insights gained from the findings and conclusions. These suggestions are intended to strengthen the project's overall effectiveness, enhance its long-term sustainability, and address a variety of cross-cutting issues.

5.1 EFFECTIVENESS

- Maintain the project's current focus on the electoral process and democratic representation and accountability. Deepen efforts to promote inclusion throughout the electoral process and democratic representation (EQ1²⁹).
- Prioritize interventions that improve the interaction of the Executive with the National Assembly through a seamless and well-integrated policy process, which includes coordinated policy formulation and an oversight role for the National Assembly in policy implementation. Strengthen the project's focus on policy implementation and prioritize effective coordination among stakeholders and results-based monitoring throughout the implementation process (EQ1).
- Increase the focus on citizen engagement with the political process and the public's understanding of key reforms and democratic institutions. Foster a grassroots approach to citizen engagement, ensuring that key reforms are communicated in an easily digestible manner. Develop localized engagement strategies that leverage community networks and local media platforms (EQ1).
- Strengthen engagement with political processes at the local level and support local party structures to increase the focus on the decentralization of political processes.

- Explore the role of academic institutions in mitigating political polarization and bridging the political divide by serving as neutral platforms that mediate and build consensus on technical policy issues over more ideologically charged reforms (EQ2).
- Maintain a high degree of adaptability, while developing contingency plans that outline critical scenarios, especially in relation to the electoral cycle, and prescribe pre-emptive actions and adaptive responses. In line with reporting cycles, a more rigorous review process should be established that allows for the adjustment of activities and roles based on evolving needs, emerging challenges, and opportunities (EQ3).
- Harmonize similar activities across IPs to the extent possible— such as NA outreach activities, fellowship programs, opinion polling, etc. Incentivize and structure joint IP implementation more effectively (e.g., financial incentives for collaborations, built-in collaborative frameworks, joint performance indicators). Create a framework of processes and guidelines that aid IPs in further integrating activities among themselves (EQ3).

²⁹ The recommendation is deriving from the findings and conclusions of EQ 1.

5.2 SUSTAINABILITY

- Elevate the importance of “sustainability” in the project design, implementation, and performance monitoring to ensure that explicit sustainability considerations guide all major activities during potential follow-up phases or iterations of the project.
 - Develop a long-term strategy to transfer the following initiatives to national entities to guarantee their independence, quality, and integrity: public opinion polling, the Katarine program, and internship and fellowship programs and networks. This strategy should involve collaborating with political parties and MPs/parliamentary committees to institutionalize public outreach efforts further, ensuring sustained engagement with the initiatives even after their transfer (EQ4).
- Strengthen the sustainability of the training programs by exploring institutionalization within local entities, seeking formal recognition or accreditation, and broadening the scope of Training of Trainers programs to include more local trainers (EQ4).

5.3 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- Develop an inclusion approach/strategy that outlines specific ways for integrating marginalized groups into all aspects of the project. Make outreach activities more inclusive to marginalized groups, especially persons with disabilities and first-time voters, and prioritize activities that engage CSOs representing marginalized groups (EQ5).
- Develop a dedicated project component focused on empowering women MPs and connecting them across party lines. This could include tailored leadership training, thematic workshops on gender-sensitive legislation, and facilitation of regular cross-party dialogues among women MPs to strategize on advancing shared priorities and overcoming barriers to their full political participation (EQ5).
- Launch public awareness campaigns that utilize various media platforms to challenge stereotypes and cultural norms that limit women's roles in leadership and politics and promote a positive narrative around gender equality in leadership roles. Employ a multi-faceted approach, including social media, television, radio, print, and community events, to reach a broad audience across different demographics (EQ5).
- Ensure that the project's training incorporates inclusive practices and perspectives systematically. Expand Training of Trainers on inclusive pedagogies and sensitivities to ensure they are equipped to deliver training

that is accessible and relevant to all participants, including those from underrepresented groups (EQ5).

- Promote more robust engagement of CSOs in advocacy, policy analysis, and public awareness campaigns. Strengthen collaboration with CSOs in designing and delivering civic education programs that raise public awareness about democratic processes (EQ6).
- Strengthen coordination with other USAID-funded projects, such as the Media Program in Armenia, and Action for Civic Education, by holding regular meetings to discuss ongoing activities, potential areas of overlap, and opportunities for collaboration (EQ6).
- Strengthen the project's MEL plan by simplifying the results framework and identifying indicators that measure the project's outcomes more effectively. Develop clear definitions for key concepts such as "capacity" or "citizen engagement." Ensure consistency in understanding and usage of these concepts across all project components. Invest in strengthening MEL capacities and systems within the project to ensure accountability, adaptability, and evidence-based programming (EQ6).

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VOTER EDUCATION

ANNEX A:

ACTIVITY AUTHORIZATION REQUEST

EE/MELDS ACTIVITY AUTHORIZATION REQUEST (AAR)

FINAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF
USAID/ARMENIA SEPPA ACTIVITY

Contract Title: Europe and Eurasia / Monitoring, Evaluation,
Learning and Decision Support
(EE/MELDS)

Contract Number: GS-10F-083CA / 7200AA22M00013

Activity Number: EE/MELDS – 1022.1009

Submitted: October 30, 2023

Contractor: Integra Government Services International LLC
1156 15th Avenue NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

USAID Office: USAID/Europe

COR: Kraemer Lovelace, klovelace@usaid.gov

1. INTRODUCTION

USAID/Armenia has requested a final performance evaluation of the Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia (SEPPA) Program, implemented by the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS). The Activity runs from September 2018 to September 2025 with an estimated cost of \$21.6 million. This evaluation will focus on the time period starting from September 2018 to November 2023. The purpose of this evaluation is to assist USAID/Armenia in determining the degree to which SEPPA achieved its intended goals and objectives, capture key lessons learned, and provide conclusions that USAID/Armenia will consider for the design and/or implementation of future activities and/or for directions to explore regarding electoral processes. USAID/Armenia will use the results of this final performance evaluation to inform future programming and theories of change that support strengthening governance, institutional capacity, election management, and mechanisms for parliamentary accountability in order to maximize development outcomes and effectively achieve U.S. government strategic objectives in Armenia.

This Activity Authorization Request (AAR) provides an overview of the EE/MELDS team's proposed approach, including staffing, budget, and timeline, to implement the evaluation as requested.

2. BACKGROUND

Through its assistance activities, CEPPS engages election management bodies to become more voter-centric and inclusive and deliver professional, non-partisan administration of the elections through revised legislation, improved training, and effective education and motivation of voters. CEPPS works with political parties to develop issue-based platforms informed by voters' interests and improve their ability to engage citizens through effective advocacy and outreach. CEPPS supports

the government and parliament in developing and communicating policies through two-way interactions with citizens, strengthens public institutions, and builds the capacity of the ministries by supporting the development of professional bureaucracy within the executive branch. Through SEPPA, the partners deliver support to enhance the ability of civil society actors to provide oversight of the government and contribute to decision-making through effective advocacy. Activities maximize inclusion, diversity, access to information, and public ownership of peaceful transitions, which are the stated intentions of the new government.

SEPPA has five mutually reinforcing objectives:

- The Government's ability to devise and deliver informed and responsive policies is facilitated and strengthened;
- The institutional capacity of election management bodies and mechanisms for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process is strengthened and sustained;
- An enabling environment for developing a multiparty system and inclusive and responsive political parties is fostered; and
- Mechanisms for parliamentary accountability and constituent engagement are facilitated and institutionalized.
- Women's political participation, influence, and leadership fostered.

To deliver the desired outcome and impact identified in the four SEPPA Objectives, CEPPS works collaboratively to support all interventions as part of an interconnected approach, sharing successes and lessons learned throughout the four years of implementation and adjusting strategies as necessary. Regular discussion among CEPPS partners and with USAID ensures that program activities are in sync and mutually supportive, with a consistent message delivered to all target groups that capture the goals identified in SEPPA.

3. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

The purpose of this final performance evaluation is to assist USAID/Armenia in understanding the extent to which SEPPA achieved its intended goals and objectives, and capture key lessons learned. The Mission will use this evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this evaluation to inform future programming and theories of change to maximize development outcomes and achieve U.S. Government strategic objectives in Armenia. The evaluation will focus on the SEPPA performance period from September 2018 to November 2023. USAID will share the evaluation report with the key stakeholders.

4. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

USAID/Armenia and the EE/MELDS Evaluation Team discussed and agreed on the below Evaluation Questions during the SEPPA evaluation Kick-Off Call on October 25, 2023. The ET will design and formulate the Evaluation Work Plan and data collection tools based on these questions.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

EFFECTIVENESS

- How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA's intended outcomes, and why?
- What are key enabling and hindering factors that have affected the achievement of outcomes?
- To what extent was SEPPA able to steer its strategic approach in response to key developments during the implementation period?

