

PROJECT TITLE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE EU-FUNDED PROJECT DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
FOR
CIVIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC (DT4CE)

FINAL

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF
THE EU-FUNDED PROJECT
DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR
CIVIC EMPOWERMENT IN THE
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC (DT4CE)**

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

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This independent evaluation report was prepared by an evaluation team consisting of Bunafsha Gulakova, Team Leader, and Sabina Salikhova, Data collection expert. The Transparency International MEL Unit provided normative tools and guidelines used in the evaluation process.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this independent evaluation report are those of the evaluation team. They do not represent those of Transparency International. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the evaluation team.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation or Acronym	Full name/word	Abbreviation or Acronym	Full name/word
AC	Anti-Corruption	PwD	Person with Disability
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	KII	Key Informant Interview
DAC	Development Assistance Committee	RCR	Road Condition Reporting
DT4CE	Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment	ToR	Terms of Reference
EU	European Union	ToT	Training of Trainers
EC	European Commission		
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment		
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach		
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning		
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization		
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development		
OGP	Open Government Partnership		
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring		
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals		
TI-S	Transparency International Secretariat		
TI-K	Transparency International Kyrgyzstan		

INTRODUCTION

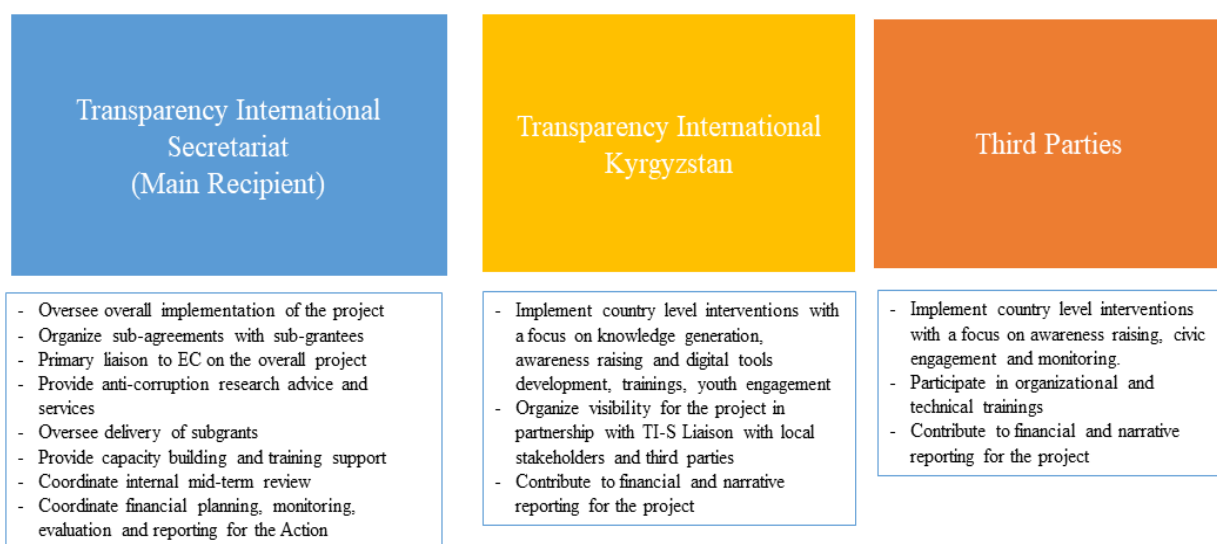
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The intervention *Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment in Kyrgyzstan* (DT4CE) is a three-year initiative (1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025) funded by the European Union under the 2022 Call for Proposals of the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic, within the framework of the Development Cooperation Instrument (2021–2027). The total project budget is EUR 1,052,632, of which the EU finances EUR 1,000,000.

Implemented by Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S), a lead applicant, and in partnership with Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) as a co-applicant, the project aims to strengthen the capacity of civil society to assert their rights and participate in governance processes through the use of digital technologies. By improving access to interactive digital tools (Outcome 1) and enhancing the digital capacities of CSOs and youth (Outcome 2), the intervention contributes directly to the intended impact: an empowered civil society that uses digital technology to become a stronger actor in democratic governance.

