

Problem

Institutional problem

- Two different institutions were responsible for property registration in Georgia: The Bureau of Technical Inventory (BTI) and the State Department of Land Management (SDLM). BTI's local offices were controlled by municipalities and SDLM was under direct Government control
- The institutional split and financial and legal dependence on different bodies created problems for reform financing

Administrative difficulties

- Only registration offices accepted applications
- Increasing real estate transactions significantly enlarged queues, which were immense. Additional offices were opened and staff hired to manage the requests, resulting in a huge costs
- All procedures and cadastral activities were paper based, which made them lengthy and wearying
- Many unnecessary documents were requested for submission

Bureaucratic barriers

- Citizens had to go to several different agencies a number of times, and had to gather vast amounts of documents
- The timeline for registration was not specified
- The flow of documents in the registration offices was chaotic
- SDLM offices used Georgia's general administrative code that allowed one month for issuing a certificate, which was usually exceeded
- The registration process was too complicated and time-consuming
- Citizens were forced to pay several official (and unofficial) fees to gain required services in a timely way, which encouraged a parallel system of corruption.
- After submitting the documents for registration, next steps or the timeline of the procedure were unclear to the clients.
- To receive an extraction from a registration authority, physical identification was required or verified authority, and only then it was possible to obtain an application.
- It was impossible to get similar services in one particular location/department.

Overall, the problem was created by the queues, complicated bureaucratic mechanisms, fraud and corruption, lack of qualified personnel, lack of clearly defined procedures, the low accuracy of the cadastral proceedings, and documents on paper.

Solution

Institutional reform

A new agency, the National Agency of Public Registry (NAPR) has been established which is in charge of registering and administering all land/immovable property in Georgia. NAPR inherited the archive of BTI.

Operating the registration agency as a unified entity – A single body with the rights and functions to registration, cadastral record-keeping, and technical inventory archive management. Free from the local government influence

NAPR's capacity increased by streamlining operating procedures – An electronic registration system has been created.

Onerous and unnecessary requirements for notarization and stamps have been abolished.

Achieving full self-financing - The quality of the NAPR staff has been improved by increasing the funding of regional offices, improved service quality and investments in capacity building.

NAPR's capacity increased by institutionalizing procedures to eliminate corruption – A staff performance monitoring system coupled with online accessibility and transparency have eliminated corruption.

Simplification and de-bureaucratization of administration

- Procedures have been simplified and the list of required documents has been shortened
- The whole system has been digitalized, an electronic journal has been created containing information about every step of each procedure, additional information and results. Abstracts documenting the status of citizens' real property can now be obtained online. The web-page enables users to use each service and observe the decision-making process.
- Front and back offices were divided functionally. Citizens only have contact with the front office, while the decisions are made in the back. Front and back offices have an electronic communication system.
- Outsourcing: Involving people with specific skills such as: commercial banks, credit agencies, notaries, brokers, companies, and others.
- A GIS Geographic Information System has been implemented in a unified cadastral information system. In this system, each plot is determined with high accuracy. The cadastral information is presented in an electronic form to the registering body. Implementations of cadastral plots are digital, and are under the authority of the public registry.
- The existing paper based databases were digitalized. Now only the scanned versions are used and the paper based documents were sealed off after scanning.
- House of justice. Introducing electronic systems and services, simplifying processes, and de-bureaucratizing resulted in the creation of a unified space of public service, the House of Justice, which includes the majority of public services (public and civil registry services, etc.).

Results

- As a result of outsourcing, 30% of applications are submitted by authorized personnel.
- Registration takes just one procedure and less than one day.
- After digitalizing the archives the risk of corruption in technical bureau has been minimized.
- After the reforms the number of registrations increased, the queues decreased, the processes and administration simplified, the problem of unqualified staff solved. A comfortable and transparent environment has been created for the citizens.
- As a result of the reforms, the main criteria of good governance have been reached: transparency, accessibility, transparent procedures, and guaranteed protection of registered rights.
- International recognition – # 1 in registering property in Doing business ranking (2013 - 2014)
- Time required for the procedure decreased from 39 (2005) days to just 2 days (2013)