SUSTAINABILITY

- Which elements of the intervention approaches and results achieved by SEPPA are most likely to be taken further and sustained beyond the close of the program? Why?

CROSSCUTTING

- To what extent did program design and implementation prioritize/ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women; tackle outreach challenges sensitively; and actively address systemic barriers to ensure equitable participation in electoral processes?
- Lessons Learned - What worked well and should be continued? What didn't work?

4.1 EVALUATION

QUESTION FOCUS

The Evaluation Questions 1: Effectiveness and 3: Crosscutting will focus at the IR-level, specifically on the below IRs from SEPPA's Indicator Performance Tracking Table to the extent possible:

4.1.1. OBJECTIVE 1: GOVERNMENT ABILITY TO DEVISE AND DELIVER INFORMED AND RESPONSIVE POLICIES FACILITATED AND STRENGTHENED

- IR 1.0.1: Improved operational capacity and coordination between government ministries
- IR 1.0.2: Improved capacity to develop responsive policies/reforms that are in line with public and civil society demands
- IR 1.0.3: Improved strategic communications strategies to promote reforms and counter adversarial disinformation campaigns

4.1.2 OBJECTIVE 2: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY OF ELECTION MANAGEMENT BODIES AND MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS STRENGTHENED AND SUSTAINED

- IR 2.0.1: Capacity of national and local election officials to effectively manage and enforce new electoral laws and regulations is strengthened
- IR 2.0.2: Election stakeholders access to the reform process and knowledge of key priority reform areas is improved
- IR 2.0.3: Citizen engagement in and understanding of key aspects of priority electoral reforms is increased
- IR 2.0.5: The enabling environment for the enfranchisement of voters with disabilities (VWDs) is improved

4.1.3 OBJECTIVE 3: AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTIPARTY SYSTEM AND INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE POLITICAL PARTIES FOSTERED

- IR 3.0.1: Political parties develop more effective and inclusive structures
- IR 3.0.2: Political parties operate and structure communications based on citizens' input and needs
- IR 3.0.3: Political parties operate in compliance with the new legal-regulatory framework on political parties

4.1.4 OBJECTIVE 4: MECHANISMS FOR PARLIAMENTARY ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONSTITUENT ENGAGEMENT FACILITATED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED

- IR 4.0.1: Improved capacity for parliamentarians and staff
- IR 4.0.2: Improved capacity to develop responsive legislation that is in line with public and civil society demands
- IR 4.0.3: Parliamentary factions are more representative of and responsive to citizen concerns
- IR 4.0.4: Women Members of Parliament are organized and take on more leadership roles
- IR 4.0.5: Young leaders are exposed to parliamentary democracy through professional internships

4.1.5 OBJECTIVE 5:

WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, INFLUENCE, AND LEADERSHIP FOSTERED

- IR 5.0.1 Women acquire the skills, confidence, and networks for leadership roles in politics
- IR 5.0.2 Women acquire the skills for leadership in consensus-building

5. TECHNICAL APPROACH

This evaluation will use a non-experimental, mixed-methods, and utilization-focused design. The evaluation will utilize a consultative and iterative approach, which aims to increase ET's collaboration with USAID to clarify the expectations and objectives of the evaluation and to ensure the relevance and inclusion of recommendations by USAID and stakeholders. The evaluation will use quantitative and qualitative methods, including document review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), surveys, and site visits (as applicable and feasible) with local partners and stakeholders.

After an initial desk review and consultations with USAID, the evaluation design and methods may undergo refinements. The Evaluation Work Plan, a subsequent deliverable Integra will submit at a later date, will detail the finalized evaluation design and methodologies.

6. TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

Based on the SOW provided, the EE/MELDS team presents our proposed approach for tasks and deliverables for USAID's consideration.

The evaluation team will serve under the technical direction of USAID/Armenia's MEL Specialist, who will also act as the USAID Activity Manager for this evaluation. The ET will rely on USAID/Armenia staff to coordinate any necessary meetings with GOAM Representatives and implementing partner staff.

The EE/MELDS team will provide the following deliverables:

DELIVERABLE**DUE DATE**

Draft AAR	October 13, 2023
Mission Intake Call	October 25, 2023
Final AAR	October 30, 2023
USAID Final Review/Approval of AAR	November 3, 2023
USAID provides all documentation for Desk Review	November 3, 2023
Draft Evaluation Work Plan (EWP)	November 22, 2023
Draft EWP feedback from USAID	December 1, 2023
Final Evaluation Work Plan	December 8, 2023
EWP approval by USAID	December 13, 2023
Final List of Key Informants and Survey Participants (including contact information)	December 22, 2023
Data Collection (In-Person and Remote)	January 8-26, 2024
*Including In-Brief and Out-Brief Meetings	
Findings and Recommendations Workshop	Week of February 16, 2024
*USAID/Armenia to decide the timing of Recommendations Workshop (pre- or post- Draft PER)	
Draft Performance Evaluation Report (PER)	March 18, 2024
USAID Comments on Draft Report	April 1, 2024
Post Evaluation Action Plan	April 2, 2024
Final Evaluation Report	April 15, 2024
Final Presentation	April 30, 2024

7. STAFFING PLAN

7.1 CORE TEAM

POSITION	RESPONSIBILITIES
Team Leader and Subject Matter Expert in Governance and Elections, Elinor Bajraktari	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Design the overall evaluation methodology, including data collection tools, evaluation design, and evaluation timeline■ Design and validate questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussions outlines, and other tools■ Train the evaluation team on the evaluation tools and methodologies, ensuring a clear understanding and uniform application■ Direct in-Country Field Work■ Lead Briefings and Recommendations Workshop■ Oversee the collection, storage, cleaning, and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data■ Draft the evaluation report, ensuring it's comprehensive, clear, and aligned with USAID guidelines■ Participate in check-in calls with USAID■ Lead the team to ensure high quality delivery of the evaluation■ Ensure that the evaluation process upholds ethical standards, including securing informed consent from participants and ensuring data privacy.
Sr. MEL Specialist and Subject Matter Expert for Armenia, Liana Poghosyan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Contribute to the development of EWP■ Contribute to the development and refinement of tools for Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)■ Lead the elaboration of quantitative survey instruments to ensure they're suitable for the local context■ Lead and/or participate in KIIs and FGDs in Armenia■ Compile KII and FGD Meeting Notes■ Lead a portion of qualitative data coding and analysis

Sr. MEL Specialist and Subject Matter Expert for Armenia,

Liana Poghosyan

- Lead quantitative data collection processes and subsequent data analysis
- Join regular calls with the team to update, review progress, and discuss any issues or concerns
- Engage in Briefings and Recommendations Workshop
- Participate in drafting, reviewing, and refining the evaluation report, ensuring inclusion of relevant local insights and data

Elections Specialist and Subject Matter Expert for the South Caucasus,

Tamara Sartania

- Contribute to the development of EWP with specific focus on the elections landscape in Armenia
- Contribute to the development and refinement of tools for Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)
- Lead the elaboration of quantitative survey instruments to ensure they're suitable for the local context
- Carry out KIIs and FGDs in Armenia
- Compile KII and FGD Meeting Notes
- Contribute to qualitative data coding and analysis
- Join regular calls with the team to update, review progress, and discuss any issues or concerns
- Engage in Briefings and Recommendations Workshop
- Participate in drafting, reviewing, and refining the evaluation report, ensuring the inclusion of relevant local insights and data

Regional Logistician,

Ani Norayr Topuzyan

- Compile stakeholder list using ET member input
- Schedule Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)
- Schedule Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Handle venue, transport and logistics
- Take notes during KIIs and FGDs.
- Prepare annexes for the evaluation report
- Act as an interpreter during the meetings if needed

7.1 ELINOR BAJRAKTARI, TEAM LEADER

Elinor Bajraktari is a seasoned professional in program evaluation with a specific focus on democratic governance. Boasting over 15 years of experience, he has adeptly led more than 50 evaluations across diverse countries, partnering with governments and international entities in public administration reform, institutional strengthening, decentralization processes, digitalization of public services, peace and confidence building in conflict regions, and modernization of parliamentary structures.

Elinor has a strong knowledge of evaluation methodologies. His skills are based on evidence-based techniques and refined through years of practical application, ensuring relevancy and depth. His strong theoretical foundation is backed by a Master's degree from Harvard University in International Development and an ongoing Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Alberta. Fluent in English and French, with a commendable command over Russian and Spanish.