To this end, the Transparency International Secretariat (TIS), as the main recipient and lead implementer, held overall responsibility for the strategic coordination and delivery of the project. This included signing agreements with sub-grantees, liaising with the European Commission, overseeing the implementation of project activities, and ensuring quality assurance across outputs. TIS also provided technical advice on anti-corruption and civic engagement, led the delivery of capacity-building and training initiatives, and managed project monitoring, evaluation, and reporting at the global level. Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) was responsible for implementing country-level activities in Kyrgyzstan. Its role focused on delivering digital tools, civic engagement actions, youth participation initiatives, and awareness-raising campaigns. TI-K also played a coordinating role with local stakeholders, ensured visibility for project interventions, and contributed to both financial and narrative reporting. It served as a key bridge between local implementation and the global project framework.

Figure 1. Division of responsibilities (source: DT4CE. Description of Action. 2022)



By developing accessible civic tech tools, the intervention seeks to enhance accountability, enable rights-holders to engage in public policy dialogue, and support inclusive civic participation. While the tools were

especially relevant for youth, women, and other underrepresented groups, the overarching goal remains to empower civil society as a whole to act as a constructive partner in governance.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

The final evaluation of the *Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment (DT4CE)* project provides an external and independent assessment of the project's overall performance, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation aims to inform future programming by Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S), TI Kyrgyzstan (TI-K), and other stakeholders, while supporting the consolidation of project achievements.

The project implementation period lasts from January 2023 to December 2025. The evaluation covers almost all implementation period from January 2023 to November 2025 and focuses exclusively on activities in the Kyrgyz Republic. The project, funded by the EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic with a total budget of EUR 1,052,632 is implemented by TI-S in partnership with TI-K.

The evaluation examines the project's contributions across four civic tech platforms (*Bilem.kg*, *Jol.kg*, *JMD.kg*, and *TSA.kg*), ten sub-granted CSO initiatives, two reports on the Public Procurement Law Amendments, published in 2024, discussed in one high-level round table¹ and a range of capacity-building and digital empowerment efforts. Special attention is given to digital inclusion and civic engagement among youth and women.

The assessment applies to standard OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, with additional attention to innovation, inclusion, and civic space. It draws on project documentation, financial records, stakeholder interviews, and monitoring data, guided by Transparency International's impact assessment framework.

MAIN FINDINGS PER EVALUATION CRITERIA

The project was highly relevant and achieved moderate to good effectiveness under difficult conditions. It produced tangible outputs and seeded mechanisms for digital civic engagement. However, structural barriers stemming from public institutions' perceptions of the CSO position as a "foreign agent" under current law, resource limitations affecting efficiency, and uncertainty about future sustainability constrain its longer-term impact. These findings suggest the need for strategic follow-up, expanded partnerships with government actors, and capacity strengthening for local implementers.

Relevance

The project was viewed as highly relevant by almost all stakeholders. Sub-grantees consistently affirmed that digital tools addressed genuine citizen needs for engagement, transparency, and safe reporting. Several CSOs confirmed that the platforms (JMD, Jol.kg, Bilem, Tsa) aligned with their target group priorities, such as youth participation, civic education, and digital literacy. For example, **Bilem's educational modules** and **JMD's initiative platform** were particularly appreciated for empowering users to engage with legislative processes. One partner emphasised that without this initiative, such civic platforms would not have emerged in Kyrgyzstan under current conditions. The intervention's overall design was also seen as responsive to contextual challenges such as shrinking civic space and limited channels for citizen voice. In that regard, the initiative helped create safe digital avenues for public participation and community-led monitoring. However, some CSOs felt that the initial needs assessments could have more explicitly captured the realities of rural users, older persons, and persons with disabilities and limited digital access. Despite these limitations, the project was widely recognised as timely and strategically positioned to support democratic participation through digital innovation.

