



Ministry of Territorial
Administration and Development
of the Republic of Armenia

TERRITORIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM IN ARMENIA (2015-2018): PROCESS, INTERIM RESULTS AND PROSPECTS

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Major developments of Local Governance in Armenia

- **Renewed legal framework** of local self government
- **Territorial and Administrative Reform in Armenia (TARA)**: consolidation of municipalities
- **Regional development strategy** to foster balanced development
- **Considerable investment projects** at local level
- **Continued donor technical and financial support** to Armenia's reforms from EU, USAID, BMZ/GIZ, SDC, UNDP etc.

TARA: Background information



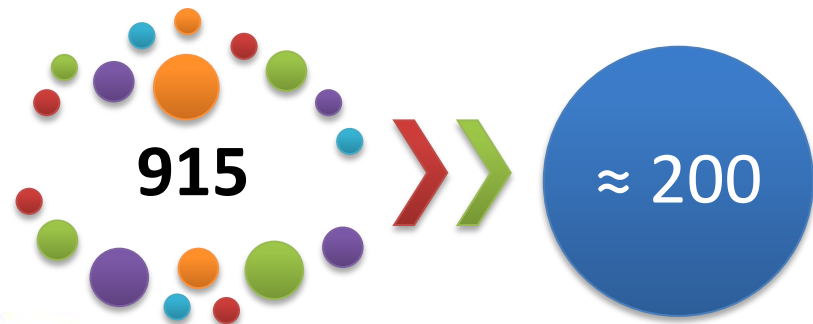
➤ Armenia at a glance:

Area: 29,800 sq. km

Capital: Yerevan

Population: ca. 3 million (2016)

Administrative division: 10 provinces and municipalities (incl. Yerevan)



➤ Number of municipalities:

Before the consolidation (2015): 915

After piloting phase (2016): 793

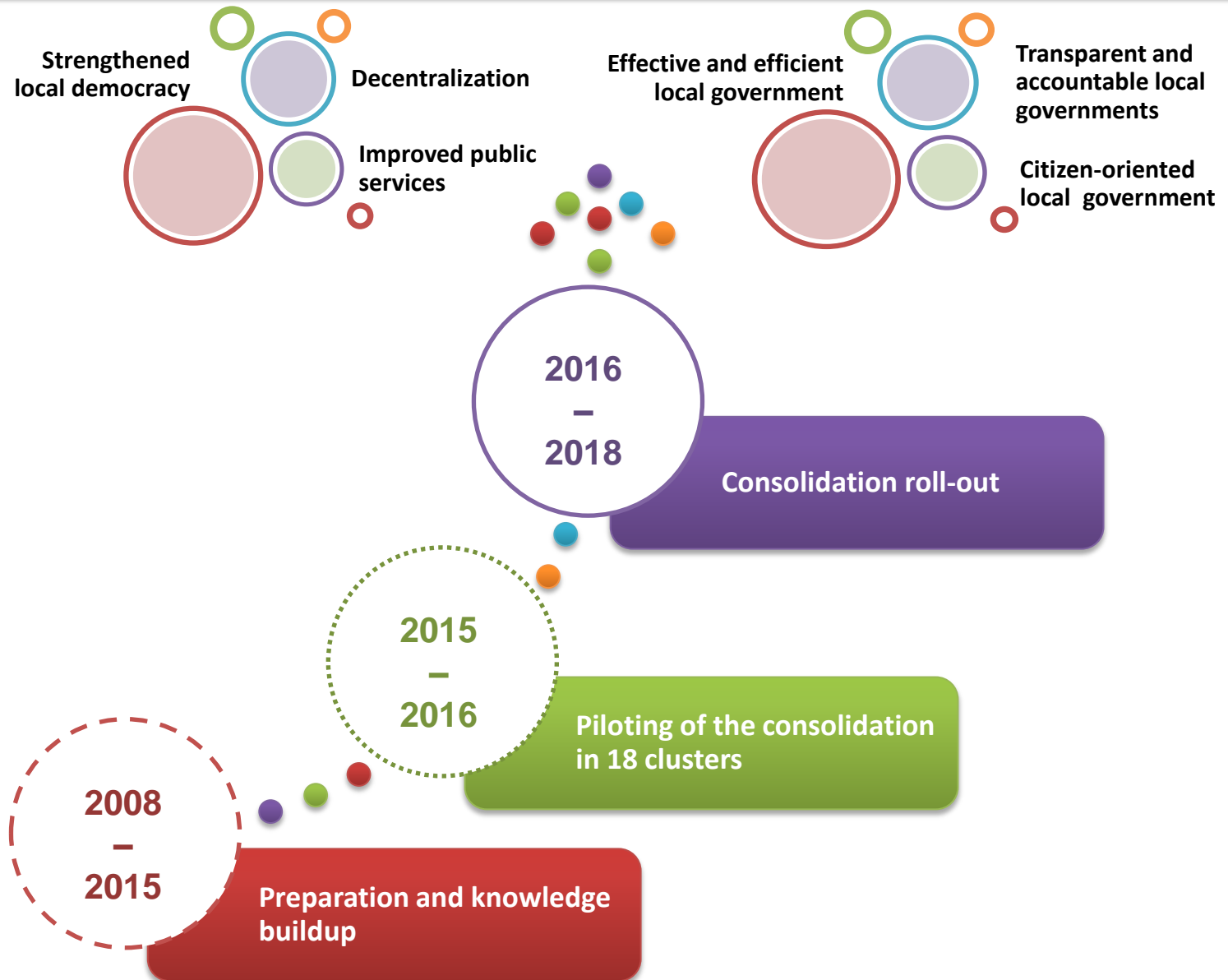
TARA rollout (planned by end 2018): 200³