7.2 LIANA POGHOSYAN, MEL AND LOCAL SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

Liana Poghosyan is an evaluation professional with over 20 years of experience working with international development organizations. She has strong expertise in conducting both small-scale and large-scale program evaluations precisely. Adhering to DAC criteria, she proficiently oversees all evaluation stages, from formulating methodologies and recommending proven tools to executing meticulous data collection, analysis, and reporting. Beyond her evaluation skills, Liana is a maestro in organizing and managing large-scale and national surveys, ensuring the garnered data is accurate and actionable.

7.3 TAMARA SARTANIA, ELECTIONS SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

Tamara Sartania is acclaimed for her comprehensive expertise in election dynamics. With a background spanning various regions, her vast experience encompasses every facet of election mechanics, from civil society capacity building to women's political engagement.

Over the past 15 years, Tamara has solidified her stature as a distinguished election specialist. She has undertaken significant roles in esteemed organizations such as the OSCE/ODIHR and the National Democratic Institute (NDI), both domestically and internationally. In Sofia, Bulgaria; Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Chisinau, Moldova, Tamara worked on pivotal election processes, analyzing and evaluating administrative functions, legal frameworks, and civic engagements. Through these experiences, she delved into the nitty-gritty of candidate and voter registration, new voting technologies, and the broader political and electoral landscapes.

In Warsaw, Poland, her role extended to overseeing multiple election observation missions, a testament to her multifaceted capacities. Her work in Tbilisi, Georgia, with NDI, further showcased her strategic prowess, where she was instrumental in fostering political pluralism and enhancing political party outreach.

Tamara's collaborations with global institutions such as USAID, the EU, and NED further enrich her credentials. She earned her Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from Tufts University, focusing on International Development and International Business Relations. Further complementing her professional journey is her Postgraduate Certificate in Strategic Communications (with Distinction) from King's College London and a Bachelor of Arts with a concentration in International Relations from Tbilisi State University, which was augmented by her time as an exchange student at Eastern Connecticut State University, a tenure supported by the U.S. Department of State Scholarship (UGRAD).

7.4 ANI NORAYR TOPUZYAN, LOCAL LOGISTICS COORDINATOR

Ani Norayr Topuzyan has over five years of experience in fieldwork coordination, logistical support, and administration management in Armenia. She is a native Armenian speaker and fluent in English and Russian. Ani will serve as the Logistics Coordinator who will support scheduling and organizing data collection, including KIIs, FGDs, and survey logistics. In addition, the Coordinator will conduct translation and interpretation as needed.

EE/MELDS SUPPORT PERSONNEL: The EE/MELDS Team may bring on an additional senior subject matter expert, field logistics manager, or technical specialist to support the Team Leader, as relevant. The possible addition of these team member(s) could change the details of the budget but will not affect the overall budget ceiling unless otherwise approved by USAID.

EE/MELDS is a demand-driven task order. Therefore, core operations and administrative functions of the project are billed directly to the activity (e.g., activity authorization development, recruitment, contracting and fielding consultants, quality assurance review, etc.). Mr. Kev Torosyan, Sr. Technical Advisor, and Ms. Summer Hunter-Kysor, Technical Specialist- Mid-Level, and their team will oversee activity operations and provide administrative support.

ANNEX B:

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TOOLS

I DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

The data collection approach for evaluating the SEPPA project is methodically designed to be both enriching and investigative, ensuring a robust and comprehensive evidence base for analysis. This approach integrates a parallel data-gathering method with an integrated design strategy, enabling the simultaneous collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. This integrated approach ensures that the findings from one type of data can inform and enrich the understanding gleaned from the other.

The following table summarizes the data collection instruments that will be used for each respondent category, and the rest of this section outlines the key features of each data collection method.

FIGURE 3: PROPOSED DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS BY RESPONDENT CATEGORY

RESPONDENT CATEGORY	# OF KIIS	# OF FGDS	# OF ONLINE SURVEYS
Executive Government (Ministries, PM's Office, DMs' Offices)	9	-	-
Legislative Bodies (National Assembly)	6	-	-
Local Authorities	3	-	-
Political Parties	7	-	-
Electoral Bodies (CEC)	5	-	1
Civil Society Organizations	3	1	-
Women in Leadership Participants	-	1	-
Educational Institutions and Teachers	6	-	-
Students (Interns and Fellows)	-	2	-
Media Organizations	3	-	-
International Organizations	5	-	-
Implementing Parties (IFES, IRI, NDI)	3	-	-
Total	50	4	1

³⁰ These KIIs will target MPs, including women MPs.

³¹ KIIs will be organized with the project's subgrantees. One Focus Group Discussion will be organized with civil society organizations that are active in the area of governance and electoral processes in Armenia.

³² Katarina program participants.

³³ One Focus Group Discussion will be organized with interns and fellows.

³⁴ This category includes USAID.

1.1. DESK REVIEW

The desk review will constitute the foundational phase of the data collection process. The Evaluation Team has already conducted a preliminary review of the project documentation to develop this work plan. Subsequently, a more comprehensive review of the project's documentation will be conducted, including project reports and research, progress reports, legislative changes, training materials, the project's mid-term evaluation, and policy documents, to establish a baseline understanding of the project context, objectives, deliverables, and the extent to which the project's expected outcomes and results are achieved. In addition, the desk review will provide insight into the responsiveness of the project to external developments, as well as the inclusion of vulnerable groups. The desk review will inform the further adjustment of the data collection instruments and will help the Evaluation Team identify additional stakeholders for the KIIs and FGDs.

A comprehensive list of the documents that will be included in the final desk review will be attached as an annex to the final evaluation work plan. Some illustrative examples of key documents are provided here:

- Project Description
- Mid-term Evaluation Report
- Quarterly and Annual Reports
- Public Opinion Research
- Statements of Election Observer Organizations

1.2. KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)

The second pillar of the data collection process is a set of KIIs with 12 categories of stakeholders identified during the preliminary desk review process (and shown in **Table 2** above). The purpose of the KIIs is to draw in-depth insight into the key evaluation questions from individuals directly involved with or affected by the SEPPA project.

Sample Design: The starting point for the design of the KII sample was the identification of stakeholder categories. **Table 2** shows that the evaluation team identified 12 categories representing the minimum number of internal and external stakeholders necessary to answer the evaluation questions. Additionally, the Evaluation Team established a target number of interviews for each of the stakeholder categories. This process results in a total of 50 KIIs planned at the stage of the development of this work plan. This is a flexible number that will be adjusted accordingly as the evaluation process moves along. A purposive sampling approach will be applied to select the most relevant stakeholders, focusing on those with the most intimate and first-hand experience of the project. The ET will ensure representation across all institutions with direct relevance to the project, such as staff of Implementing Partner organizations, government officials at the central and local level, Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff, election officials, political party members, civil society and media representatives, and participants of training programs, etc.

As a next step, the Evaluation Team will collaborate with the Implementing Partners (IPs) to identify specific individuals within these organizations to be invited to participate in interviews. **Annex B** of this report includes the protocols developed by the Evaluation Team for the KIs.

Instrumentation Approach: The KI instruments were designed to focus on those EQs a given respondent is most well-placed to address. In some instances, the interview guides cover all EQs (e.g., KIs with Implementing Partners), whereas in other cases, the questioning is more specific (e.g., KIs with International Organizations). The KI instruments are designed to enable the triangulation of the collected information while also remaining relevant to specific respondent types. Throughout the interview process, the Evaluation Team will include additional questions to obtain more in-depth insights on particular issues raised by the respondent. The KI guides are included in **Annex B**. They will be translated into Armenian and Russian as needed.

Logistical Approach: The KIs will be conducted primarily in person. However, recognizing the need for flexibility, especially in today's dynamic environment, some may be conducted using online platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, or Zoom. This flexibility will accommodate interviewees' preferences and geographical locations, ensuring broader participation and convenience. Each interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes and will be scheduled at the convenience of the respondents. Interviews will be audio-recorded with prior consent to ensure accurate data capture and transcription, adhering to confidentiality principles. The evaluation team will also take detailed notes to capture the essence of the conversation, including key points, anecdotes, and specific quotes that may be relevant to the study. The interviewers will guide the conversation, ask questions, take notes, and manage the overall interview flow. The evaluation team will adhere strictly to confidentiality and ethical standards throughout the process. Interviewees will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and any sensitive information will be handled with the utmost discretion.

I.3. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)

The other pillar of the data collection process will be the FGDS. As can be seen from **Table 2**, the Evaluation Team has planned one FGD with civil society organizations, one FGD with participants of the "Women in Leadership" program, one FGD with representatives of media organizations, and one FGD with students (interns and fellows). The aim of the FGDS is to gather collective insights on the key evaluation questions through a discussion-based format involving individuals who were either directly engaged in or affected by the project.