¹ <https://bilem.kg/category-resources-article/13>

Coherence

There was alignment between the project goals and the mandates of the partner CSOs. For example, some beneficiaries stated the hackathons were directly aligned with their mission to empower youth in the tech sector, while others reported that the digital tools advanced their work in citizen oversight. While some sub-grantees initially noted limited coordination across organisations working on similar themes, efforts were made to address this. For instance, Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) facilitated cooperation by connecting CSOs with the Kyrgyz branch of the Internet Society, which delivered training-of-trainers on digital literacy and shared educational materials. This brought together multiple sub-grantees, helping to build collaboration and avoid duplication. Some CSOs continued to coordinate during implementation, although the level of collaboration varied. However, the project team clarified that integration with government systems was neither planned nor possible. Maintaining the platforms' independence was a deliberate, strategic design choice aimed at safeguarding their role as civic tools for public oversight, transparency, and rights-based engagement. In the current national context, formal integration into government infrastructure would not have ensured sustainability. On the contrary, it could have led to the marginalisation or even deactivation of the platforms, effectively removing them from the public digital space. Against the backdrop of shrinking civic space and increasing restrictions on information, the autonomy of these platforms was critical to preserving their accessibility, credibility, and developmental potential.

Efficiency

The project met or exceeded most of its output targets within the planned timeline. Four hackathons were conducted in 2023, with over 700 participants. Mobile apps and platforms were launched across all four components. The number of registered users on platforms surpassed targets by more than fourfold (2358 vs. 500 target). However, several partners reported that the initial technical design and procurement processes led to delays, and timelines were tight for adapting and testing tools. In addition, delays were also driven by external factors such as changes in procurement legislation, the introduction of new NGO regulations, and complex app store compliance requirements. Although financial disbursement was seen as flexible and quick, CSOs highlighted the need for earlier and more structured communication from TI. At the same time, procurement and approval procedures followed EU PRAG requirements, which ensured compliance and eligibility but inevitably extended timelines. Additional due diligence was required to uphold Transparency International's integrity standards and prevent potential conflicts of interest before disbursing grants. Although these steps were necessary, they contributed to a tight implementation schedule. The experience highlights the importance of early risk assessment, clearer planning, and streamlined communication in multi-stakeholder initiatives.

Sustainability

There is credible evidence that certain project benefits, especially those related to digital literacy, civic engagement tools, and CSO capacity-building, are likely to persist beyond the immediate funding period. At the organisational level, Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability. This is reflected in the ongoing maintenance of the Bilem.kg platform, supported by partial bridge funding from the Open Society Foundations. TI-K also plans to activate a donation feature and further consolidate the platforms under its management, though achieving long-term technical and financial sustainability will depend on securing future support. Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) contributed to these efforts by facilitating structured handover processes, providing system documentation, and offering targeted capacity development. Notably, one of the municipal authorities has agreed to include their data on the website, which is still owned by the CSO-subgrantee, and several CSOs have shown interest in continuing aspects of their work.

Additionally, digital content produced through the project, such as video tutorials and civic education materials, continues to circulate on public platforms. However, for most sub-grants, particularly those with only a six-month implementation period, the limited duration restricted the ability to consolidate results, deepen user engagement, or embed lasting change. Moreover, legal amendments passed in April 2024 under Law No. 72 have created new administrative burdens for NGOs, including requirements for registration in a state registry, mandatory audits, and public disclosure of foreign funding sources. These changes have

contributed to a shrinking civic space, characterised by heightened surveillance, a risk of sanctions, and reputational concerns. Simultaneously, shifting donor priorities particularly among some bilateral donors, have reduced the availability of funding for transparency and governance initiatives, contributing to a more constrained operating environment for civic tech projects and transparency and governance, and has further reduced the availability of funding for civic tech and accountability initiatives². This combination of factors has fostered an environment of self-censorship, leading some civil society actors to shift to less sensitive areas, such as youth or environmental protection.