TARA: Why consolidation?

- **Territorial and administrative fragmentation**
- **Weak capacity and performance** of local self-government bodies
- **Limited resources** (human, financial, etc.)
- **Low level of service delivery** at local level
- **Limited opportunities for territorial development**
- **Limited leverage for decentralisation**



TARA process timeline



18 consolidated municipalities (2015-2016)

✓ **Amasia** (9 settlements): 5.500 inhabitants

✓ **Arpi** (9 sett.): 1.900

✓ **Ashotsk** (11 sett.): 7.700

✓ **Ayrum** (8 sett.): 11.000

✓ **Dilijan** (7 sett.): 26.500

✓ **Gorayk** (4 sett.): 1.800

✓ **Goris** (10 sett.): 29.400

✓ **Jermuk** (4 sett.): 9.400

✓ **Koghb** (2 sett.): 5.900

✓ **Meghri** (13 sett.): 11.800

✓ **Noyemberyan** (9 sett.): 16.700

✓ **Sarapat** (15 sett.): 3.700

✓ **Tatev** (8 sett.): 6.400

✓ **Tegh** (7 sett.): 5.600

✓ **Tumanyan** (7 sett.): 4.800

✓ **Urtsadzor** (3 sett.): 4.200

✓ **Vayk** (5 sett.): 7.900

✓ **Zaritap** (9 sett.): 4.100



Impact of TARA (early results)

- **Improved local governance:** informed decision-making, more public participation, transparency and accountability, etc.
- **Increased financial and human resources**
- **More capable administrations** and improved administrative services, innovative e-governance tools
- **Improved infrastructures**
- **Advanced management tools** and mechanisms
- Expansion and **improvement of public services**

Innovative Tools for improving Local Governance



Efficient and effective municipal administration:

- Municipal Management Information System (MMIS)
- Citizen Offices (one-stop-shop)



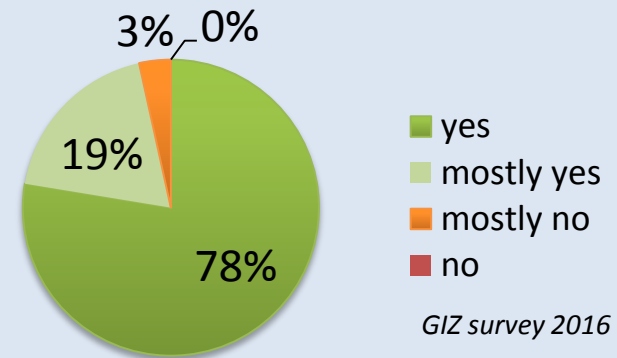
Public participation and engagement in local governance:

- SMS polling
- Accessible information platforms (MTAD, regional administrations and municipalities)
- On-line broadcasting

Municipal Management Information System

- ✓ **Initiative started in 2006**
- ✓ **Unified information system consisting of:**
 - numerous management systems, information resources, e-governance, e-participation and e-services components
 - Integrated with other state systems
- ✓ **Introduced and launched in over 550 municipalities in all 10 regions of Armenia**
- ✓ **Over 4.000 municipal servants trained on the system**
- ✓ **International awards :**
 - Open Government Award 2015 (Mexico)
 - Georgian IT Innovation Award 2016

Has the municipal service delivery improved after the introduction of MMIS?



Asia and Oceania
Armenia

"Smart Municipality"
Connecting the needs of the citizenry to the institutional development of local government



Citizen Offices

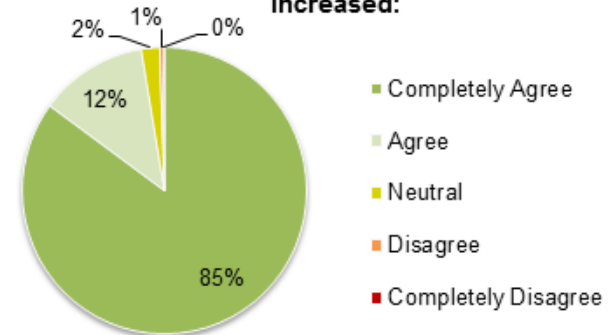
- Centralization of public service delivery, according to the citizen-oriented **“one-stop-shop”** principle

- By 2016, **21** Citizen Offices established:



- Plan for 2017-2018: **11** new Citizen Offices
- ✓ Extensive technical and financial support by donors and international organisations (BMZ/GIZ, USAID, SDC)

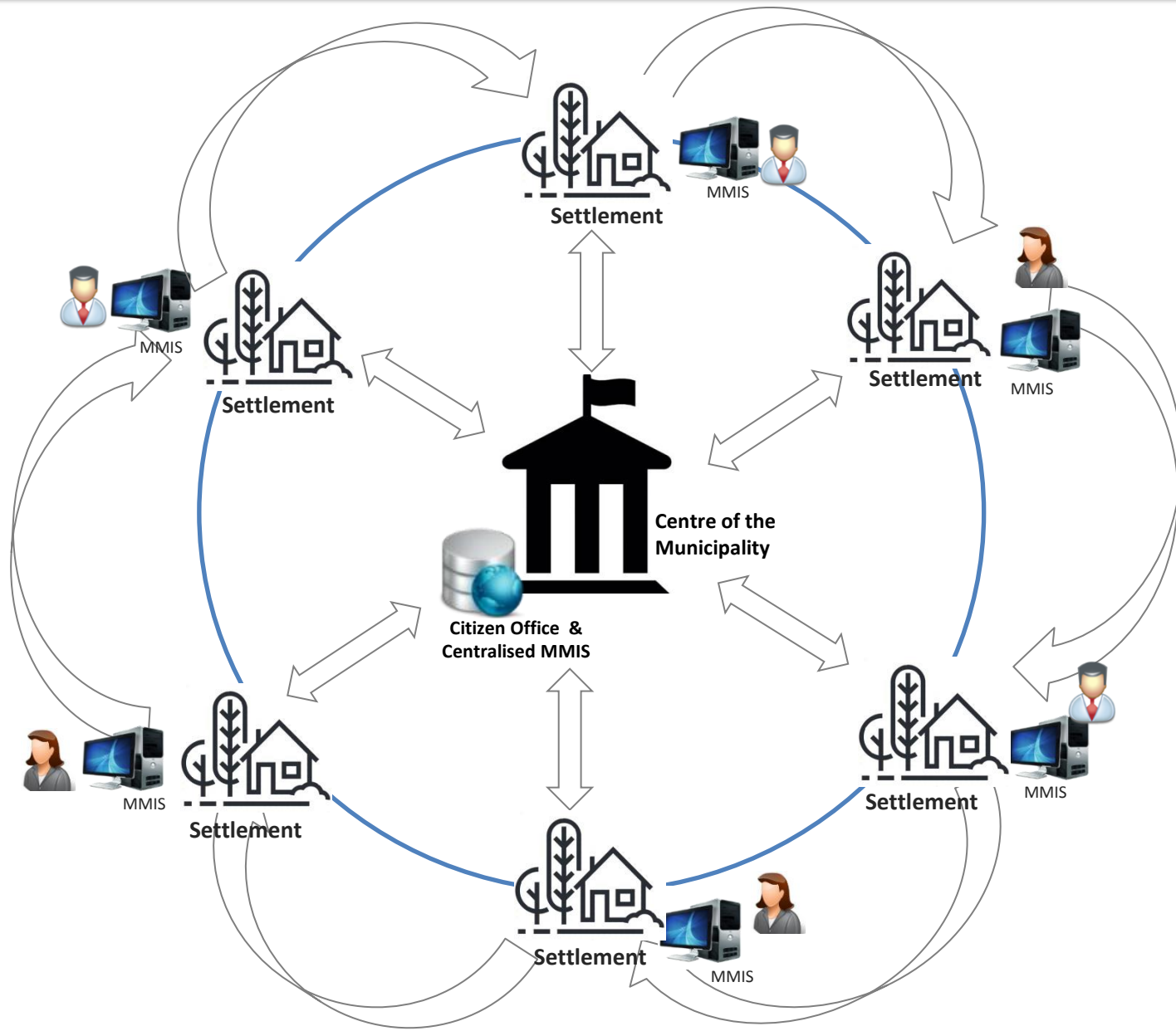
Since the opening of the Citizen Office the quality of municipal service delivery has increased:



GIZ surveys 2016 and 2017



MMIS and Citizen Offices operations in enlarged municipalities



Public participation and engagement in Local Governance

On-line broadcasting of Council sessions



SMS polling: a micro-referendum tool



Overall, 7.665 residents are registered for the SMS-polling in all 9 communities



In 9 pilot communities, 20% of the community residents registered responded to the poll



Poll results helping mayors substantiate arguments for requesting additional resources



SMS polling has been included in 2014-16 Open Government partnership Action Plan (2014-2016).



Presented at Global Forum on “Modern Direct Democracy” in San-Sebastian (Spain) and other events



Strengthening local infrastructures



ARMENIAN TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

- ❖ Governmental institution to identify local economic potential and prioritize investment needs
- ❖ Capital expenditures to foster local economic development, reactivate community life and reduce regional disparities
- ❖ Demonstration of potential benefits of the territorial reform, including increased access to financial resources



Lessons, issues and challenges

Lessons

- Considerable impact of socio-economic conditions (poverty, migration, unemployment, etc.) on achieving TARA goals and objectives
- Low public participation

Issues

- Balancing the interests of center and settlements
- Resistance of Mayors towards enlargement

Challenges

- Improved public confidence and trust
- Increased favorable perception among the public
- Activated community livelihood

Prospects, beyond 2018

1

TARA: assessment and capitalization on the results

2

Deconcentration and rethinking of the regional administrations

3

Further support to **capacity development and performance improvement** of local authorities

4

Expansion of **innovative tools and instruments to boost local governance** and the efficiency and effectiveness of local administrations

5

Design and implementation of **new (administrative and financial) decentralisation policies**

References

- Ministry of Territorial Administration and Development of Armenia: <http://mtad.am/en/>
- Armenia Territorial Development Fund: <http://www.atdf.am/en/Home>
- Municipality MMIS-based website (example): <http://ashtarak.am/Pages/Home/Default.aspx>
- On-line broadcasting of Council sessions (example) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UL7MVVHWXuc>
- SMS polling: <http://smspolling.org/#>
- Open Government Partnership <http://www.ogp.am/en/>

Thank you for your attention !