Sample Design: In developing the sample design for FGDS, the Evaluation Team employed a purposive sampling approach. The team utilized the stakeholder categories outlined in **Table 2** to identify those most suitable for the group discussion format. As a result, the ten FGDS noted above were identified for this evaluation. This is a flexible number that may be adjusted as the evaluation process moves along. As a next step, the Evaluation Team will collaborate with the Implementing Partners to identify specific individuals within the identified organizations to invite to participate in the FGDS. Each FGD will be thoughtfully designed to involve a small, manageable group of 5-6 individuals.

³⁵ The criteria for selecting KI participants will be based on three core aspects: first, their relevance to the subject matter under study; second, the diversity of their perspectives and the variety of roles they hold within their respective institutions; and third, their availability and willingness to engage in the process. Additionally, the selection procedure will guarantee a balanced representation across genders, geographical regions, and other relevant demographic factors.

This size is optimal for encouraging active participation from all members while allowing in-depth discussions. Efforts will be made to ensure group diversity in terms of demographics, background, and perspectives, enriching the discussion with a multitude of viewpoints. **Annex B** of this report includes the protocols developed by the Evaluation Team for the FGDs.

Instrumentation Approach: FGD guides are designed to facilitate open discussion, allowing participants to express their views on the project's effectiveness and impact. They are expected to prompt discussions on specific areas of interest identified during the desk review and are tailored to suit the context of each focus group.

Administration Approach: Given the in-person nature of most FGDs, selecting a conducive and neutral venue is crucial. The environment will be chosen to ensure comfort, privacy, and minimal distractions, facilitating open and honest discussions. In cases where physical meetings will not be feasible, video conferencing platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams will be used, offering a virtual space that is equally welcoming and secure. The FGDs will last between 60-90 minutes. This duration strikes a balance between providing ample time for thorough discussion and maintaining the engagement and attention of the participants. Each FGD will be co-facilitated by two members of the Evaluation Team. These facilitators will guide the discussion, ensuring it stays focused and productive. They will be responsible for creating a respectful and inclusive atmosphere, encouraging participation from all group members, and managing the flow of conversation. With the prior consent of the participants, each discussion will be recorded. This will ensure accuracy in capturing the insights and information shared during the FGD. Alongside audio recording, facilitators will also take detailed notes, highlighting key points, considerable quotes, and the group's general sentiment. Participants will be assured that their identities and responses will be completely confidential. The facilitators will also ensure that the discussions adhere to ethical standards, with no participant feeling pressured to conform to a particular viewpoint.

1.4. SURVEY

As part of the primary data collection, the evaluation team will conduct one small-scale online survey with representatives of the Central Electoral Commission. The survey will generate quantitative data specifically concerning the project's effectiveness and sustainability.

Sample Design: Given the relatively limited number of participants, a census will be applied instead of sampling.

Instrumentation Design: The survey questionnaire is designed to collect quantifiable data on specific project objectives and results. The survey will take approximately 5-10 minutes for participants to fill out.

Administration Approach: The survey will be administered electronically, via a well-established platform such as Google or Survey Monkey. Where necessary, the Evaluation Team will assist respondents by email, ensuring anonymity to encourage confidential participation.

The Evaluation Team will employ a multi-faceted approach for data analysis to ensure a thorough interpretation and understanding of the gathered data.

³⁶ As in the KIIs, the criteria for selecting FGD participants will be based on three core aspects: first, their relevance to the subject matter under study; second, the diversity of their perspectives and the variety of roles they hold within their respective institutions; and third, their availability and willingness to engage in the process. The selection procedure will also guarantee a balanced representation across genders, geographical regions, and other relevant demographic factors.

2 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data from KIIs, FGDs, and observational notes will undergo a thematic analysis process. The Evaluation Team will create a preliminary codebook based on the Evaluation Questions to guide the initial coding process. This codebook will be dynamic, expanding and adapting to incorporate emerging themes and patterns identified during the data collection phase. The coding process will involve attributing codes to text segments, including specific themes, concepts, or expressions related to the project's outcomes and objectives. By categorizing these responses, the evaluation team will identify commonalities and differences in perspectives across various stakeholder groups. Qualitative data analysis software will be utilized to assist in coding, categorizing, and thematizing large volumes of qualitative data. The Evaluation Team will perform content analysis and apply grounded theory methods to explore participant narratives, perceptions, and contextual factors.

3 DISAGGREGATION OF DATA

Both qualitative and quantitative data will be disaggregated to highlight findings related to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), regional disparities, and other focal points pertinent to the evaluation questions. This disaggregated approach will be crucial for capturing nuanced insights into how the project's effects may have varied across different demographics and locations.

4 TRIANGULATION

To enhance the validity and reliability of the evaluation findings, the data will be triangulated by comparing information from different sources and methods. For example, qualitative insights from KIIs and FGDs will be cross-referenced with quantitative survey data to confirm patterns and validate conclusions. This will also involve comparing data from respondents within similar groups (such as direct beneficiaries versus indirect beneficiaries) to ascertain the consistency of reported outcomes and experiences.

5 SYNTHESIS AND INTERPRETATION

At the last stage, the data will be synthesized to draw comprehensive conclusions about the project's effectiveness, sustainability, and inclusivity. This will include integrating findings from different data sources and methods to form a holistic understanding of the project's performance and to inform actionable recommendations. The Evaluation Team will ensure that the analysis captures the complexity of the project environment and provides clear insights into the factors contributing to the project's success and areas requiring improvement.

6 DATA VISUALIZATION

In addition to the comprehensive data collection and quality assurance processes, data visualization will play a crucial role in the evaluation. The Evaluation Team will utilize various data visualization techniques to present complex data in a clear, concise, and visually appealing manner. This approach is key to making the data accessible and understandable to a wide range of stakeholders, including project staff, participants, and funders. Charts, graphs, and infographics will be employed to illustrate trends, patterns, and relationships within the data. Interactive dashboards may also be used for dynamic data exploration, allowing users to delve deeper into specific areas of interest. The team will ensure that these visualizations are informative and adhere to sound design principles, such as clarity, accuracy, and simplicity. By effectively utilizing data visualization, the evaluation findings will be communicated more effectively, facilitating informed decision-making and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the evaluation.

7 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

7.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1 Achievement of Results:

- Can you describe from your perspective the results/outcomes that have been achieved with the help of the SEPPA project?
- Can you provide specific examples of policy changes or capacity building within your ministry/agency that can be directly attributed to the SEPPA project?
- From your perspective, which SEPPA project interventions have been the most and the least effective, and why do you think that has been the case?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What contextual factors (at the level of your institution, the broader government, or the country) have enabled or hindered SEPPA's contributions in your area of work?
- From your perspective, was the design and implementation of the SEPPA project adequate and in line with your expectations?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- To your knowledge, how effectively did the SEPPA project adapt in response to changes in the country context during its implementation?
- Can you provide examples of adjustments made by the project team and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

7.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- What aspects of SEPPA's results do you see as most likely to be sustained after the project ends and why?
- Can you provide examples of any capacity-building results, policy/institutional changes and communication practices that have been institutionalized in your organization or in the government thanks to SEPPA?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What factors do you believe have contributed the most to the lasting impact of the project's achievements or have hindered them?

7.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How were gender equality and social inclusion factors integrated into the SEPPA's implementation from your perspective?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- How effectively did SEPPA identify and address barriers to participation of marginalized groups and underrepresented communities in the country's political and electoral processes?
- Have you observed any tangible effects/outcomes from SEPPA's focus on marginalized groups?

7.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- In your view, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project?
- Also, what were its key weaknesses or aspects that did not work as well as expected?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Can you share any good practices that you have noticed in the SEPPA project that should be continued or replicated in future initiatives?
- Are there any specific recommendations you would like to offer based on your experience with the SEPPA project?

8. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY MPS

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

8.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- In your opinion, how have the interventions of the SEPPA project contributed to political and electoral processes in the Republic of Armenia?
- Could you share some specific instances or evidence of SEPPA results that have had a tangible effect on the work of the National Assembly?
- Which specific SEPPA interventions/activities did you find most effective and least effective?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within the National Assembly or the broader political context in the country have either facilitated or impeded the achievement of SEPPA's results?
- Was IRI's/ NDI's assistance to the National Assembly designed to meet your needs?
- How effective was NDI/IRI's assistance in meeting the needs of the National Assembly?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How well did the SEPPA project adjust its strategies and approaches in response to political or legislative changes during its implementation?
- Could you provide examples of SEPPA project adaptations and their effectiveness?

8.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which SEPPA-initiated changes or results do you believe will continue to impact the National Assembly's work beyond the project's lifespan?
- Are there any specific capacities, policy changes, or practices within the National Assembly that were facilitated by SEPPA that, in your opinion, have been or will be institutionalized?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What mechanisms or strategies do you think the SEPPA project should put in place to ensure the longevity of its achievements within the National Assembly?