The suspension of the Kyrgyz Republic from the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in May 2024 has further diminished the enabling environment for institutional uptake of civic technology initiatives. This development reflects a broader national retreat from commitments to transparency and citizen participation. Nonetheless, despite this national-level withdrawal, some municipal actors, including the Bishkek Mayor's Office, have expressed interest in adopting and adapting tools developed under the (sub-grant) project. While these localised engagements indicate potential entry points for sustaining project results through subnational partnerships, without continued investment and structured follow-up, such efforts are likely to remain isolated and insufficient to ensure long-term sustainability.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- The DT4CE project introduced innovative digital tools and small grants to engage citizens, particularly youth and regional CSOs, in promoting transparency and civic participation. The project achieved many of its immediate objectives, but its contribution to long-term, systemic change in public integrity, accountability, or anti-corruption remains limited.
 - The project was relevant to the needs of civil society in Kyrgyzstan, offering new forms of engagement amid increasing restrictions on civic space. It was particularly timely in its focus on youth and digital literacy, recognising that young people increasingly use technology to engage with public life. The sub-granting mechanism enabled regional outreach and the development of content in local languages and formats, which was positively received.
 - Platforms such as Jol.kg and JMD demonstrated that citizens are willing to use technology to report problems and engage in lawmaking when provided with user-friendly tools. The legislative platform generated 44 proposals approved by moderators (out of 63 submitted) from 388 verified users, totaling 828 votes as of 1st December 2025. This exceeds the Logframe target of two initiatives and 250 engaged participants.
1. While the quantitative indicators achieved during the reporting period exceeded Logframe targets, particularly in terms of platform visits and user registrations, it would be premature to interpret these figures as evidence of sustained civic mobilisation. Most of the activity was concentrated in October 2025, coinciding with a targeted promotional campaign. This pattern suggests that while civic engagement can be mobilised through short-term outreach, the observed participation likely reflects an initial uptake phase rather than organic or recurring use. Indicators related to stable user growth, autonomous participation, and recurring engagement are inherently long-term in nature and require ongoing observation beyond a single campaign cycle. At this stage, the results point to the platform's functional viability and potential as a civic tool, rather than to its institutionalisation in daily citizen engagement. Sustained participation will likely depend on the presence of follow-up mechanisms, stronger institutional integration, and demonstrated responsiveness, factors that help reinforce public trust in the platform's relevance and credibility.
 2. The project made measurable progress in outreach and digital engagement, while capacity-building results were more mixed. Hackathons successfully attracted more than 700 participants, mostly students,

² This refers to the phasing out of USAID's direct funding mechanisms for Kyrgyzstani CSOs, including the closure of its civil society support programme. This development was cited by several stakeholders during the evaluation as indicative of a broader decline in donor support for governance-related initiatives.

exceeding the 500-person target. They played an important role in introducing civic tech concepts to new audiences. Over 1,085,223 digital platform visits and 2,358 registrations were recorded, surpassing expectations. Data on whether CSOs improved their use of technology or internal governance was collected via sub-grantees feedback forms by the project staff at the end of the sub-grant program in November 2025, indicated that a half respondents (50%) rated their improved digital capacity with the highest score, thus the project had rather strong positive impact on digital capacity, confidence, and practical application of digital tools among CSOs.³