8.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effective was the SEPPA project at involving women MPs and female parliamentary staff in its activities? What special provisions were made by the project to ensure their full engagement?
- From your perspective, can you share examples of how the SEPPA project enabled the inclusion of the interests of marginalized groups in its activities related to the National Assembly?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- Have women MPs gained any skills, capacities, or other benefits from the SEPPA project, and if so, how?
- To your knowledge, what were the main barriers to participation of marginalized groups in the country's political and electoral processes, and how did the SEPPA project address these barriers through its interventions?
- What have been the tangible outcomes of SEPPA's inclusion strategies within the National Assembly's work?
- Were there any ways in which SEPPA could have better enabled the inclusion of marginalized groups in its activities related to the National Assembly?

8.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- What do you consider to have been SEPPA's key strengths in the context of its contributions to the country's political and electoral processes?
- What aspects of the SEPPA project do you think required improvement or did not meet your expectations or the expectations of your organization?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience, what best practices from SEPPA would you recommend for future legislative development programs?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to enhance the effectiveness of similar projects in the future?

9 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STAFF

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

9.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- From your perspective, what have been the main contributions of the SEPPA project to the National Assembly? How have SEPPA's interventions enhanced your capacity/ability to support the legislative processes?
- Can you provide examples or evidence of how some of these results relate to your day-to-day work within the Assembly? What specific aspects of your role in the National Assembly have been directly impacted by SEPPA's training or interventions?
- Are there any specific project elements or interventions that you found particularly effective? Any elements or interventions that you found ineffective?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within your work environment have helped the achievement of SEPPA's results? What factors have hindered them?
- Based on your knowledge, which aspects of the design and the implementation of the SEPPA project were crucial for supporting legislative staff in the conduct of their duties?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How responsive was the SEPPA project to changes and evolving needs within the National Assembly or the broader political landscape?
- Can you share with us any adjustments made by the SEPPA project in response to these changes and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

9.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization and Institutionalization:

- Which changes or results facilitated by the SEPPA project do you believe will continue to influence the National Assembly's operations after the project ends?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?
- Have any capacities or policy changes initiated under the SEPPA project been institutionalized within the National Assembly or are there plans for their institutionalization?
- Are there specific skills or knowledge acquired through SEPPA that you or your colleagues continue to use in your current roles?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms will be necessary to maintain or put in place, in your opinion, to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements in the National Assembly?

9.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project engage with marginalized groups, youth, and women during its implementation?
- Can you provide examples of SEPPA's interventions that promoted the participation of these groups in project activities?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- From your perspective, what were the main barriers faced by marginalized groups in their engagement with the country's political and electoral processes, and how effectively were these barriers addressed by the SEPPA project?
- What have been the tangible outcomes of SEPPA's inclusion strategies in the daily operations of the National Assembly?
- Is there evidence that these groups benefited specifically from SEPPA's interventions?

9.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- What do you consider the key strengths of the SEPPA project in support of the capacities of the National Assembly's staff?
- Are there any areas or aspects of the project that require further improvement or did not meet your expectations?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience, what best practices from the SEPPA project would you recommend for future programs aimed at supporting the National Assembly?
- What specific recommendations would you suggest to enhance the effectiveness of similar projects in the future?

10. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

10.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- Can you describe specific contributions by the SEPPA project to the political process and the administration of elections in your municipality/city?
- Can you provide specific examples or evidence of SEPPA's results that were significant and meaningful in your municipality/city?
- What specific SEPPA interventions did you find the most effective? What interventions did you find least effective?

I.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors in the context of your municipality/city have facilitated the achievement of SEPPA's results? What factors have impeded the achievement of results?
- In your opinion, which design and implementation features of the SEPPA project were adequate and in line with your expectations?

I.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How adaptable was the SEPPA project to the evolving challenges or contextual changes during its implementation?
- Can you provide examples of SEPPA project adjustments made in response to changes in local needs and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

10.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which changes or results from the SEPPA project are likely to continue impacting local governance and elections beyond the project's conclusion?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?
- Are there ongoing initiatives that originated from SEPPA's interventions, and how are they being maintained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms do you suggest to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements at the local level?

10.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project include marginalized groups, youth, and women in its activities at the local level?
- Can you share examples of how the SEPPA project engaged these groups in its activities at the local level?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What were the main barriers to the participation of marginalized groups in the political and electoral processes at the local level and how effectively were they addressed by the SEPPA project?
- Is there evidence that these groups specifically benefited from SEPPA's interventions in your municipality/city?

10.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project in the context of local governance?
- Are there areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet your expectations or the expectations of your community?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with the SEPPA project, what best practices would you recommend for future projects aimed at enhancing the political process and the administration of elections at the local level?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar initiatives in the future?

11. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF POLITICAL PARTIES

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

11.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- In your opinion, how has the SEPPA project contributed to the capacity of election officials to manage and enforce electoral laws and regulations effectively?
- How has the SEPPA project contributed to your party's ability to participate in the electoral reform process?
- How has SEPPA assistance contributed to your internal party's capacity building? (with regard to more effective and inclusive party structures; communication with citizens; and understating of the new electoral and regulatory framework)
- Can you provide specific examples or evidence of benefits derived by your political party from the SEPPA project?

- Which SEPPA project interventions did you find the most effective? What interventions did you find least effective?

I.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within Armenia's political context have facilitated the achievement of SEPPA's results? What factors have impeded the achievement of results?
- In your opinion, which design and implementation features of the SEPPA project were the most crucial for its results?

I.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How responsive has the SEPPA project been to changes in Armenia's political landscape during its implementation? Were there any ways in which SEPPA could have better adapted to changes in Armenia's political landscape?
- Can you provide examples of adjustments made by the SEPPA project in response to these changes and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

I I.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which results from the SEPPA project are likely to continue impacting your party's operations beyond the project's conclusion?
- Have any practices or policy changes promoted by the SEPPA project been institutionalized within your party?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms do you think are necessary to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements within your party?

I I.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project include marginalized groups, youth, and women in its implementation?
- Can you share examples of how SEPPA promoted the participation of these groups in its activities?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What were the main barriers to the participation of marginalized groups in the political and electoral processes in Armenia, and how effectively have these barriers been addressed by the SEPPA project?
- Can you describe specific initiatives or strategies adopted by your party to improve inclusivity, as influenced by SEPPA?

11.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project in the context of political party development?
- Are there areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet your expectations or the expectations of your party?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with SEPPA, what best practices would you recommend for future projects of a similar nature?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar initiatives in the future?

12. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF ELECTORAL BODIES

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

12.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- In your opinion, how has the SEPPA project contributed to the capacity of electoral bodies to effectively manage and enforce electoral laws and regulations?
- Can you identify specific changes in election administration or voter engagement that were directly influenced by SEPPA's activities?
- What SEPPA-supported training or capacity-building initiatives have been most beneficial in improving your organization's functions?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within the country's electoral system or broader context have helped the achievement of SEPPA's results? What factors have impeded the achievement of results?
- In your opinion, was the design and implementation of the SEPPA project adequate and in line with your expectations?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How adaptable was the SEPPA project to changes or challenges in the electoral environment during its implementation?
- Could you discuss any project adjustments made in response to these changes and their impact on effectiveness?

12.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which changes or results from the SEPPA project do you believe will continue to impact electoral processes in Armenia beyond the project's conclusion?
- Are there ongoing electoral initiatives or reforms initiated with the help of the SEPPA project that your organization is planning to continue independently?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms would you suggest to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements in the country's political and electoral process?

12.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project address the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women in its implementation?
- Can you share examples of how the SEPPA project promoted participation from these groups in its activities?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What were the main barriers to participation for marginalized groups in the electoral and political processes, and how effectively were they addressed by the SEPPA project?
- What tangible results have you observed in the participation of marginalized groups due to SEPPA's interventions? How could SEPPA have better included marginalized groups, youth, and women in its activities in political and electoral processes?

12.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project in the context of electoral administration?
- Are there any areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet your expectations or the expectations of your organization?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with SEPPA, what best practices would you recommend for future programs aimed at enhancing electoral processes?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar initiatives in the future?

13. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

13.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- How has the SEPPA project impacted civil society activities and advocacy efforts in your experience?
- What changes in your organization's approach to civic engagement or voter education can be attributed to SEPPA's activities?
- Which SEPPA project interventions did you find to be the most effective? What interventions did you find least effective?

I.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within the civil society sector or broader socio-political context have helped the realization of SEPPA's goals? What factors have impeded the achievement of SEPPA's goals?
- In your opinion, which features of the SEPPA project were the most crucial for its contributions to civil society?