3. At the impact level, the project contributed to civic awareness and helped raise visibility of local issues that were possible to validate by visiting the websites such as Bilim.kg. Sub-grantees documented a few examples of municipal responses to citizen reports. Behavioural change among digitally excluded groups, particularly older persons, was clearly observed in the case of the Resource Centre for the Elderly (RCE). Following the digital literacy trainings conducted in Balykchy and Ak-Jar, participants not only accessed the civic technology platforms but also actively engaged with them. Usage data shows that older adults made 278 visits to **Bilem.kg**, 258 to **Jol.kg**, and 125 to **jmd.kg**, demonstrating uptake of new digital habits⁴. In addition, members of the AgeNet network submitted 15 real appeals and petitions through these platforms, signaling a meaningful shift from passive recipients of information to active civic actors⁵.
 - A post-training survey revealed that 60 per cent of respondents reported feeling more confident using digital tools, with an additional 37.5 per cent noting partial improvement. The popularity of follow-up learning tools, including video lectures with over 13,000 views and an electronic textbook accessed more than 1,800 times, further indicates a sustained interest in acquiring and applying digital skills among elderly users⁶. These results demonstrate that the intervention had a measurable, transformative behavioral effect on a typically excluded population segment. However, there is no clear evidence of sustained behavioral change and institutional responsiveness, or policy uptake as a result of the project. Some sub-grantees noted improvements in internal data handling and documentation, but this remained isolated.
 - The project's impact was constrained by several factors, including: the late launch of digital platforms (some in December 2024) and mobile apps, the compressed timeline for sub-grants (six months instead of a more prolonged period up to 12 months initially envisaged by sub-grantees), and political developments and restrictive legislative amendments, including the 2024 "foreign representatives" law. These conditions limited the opportunity to consolidate or expand the project's results.
 - While the EU's support was essential to the implementation of this project, especially under difficult political conditions, its added value was not fully realised. The EU's support provided essential legitimacy and flexible funding, creating a strong foundation for the project's achievements. While the EU did not engage directly in coordination or policy-level dialogue, its backing enabled the project to reach significant milestones and positioned it well for potential future scaling and broader impact.
 - In response to civic space concerns, the project's visibility was intentionally managed with caution, ensuring a sensitive approach that respected the local context. This careful strategy allowed the initiative to progress without drawing undue attention, while still laying the groundwork for advancing EU priorities such as public accountability and amplifying citizen voice.
 - Gender and social inclusion were considered at the design stage, including through the use of a gender screening tool for sub-grants. TI-S and TI-K undertook steps after the ROM review to address gender and social inclusion shortcomings, in particular by systematising data aggregation, developing subgrantee selection criteria that consider GESI, providing GESI recommendations to subgrantees, and others. However, some projects did not disaggregate data by gender or disability, and no budget was allocated for accessible formats of the four platforms. While the project reached women, rural communities, and some marginalised groups such as LGBTQ+ youth, this was not the result of a systematic and well-elaborated inclusion strategy, as, for instance, the most vulnerable group in terms of digital and information accessibility, as PwD were not sufficiently included.

³ The project document "Assessment of grant program"

⁴ Resource Center for the Elderly, Final Report on Implementation of DT4CE Sub-Grant Activities (November 2025) 2–5, 8–9.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLowW6wWFyqooeLXY9Pq6PtUT1LFex70M6>, last visited 18.12.2025

- The DT4CE project demonstrated that civil society organisations and citizens in Kyrgyzstan are willing and able to engage in civic action using digital tools, when given the opportunity. However, the project's ability to turn these pilot results into lasting changes may have been undermined by time constraints and a lack of institutional partnerships with the state institutions as a result of the worsening political environment. With better sustainability planning, longer-term engagement, and stronger monitoring of results, future initiatives could build on this foundation to achieve greater and more durable change.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS⁷

The evaluation proposes three priority recommendations to enhance the sustainability, relevance, and institutional anchoring of the DT4CE initiative:

1. Enhance Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

To bridge the digital divide and ensure inclusive civic participation, it is recommended that all project-supported platforms undergo an accessibility audit by Q2, 2026. The audit should assess compliance with international standards such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) and identify concrete areas for improvement. Based on audit findings, a phased action plan should be developed and implemented to ensure accessibility for persons with various disabilities, including visual, hearing, cognitive, and mobility impairments. This may include features such as screen reader compatibility, keyboard navigation, alt text for images, scalable text, audio captions, and plain-language options in Kyrgyz and Russian.

2. Strengthen Institutional Coordination and Sustainability

TI-K should initiate formal dialogues with the relevant ministries to explore the institutional adoption or co-maintenance of DT4CE-developed civic tech platforms or features (for instance, a road-fixing platform). This aims to embed the tools within Kyrgyzstan's digital governance framework and increase the prospects for long-term impact.

3. Clarify Post-Project Platform Ownership and Management

TI-K and TI-S should undertake a technical and institutional review of all digital platforms by Q2 2026 to define responsibilities, maintenance needs, and funding pathways. A roadmap should be shared with stakeholders to ensure clarity over platform sustainability and content moderation. In particular, it should include options for establishing mirror hosting arrangements on secure servers outside the country to preserve user access in the event of domestic restrictions. TI-K, as the platform owner, should lead implementation, with technical guidance from TI-S and potential donor support for digital security and cross-border hosting solutions.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Lessons Learned

1. The sustainability of digital tools requires local capacity and support.

There is limited project capacity to maintain platforms due to insufficient IT staff or resources. Maintenance strategies must include local adaptability, paired with extended capacity-building beyond the project timeframe.