I.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How adaptable was the SEPPA project to changes or challenges in the civil society landscape during its implementation?
- Can you provide examples of project adjustments made in response to these changes and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

I 3.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which changes or results from the SEPPA project do you believe will continue to impact civil society organizations beyond the project's conclusion?
- Have any practices or policy changes inspired by the SEPPA project been adopted or institutionalized within your organization?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms would you suggest to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements within the civil society sector?

I 3.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project address the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women in its implementation?
- Can you share examples of how the SEPPA project promoted the participation of these groups in its activities?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What were the primary barriers to the participation of marginalized groups in the country's political and electoral processes, and how effectively were they addressed by the SEPPA project?
- What tangible results have you observed in terms of enhanced engagement of marginalized groups due to SEPPA's focus on inclusion?
- How could the SEPPA project have better included marginalized groups, youth, and women in its activities in political and electoral processes?

13.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project in relation to the strengthening of civil society's role in the country's political and electoral processes?
- Are there areas or aspects of the SEPPA project that need improvement or did not meet your expectations or the expectations of your organization?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with the SEPPA project, what best practices would you recommend for future projects aimed at strengthening the role of civil society in political and electoral processes?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar initiatives in the future?

14. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization.
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

14.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- From your perspective, how has the SEPPA project contributed to the political and electoral processes in Armenia?
- Were there any specific SEPPA interventions that you found particularly useful and relevant? Any interventions you found lacking?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- From your perspective, what external factors (e.g., geopolitical, economic) have influenced the achievement of SEPPA's results?

I.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- In your opinion, how well did the SEPPA project adapt to significant developments or shifts in the Armenian context during its implementation?

I 4.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which aspects of the SEPPA interventions do you see as most likely to be sustained or institutionalized?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- From your perspective, what strategies or mechanisms should be in place to ensure the continuity of key SEPPA results?

I 4.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively, in your view, did SEPPA prioritize and ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, including women and youth, in its activities and, ultimately, in the country's political and electoral processes?

I 4.4. LESSONS LEARNED

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- What do you perceive as the project's key strengths? What do you perceive as its key limitations?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- What specific recommendations would you provide for enhancing similar projects' effectiveness based on your observations of SEPPA?

15. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (INCLUDING TEACHERS)

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

15.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- What difference has the SEPPA project made for your institution in terms of how it educates students about the democratic process, governance, and civic responsibilities and how it engages them in political and electoral processes?
- From your experience with the SEPPA project, can you provide specific examples or evidence that demonstrate SEPPA's contributions to the building of the capacities of teachers and improvement of curricula and training content?
- Were there any specific SEPPA interventions that you found to be particularly effective? What interventions did you find least effective?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors (within the education sector or the broader country context) have facilitated the achievement of SEPPA's results? What factors have impeded the achievement of results?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How adaptable was SEPPA to contextual changes or challenges during its implementation?
- Could you identify any adjustments made by SEPPA in response to these changes and their impact on the project's effectiveness?

15.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- To what extent will the educational content (curricula, training programs, etc.) created with the support of the SEPPA project continue to be delivered by your institution?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What additional strategies or mechanisms would have been necessary to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements?

15.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project promote the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women in the activities it supported in the education sector?
- Can you share examples of how SEPPA promoted participation and inclusivity in its educational activities targeting students?
- How could SEPPA have better included marginalized groups, youth, and women in its activities?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What, in your opinion, were the main barriers to the inclusion of marginalized groups in educational activities, and how effectively did the SEPPA project address them?
- Is there evidence that marginalized groups or underrepresented students specifically benefited from the educational opportunities created by the SEPPA project?

15.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project?
- Are there areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet your expectations?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with the SEPPA project, what good practices would you recommend for future programs aimed at enhancing educational activities related to the democratic process, good governance, and civic responsibilities?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar educational initiatives in the future?

16. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

16.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- Can you specify how the SEPPA project has shaped your organization's approach to covering democratic governance, political, and electoral processes in Armenia?
- Can you provide specific examples of how the SEPPA project helped improve your reporting, particularly in investigative journalism or educational content?
- In your view, how have SEPPA's interventions contributed to the quality, depth, or breadth of media reporting on governance and political issues in Armenia?
- Were there any specific SEPPA interventions that enhanced media reporting? What interventions did you find least effective?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What factors within the media landscape or broader socio-political context have helped the achievement of SEPPA's goals related to media? What factors have impeded the achievement of SEPPA's goals?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How adaptable was the SEPPA project to changes or challenges in the media environment during its implementation?
- Could you discuss any project adjustments made in response to these changes and their impact on media effectiveness?

16.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which changes or results from SEPPA are likely to continue impacting media reporting and operations beyond the project's conclusion?
- Have any practices or policy changes brought about by SEPPA been adopted or institutionalized within your media organization?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What strategies or mechanisms would you suggest to ensure the sustainability of SEPPA's achievements in the media sector?
- Are there any particular changes/activities the SEPPA project facilitated that you don't think will be sustained?

16.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did SEPPA address the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women in its media-related initiatives?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- What were the main barriers to inclusive and comprehensive reporting, and how effectively were they addressed by SEPPA?
- Is there evidence that marginalized groups or underrepresented voices were given more platform or coverage due to SEPPA's interventions?
- How could SEPPA have better included marginalized groups, youth, and women in its media-related activities?

16.4. LESSONS LEARNED

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project in relation to the media's engagement in political and electoral processes?
- Are there areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet media expectations?

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Based on your experience with SEPPA, what best practices would you recommend for future projects aimed at enhancing media capacity and coverage?
- What specific recommendations would you offer to improve the effectiveness of similar initiatives in the future?

17. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS (IFES, IRI, NDI)

Warm-up

- Introduction of the evaluator(s) and the evaluation process.
- Could you please introduce yourself and describe your role within your organization?
- Could you please provide a brief overview of your organization's cooperation with CEPPS (NDI/IRI/IFES) to date?
- To what extent are you aware of the efforts made by USAID SEPPA (NDI/IRI/IFES) in Armenia, particularly in their contribution to the democratic transition through the establishment of more participatory, transparent, and accountable government processes?

17.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- From your perspective, what were the main achievements of your organization under each IR?
FOR IRI:
 - IR 1.0.1: Improved operational capacity and coordination between government ministries
 - IR 1.0.2: Improved capacity to develop responsive policies/reforms that are in - line with public and civil society demands
 - IR 1.0.3: Improved strategic communications strategies to promote reforms and counter adversarial disinformation campaigns
- FOR NDI:
 - IR 3.0.1: Political parties develop more effective and inclusive structures
 - IR 3.0.2: Political parties operate and structure communications based on citizens' input and needs
 - IR 3.0.3: Political parties operate in compliance with the new legal-regulatory framework on political parties
 - IR 4.0.1: Improved capacity for parliamentarians and staff
 - IR 4.0.2: Improved capacity to develop responsive legislation that is in line with public and civil society demands
 - IR 4.0.3: Parliamentary factions are more representative of and responsive to citizen concerns
 - IR 4.0.4: Women Members of Parliament are organized and take on more leadership roles
 - IR 4.0.5: Young leaders are exposed to parliamentary democracy through professional internships
 - IR 5.0.1 Women acquire the skills, confidence, and networks for leadership roles in politics
 - IR 5.0.2 Women acquire the skills for leadership in consensus-building

FOR IFES:

- IR 2.0.1: Capacity of national and local election officials to effectively manage and enforce new electoral laws and regulations is strengthened
 - IR 2.0.2: Election stakeholders access to the reform process and knowledge of key priority reform areas is improved
 - IR 2.0.3: Citizen engagement in and understanding of key aspects of priority electoral reforms is increased
 - IR 2.0.5: The enabling environment for the enfranchisement of voters with disabilities (VWDs) is improved
- Can you provide examples and evidence of how these outcomes were realized through your organization's work?
 - How did your organization's specific interventions contribute to SEPPA's overall goals?
 - Were there any interventions that were particularly effective? What interventions did you find least effective?

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What internal or external factors positively or negatively impacted the achievement of SEPPA's goals?
- How did the project's design and your organization's implementation approach affect the project's results?
- What were your organization's operational strengths in implementing SEPPA?
- What operational challenges did you encounter, and how were they addressed?
- How effective were the project management and coordination mechanisms within your organization?
- How did your organization coordinate with other implementing partners and stakeholders?
- How efficiently were resources allocated and utilized in the implementation of the project?
- Were there instances of over or underutilization of resources, and how were these issues addressed?

1.3. Response to Contextual Changes:

- How did your organization adapt its strategies in response to contextual changes during the project's implementation?
- Can you describe the major adjustments that you made to the implementation of the project and their impact on the project's effectiveness?
- Could your organization have better adapted in response to contextual changes during implementation in any way? If so, how?