2. Civic space restrictions affect participation and focus areas.

CSOs shifted to less politically sensitive themes, such as environmental protection and digital literacy, in response to shrinking civic space. Thematic flexibility is therefore essential for projects in restrictive environments.

⁷ Please note that the Executive Summary only includes the most important recommendations as identified by the evaluation team. All recommendations can be found in the main body of the report.

3. **User engagement depends on ease of use and visible outcomes.**

Platforms such as JMD and Jol.kg were more effective when users could intuitively navigate them and see concrete results (e.g. legislative follow-up, road improvements). However, both platforms faced operational constraints, including limited user analytics, slow query response times, and unclear mechanisms for escalating feedback. While they represent promising practices in civic tech, further improvements are needed to strengthen their usability, responsiveness, and integration with decision-making processes.

4. **University partnerships show promise but need to be institutionalised.**

Hackathons attracted significant student participation, and an agreement was established with AUCA to showcase the platforms and engage AUCA Innovation College (start-up participants) in developing solutions for or utilising our platforms. While some formal collaboration has been established through MoUs, longer-term sustainability may require more systematic approaches. A more feasible option could involve including project platforms (e.g., Jol.kg, TSA.kg) as optional digital tools within university seminars, extracurricular civic tech clubs, summer schools or student-led research projects. There is emerging evidence of institutional progress in embedding anti-corruption education at the tertiary level in Kyrgyzstan⁸. Similarly, while embedding the digital platforms into a single municipal or national service portal is not feasible, continued use may be supported by promoting the portals as informational resources through existing local government or sectoral digital channels.

5. **Visibility of the EU's Role**

In restrictive civic space environments, visibility must be carefully calibrated to avoid exposing local actors to risk. While DT4CE rightly adopted a cautious approach to in-country visibility, future interventions could enhance the EU's profile through alternative, lower-risk channels. These may include using EU Delegation websites and regional EU platforms to showcase results, highlight success stories, and promote EU support for democratic values and digital rights. Developing a visibility strategy early in the project, in coordination with the EU Delegation, would help maximise outreach while safeguarding implementing partners.

Good Practices

■ **Local language content improves accessibility**

Short video tutorials in Kyrgyz language and usage of plain texts on using tools like Tunduk were effective in reaching elderly and rural users, demonstrating the importance of linguistic relevance. Platforms like Bilem and JMD used modular navigation and gamification, making them more accessible to users with limited digital skills. These efforts were complemented by targeted capacity-building activities, including digital literacy trainings and helpdesk support, which reinforced users' ability to navigate and benefit from the platforms.

■ **Hackathons as entry points for youth innovation**

Hackathons provided a safe and creative forum for youth to develop civic tech ideas. While not all prototypes were scaled, they generated public engagement and innovation pipelines, and some interesting start-ups.

■ **Engaging regional NGOs in all capacity-building activities**, strengthening their skills through expert sessions, peer learning, and networking. **Benefits:** broad geographic coverage, complementary expertise, shared learning, and greater reach and quality

⁸ In 2024, a Master's programme in "Effective Governance and Anti-Corruption" was launched by the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, with support from UNDP⁸. The programme is designed to equip civil servants and prospective public officials with competencies in corruption risk assessment, compliance mechanisms, and transparency tools. Its launch marks a step toward institutionalising anti-corruption capacity within the national education system and reflects a broader strategic orientation towards good governance. Complementary efforts by the Central Asian Research Institute on Corruption and Money Laundering (CARI) offer specialised training and academic engagement in anti-corruption compliance and public accountability. These early efforts are helping build Kyrgyzstan's anti-corruption learning ecosystem.

- **Integrating Internships to Sustain Platform Operations and Build Youth Capacity**
 - A structured internship program was launched to support the sustainability and daily operations of DT4CE digital platforms. Originally intended for three participants, demand grew after the first hackathon, leading to the expansion to 18 interns in 2024. Interns assisted with tasks such as content development, document uploads, and public engagement, while gaining practical experience. This not only addressed operational needs but also fostered a new generation of civic tech practitioners by providing real-world learning opportunities and career pathways.