17.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- What elements of the SEPPA project implemented by your organization are likely to have lasting impacts?
- Which project practices or methodologies have been institutionalized for future use?
- What elements are not likely to be sustained?

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- What mechanisms or strategies has your organization put in place to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the key results achieved by the project?

17.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How did your organization ensure the inclusion of marginalized groups, youth, and women in the project's implementation?
- Can you provide examples of specific strategies employed by your organization to promote inclusive participation in project activities?
- How could your organization have better included marginalized groups, youth, and women in project implementation?

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- How did your organization identify and address the main barriers to the participation of marginalized or underrepresented groups?
- Is there evidence or feedback indicating that these strategies were successful?

17.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- From your perspective, what were the key strengths of the SEPPA project?
- Are there areas or aspects of the project that need improvement or did not meet the expectations of beneficiaries?

5.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- What good practices have emerged from your organization's implementation of the SEPPA project?
- Are there any innovative approaches or techniques that you would recommend for similar future projects?
- Based on your experience, what recommendations would you offer for enhancing the effectiveness of similar projects in the future?

18. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- Brief overview of the SEPPA project and the objectives of the FGD.
- Assure confidentiality and encourage open, honest discussion.
- Establish rules for respectful and constructive conversation.

18.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- How has the SEPPA project influenced your organization's activities and the broader civil society sector?
- Share specific examples where SEPPA's outcomes have been evident in your organization's work or the civil society landscape.
- Reflect on the various interventions or support provided by SEPPA. Which aspects were most beneficial for your organization and civil society engagement?
- Discuss any elements of the project that you found less effective or impactful.

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- What challenges did your organization encounter in leveraging SEPPA's support?
- Discuss internal or external factors that facilitated or hindered the project's success in the civil society context.

18.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which skills, knowledge, or practices from the SEPPA project are likely to be sustained within your organization and the wider civil society sector?
- Explore how these changes have been or could be further promoted.

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- Discuss strategies and mechanisms used by the project to maintain the positive outcomes and benefits of SEPPA within the civil society sector.

18.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- Assess the SEPPA project's approach to inclusivity, particularly regarding marginalized groups, women, and youth.
- Share experiences or observations on the project's efforts to promote inclusive participation.

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- Discuss barriers to inclusivity and participation in civil society initiatives and how effectively SEPPA addressed these issues.

18.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- Reflect on the overall implementation of SEPPA. Highlight what worked well and areas needing improvement.
- Encourage sharing of specific examples or stories that illustrate these points.

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Solicit recommendations for future projects similar to SEPPA. Discuss elements to retain or new approaches to consider.
- Facilitate discussion on innovative ideas or strategies that emerged during the SEPPA project which could benefit future initiatives.

Conclusion

- Summarize key points and thank participants for their input.
- Explain how their contributions will be used in the evaluation process.
- Outline the next steps following the FGD.

19. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

- Briefly introduce the SEPPA project and the purpose of the FGD.
- Ensure confidentiality and encourage honest, open discussions.
- Set ground rules for respectful engagement and equal participation.

19.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- Discuss how SEPPA's involvement has altered teaching methods, curriculum content, and student engagement with political and civic topics in your classes.
- Share specific examples where you've noticed SEPPA's influence in classroom discussions, assignments, or projects.
- Assess the educational activities introduced by SEPPA, such as workshops, seminars, or courses. Which have had the most significant impact on your learning and understanding of political and electoral processes?
- Identify any areas where SEPPA's educational interventions could have been more effective.

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- Discuss the challenges encountered while engaging with SEPPA's initiatives. How were these challenges addressed?"
- Identify key factors within your environment that either supported or impeded the success of SEPPA activities from your perspective.

19.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which educational skills, knowledge, or practices from SEPPA do you foresee using in the long term?
- Explore ways these changes might be permanently integrated into your institution's educational approach.

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- Discuss the mechanisms and strategies put in place by the project to maintain the positive educational outcomes and benefits of the SEPPA project.

19.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project promote inclusivity in its educational activities, particularly in terms of engaging marginalized groups, youth, and women?
- Share experiences regarding the project's efforts to ensure diverse participation in its educational activities.

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- Identify barriers to inclusivity in education and discuss how effectively SEPPA addressed these issues.

19.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- Reflect on the implementation of SEPPA in your educational setting. What aspects were most effective, and what areas need improvement?
- Encourage sharing stories that illustrate these insights.

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Solicit recommendations for future initiatives similar to SEPPA.
- Facilitate discussion on any innovative ideas or strategies that could benefit future initiatives.

Conclusion

- Summarize key discussion points and express gratitude for the participants' contributions.
- Explain how their feedback will be utilized in the evaluation process.
- Outline the next steps following the FGD.

20. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH PARTICIPANTS OF “WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP” PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

- Briefly introduce the SEPPA project and the purpose of the FGD.
- Ensure confidentiality and encourage honest, open discussions.
- Set ground rules for respectful engagement and equal participation.

20.1. EFFECTIVENESS

1.1. Achievement of Results:

- Discuss how SEPPA’s involvement has altered teaching methods, curriculum content, and student engagement with political and civic topics in your classes.
- Share specific examples where you’ve noticed SEPPA’s influence in classroom discussions, assignments, or projects.
- Assess the educational activities introduced by SEPPA, such as workshops, seminars, or courses. Which have had the most significant impact on your learning and understanding of political and electoral processes?
- Identify any areas where SEPPA’s interventions could have been more effective.

1.2. Enabling and Hindering Factors:

- Discuss the challenges encountered while engaging with SEPPA’s initiatives. How were these challenges addressed?”
- Identify key factors within your environment that either supported or impeded the success of SEPPA activities from your perspective.

20.2. SUSTAINABILITY

2.1. Lasting Change and Institutionalization:

- Which educational skills, knowledge, or practices from SEPPA do you foresee using in the long term?
- Explore ways these changes might be permanently integrated into your institution’s educational approach.

2.2. Sustainability Mechanisms:

- Discuss ideas and strategies put in place by the project to maintain the positive outcomes and benefits of the SEPPA project.

20.3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

3.1. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups:

- How effectively did the SEPPA project promote inclusivity in its educational activities, particularly in terms of engaging marginalized groups, youth, and women?
- Share experiences regarding the project's efforts to ensure diverse participation in its activities.

3.2. Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers:

- Identify barriers to inclusivity in education and discuss how effectively SEPPA addressed these issues.

20.4. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Strengths and Areas for Improvement:

- Reflect on the implementation of SEPPA in your experience. What aspects were most effective, and what areas need improvement?
- Encourage sharing stories that illustrate these insights.

4.2. Good Practices and Recommendations:

- Solicit recommendations for future initiatives similar to SEPPA.
- Facilitate discussion on any innovative ideas or strategies that could benefit future initiatives.

CONCLUSION

- Summarize key discussion points and express gratitude for the participants' contributions.
- Explain how their feedback will be utilized in the evaluation process.
- Outline the next steps following the FGD

21. ONLINE SURVEY FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in the final evaluation of the Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia (SEPPA) Program. The program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented jointly by International Republican Institute (IRI); National Democratic Institute (NDI) and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).The evaluation, carried out by US-based company Integra and supported by local research company Prisma, will assess the implementation and the results of the program, while providing recommendations to stakeholders in order to inform future programming. Your involvement in the survey is voluntary, and all information provided will be treated confidentially and kept completely anonymous. The data will be analyzed in a generalized way and your name will not be associated with the responses documented in this survey.

Thank you for participation, your opinion is very important for the evaluation.

I. Initiatives that you have participated in (please select all that apply)

1. Technical support with electoral reforms
2. Technical support with organization of elections
3. Election trainings

Full list of initiatives for the Government to be obtained from IFES

A. Effectiveness: How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA’s intended outcomes?

A1. How relevant were SEPPA interventions to the needs of EMB?

1. Highly relevant
2. Somewhat relevant
3. Neutral
4. Somewhat irrelevant
5. Not relevant
6. DK/RA

A2. How did the institutional capacity of election management bodies and mechanisms for ensuring integrity of the electoral processes change over the last 3-4 years? (Objective 4.)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change ⇒ skip to A4
5. Became worse ⇒ skip to A4
6. DK/RA ⇒ skip to A4

A. Effectiveness: How effective has SEPPA been in achieving its intended outcomes? Which interventions have been least effective in achieving SEPPA's intended outcomes?

A3. To what extent did SEPPA program contribute to these improvements?

1. To a very high extent
2. To a high extent
3. To a moderate extent
4. To a low extent
5. Did not contribute
6. DK/RA

A4. How did the capacity of the Central Election Committee to effectively manage and enforce new electoral laws change over the last 3-4 years? (IR2.0.1)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change
5. Became worse
6. DK/RA

A5. How did the capacity of the Territorial Election Committees to effectively manage and enforce new electoral laws change over the last 3-4 years? (IR2.0.1)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change
5. Became worse
6. DK/RA

A6. How did the capacity of the Precinct Election Committees effectively manage and enforce new electoral laws changed over the last 3-4 years? (IR2.0.1)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change
5. Became worse
6. DK/RA

A7. Based on your knowledge and experience, please rate the extent to which the SEPPA project contributed to improved capacity. Use a scale of 1 to 5,

1. Minimal contribution
5. Significant contribution
6. DK/RA

A8. Did you see any change with regard to citizen understanding of key aspects of priority electoral reforms over the last 3-4 years? (IR2.0.3)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change ⇒ skip to A10
5. Became worse ⇒ skip to A10
6. DK/RA ⇒ skip to A10

A9. Based on your knowledge and experience, please rate the extent to which the SEPPA project contributed to this improvement. Use a scale of 1 to 5.

1. Minimal contribution
5. Significant contribution
6. DK/RA

A10. To what extent has participation in SEPPA interventions changed your personal capacity to perform your current duties?

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change
5. Capacity building was irrelevant to my duties
6. DK/RA

A11. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the SEPPA project's contribution to the EMB's organizational and professional capacity enhancement.

1. Significantly enhanced
5. Decreased Capacity
6. DK/RA

A12. On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend your colleague to participate in future activities of the SEPPA project?

1. It is a waste of time
10. It is a must

EQ 2. B. Sustainability: Which elements of the intervention approaches and results achieved by SEPPA are most likely to be taken further and sustained beyond the close of the program?

B1 . Which of the given statements best describes the status of application of the knowledge/ skills gained by you through SEPPA interventions?

1. Already applying
2. Planning to apply
3. Not applicable to my work
4. Unsure/no response

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither disagree nor agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	DK/RA
B2. Please evaluate the following statements	My institution has an established mechanism to ensure that skills and knowledge gained through SEPPA are institutionalized						
	My institution is developing a mechanism to ensure that skills and knowledge gained through SEPPA are institutionalized.						
	There is a risk of losing skills and knowledge gained through SEPPA due to staff turnover						

B3. On a scale of 1 to 5, what is the likelihood that the EMB will sustain the positive changes you indicated above beyond the SEPPA project's conclusion?

1. Very Unlikely
5. Very likely
6. DK/RA

B4. Please bring up to three examples of changes led by your institutions as a result of SEPPA implementation which will continue and have effect even beyond the program's conclusion.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

EQ 3. C. Cross-cutting

C1. Could you please rate the extent of change you have observed in the access of people with disabilities in election processes over the last 3-4 years? (IR2.0.5, cross-cutting)

1. Significant Improvement Observed
2. Moderate Improvement Observed
3. Minor Improvement Observed
4. Slight Improvement Observed
5. No Change Observed
6. DK/RA

C2. To what extent did SEPPA interventions contribute to these improvements?

1. To a very high extent
2. To a high extent
3. To a moderate extent
4. To a low extent
5. Did not contribute
6. DK/RA

C3. In your opinion, how did women's political participation, influence, and leadership change over the last 3-4 years? (Objective 5)

1. Improved significantly
2. Improved moderately
3. Improved minimally
4. Did not change ⇒ skip to DI
5. Became worse ⇒ skip to DI
6. DK/RA ⇒ skip to DI

C4. To the best of your knowledge, please rate the SEPPA project's contribution to the enhancement of women's influence in the decision-making processes in Armenia on a scale of 1 to 5?

- 1. Minimal contribution
- 5. Significant contribution
- 6. DK/RA

D. Information

D1. Your role in the EMB

- 1. Member of Central Election Committee
 - 2. Staff of the Central Election Committee
 - 3. Member of Territorial Election Commissions
 - 4. Member of Precinct Election Commissions
 - 5. Other (please specify)
-

D2. Gender

- 1. Female
- 2. Male
- 3. Prefer not to state

ANNEX C:

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

DESK REVIEW BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Strengthening Electoral Processes and Political Accountability in Armenia (SEPPA) program description
2. SEPPA program annual workplans
3. SEPPA program quarterly reports
4. SEPPA program Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Plan (MELP)
5. SEPPA program MELP annual LOPs (targets and achievements)
6. SEPPA program Baseline Evaluation Report
7. SEPPA program Mid-term Evaluation Report
8. NDI Party Program Materials (Surveys, qualitative research, political party tires, etc.)
9. NDI Parliament Program Materials
10. NDI Katarine Program reports
11. IRI Surveys
12. SEPPA program capacity and needs assessment reports.
13. ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, 9 December 2018 Early Parliamentary Elections (<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/7/413555.pdf>)
14. ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report, 20 June 2021 Early Parliamentary Elections (https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/5/4/502386_0.pdf)
15. Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and ODIHR on Draft Amendments to the Electoral
16. Code and Related Legislation, 6-7 October, 2023 ([https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2023\)030-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2023)030-e))
17. Report on Yerevan City Council Elections, Transparency International – Anticorruption Center (<https://www.transparency.am/en/publication/343>)
18. Final Report on June 20 RA Snap Parliamentary Elections, Transparency International – Anticorruption Center (<https://www.transparency.am/en/publication/247>)
19. Assessing the Accessibility of Polling Stations in the Republic of Armenia, final report, “Agate” Rights Defense Center for Women with Disabilities NGO, 2021.

LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Executive Government

[Redacted Name]

Prime Minister's staff

[Redacted Name]

Information and PR Center of the Staff of the Prime Minister

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Justice

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

[Redacted Name]

Expert
Ministry of Health

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

[Redacted Name]

Prime Minister's Staff

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure

[Redacted Name]

Ministry of Justice

Legislative Bodies

Civil Contract Faction

Armenia Faction

Stang Committee on Health Care

National Assembly

Armenia Alliance faction

National Assembly

Civil Contract Faction

National Assembly

Civil Contract Faction

National Assembly

Political Parties

[Redacted]

Republican Party of Armenia (RPA)

[Redacted]

Bright Armenia

[Redacted]

Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF)

[Redacted]

Republic Party

[Redacted]

Republican Party of Armenia (RPA)

Media

[Redacted]

Media Initiative Center

[Redacted]

Public TV Armenia

[Redacted]

Public Journalism Club

Election Management Bodies

Central Elections Commission (CEC)

TEC

CEC

TEC

CEC

Teachers

Armenian National Agrarian University

French University of Armenia

National University of Construction and
Architecture of RA

State Academy of Fine Arts – Gyumri

International Organizations

[Redacted]

European Union CEPA Project

[Redacted]

USAID

[Redacted]

USAID

Civil Society

[Redacted]

Union of Informed Citizens

[Redacted]

Helsinki Citizens' Assembly-Vanadzor

[Redacted]

Transparency International

[Redacted]

AGATE NGO

IPs, IP HQs



NDI Armenia



NDI HQ



IRI Armenia



IRI HQ

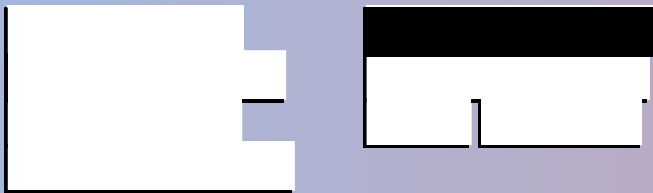


IFES Armenia



IFES HQ

FGD: Women in Leadership



KATARINE Women's Political Leadership Program participants

FGD: Civil Society

[Redacted]

We Can NGO

[Redacted]

We Can NGO

[Redacted]

We Can NGO

[Redacted]

Disability Rights Agenda NGO

FGD: Interns, Fellows

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern Alumni, Attache at the division of Multilateral Economic Cooperation, MFA

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern Alumni, Co-secretary of the Department of Foreign Relations of NA

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern Alumni, Assistant to the Deputy Minister, MFA

[Redacted]

Parliamentary Intern Alumni, Attachee of Division of Iran, MFA

ANNEX D:

**EVALUATION
TEAM MEMBERS**

	Role	Team Member	Contact Information
Evaluation Team	Evaluation Team Leader	Elinor Bajraktari	<input type="text"/>
	MEL Specialist	Liana Poghosyan (Prisma)	<input type="text"/>
	Elections Specialist	Tamara Sartania	<input type="text"/>
	MEL Expert	Maia Giorbelidze	<input type="text"/>
	Logisticician	Ani Topuzyan	<input type="text"/>

Integra Management Team	MEL Director	Gevorg (Kev) Torosyan	<input type="text"/>
	Operations Manager	Summer Hunter-Kysor	<input type="text"/>
	Operations Associate	Eleanor Roberts	<input type="text"/>



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