- **Distinctive Features of Digital Platforms**
 - Beyond numerical data, the unique characteristics of each digital platform are noteworthy: Bilem.kg is distinguished by its extensive library of user-friendly, plain-language guides. The platform contains hundreds of step-by-step instructions for accessing government services. This unique approach simplifies interactions with government institutions, making services more understandable and accessible to the general public. The legislative initiative platform introduced an innovative mechanism in Kyrgyzstan, allowing any citizen to propose legislative changes digitally. Previously, collecting the required 10,000 signatures to submit a proposal to Parliament required visiting public spaces such as bazaars, schools, and museums. With the new platform, citizens can now participate directly and gather signatures online. The road monitoring platform empowers them to document and submit photographs of poor road conditions, resulting in a publicly visible map of road quality. The platform thus directly involves the public in monitoring infrastructure quality; The public procurement platform provides practical guidance for participating in tenders and submitting complaints in cases of violations. It offers citizens and businesses a transparent and user-friendly tool to monitor procurement processes, thereby promoting fair competition and strengthening government accountability.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

OVERALL CONCEPT AND DESIGN

The DT4CE project was funded by the European Union and implemented by Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) in collaboration with Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K). The project, which runs from January 2023 to December 2025, aims to strengthen civic engagement and public accountability in Kyrgyzstan by equipping civil society actors, particularly youth and CSOs, with digital tools to influence public policy and become a stronger actor of good governance

At the core of DT4CE was the co-design and rollout of digital platforms that facilitate citizen participation, feedback, and oversight. Two existing pilot platforms were re-engineered, and two new civic tech tools—with accompanying mobile applications—were developed. These platforms address key governance domains, including public procurement, road construction, civic legislative initiatives, and access to public services. The conceptual design of the platforms was informed by four hackathons, which brought together university students and IT professionals to generate initial ideas for technical features and user engagement strategies such as gamification. These conceptual inputs were subsequently refined and formalised into final technical specifications during the development phase, in line with the project design.

In parallel, the project includes a capacity-strengthening component focused on enhancing the digital and advocacy skills of civil society organisations and citizens, with particular emphasis on young people and women civic activists. Legal and informational support is also provided to help users address corruption-related grievances and navigate administrative systems. Through these activities, DT4CE aims to increase transparency, improve access to information, and foster constructive civic engagement using digital means.

The project aims to empower civil society through digital technology to be stronger actors in governance, fostering participatory democracy and improving public accountability. The core logic of the intervention linked two interdependent objectives⁹:

1. *Improved and accessible direct and interactive digital tools*
2. *Strengthened capacities of CSOs and youth to use digital technology*

The Theory of Change assumed that empowering citizens and CSOs with digital tools, combined with targeted capacity building and inclusive design, would contribute to increased public oversight, constructive civic engagement, and incremental improvements in transparency and accountability in public governance. While the project did not anticipate measurable governance reforms during the implementation period, its design aimed to catalyse behavioural and systemic shifts through pilot initiatives and scalable models, incorporating adaptive learning to respond to restrictions on civic space. The project design incorporated adaptive learning to address constraints on civic space and included both pilot activities and scalable models for future use.

During the project implementation (2022-2025), Kyrgyzstan sharply narrowed civil space and public transparency through the adoption of several legal acts, with direct implications for the project design, the Logframe, and a risk analysis revision. The most notable Laws include:

- 1) Amendments to the Law on Non-Commercial Organisation (also known as the Law on Foreign Representatives - Law # 72 of 2 April 2024), which force foreign-funded NGOs and even some

⁹ Transparency International Secretariat, Logical Framework DT4CE UPDATED 15.06.2025 (Brussels 2025)

media projects into a stigmatising “foreign representatives” status with burdensome reporting and the risk of suspension or liquidation for non-compliance;¹⁰

- 2) A new Law on Mass Media (2025), which makes registration mandatory for all outlets (including online) and gives the statewide discretion to approve or revoke registration.
- 3) A new Law on Public Procurement (law # 27 of 14 April 2022, applied and adjusted in 2023) that removes state and municipal enterprises with ≥50% state ownership from the scope of procurement rules, effectively moving around one-third of public spending outside open tendering and the e-procurement portal and making NGO and media oversight of major contracts far more difficult.¹¹

The restricting political environment has also affected the project’s shift to reduced visibility and the level of engagement with government stakeholders.

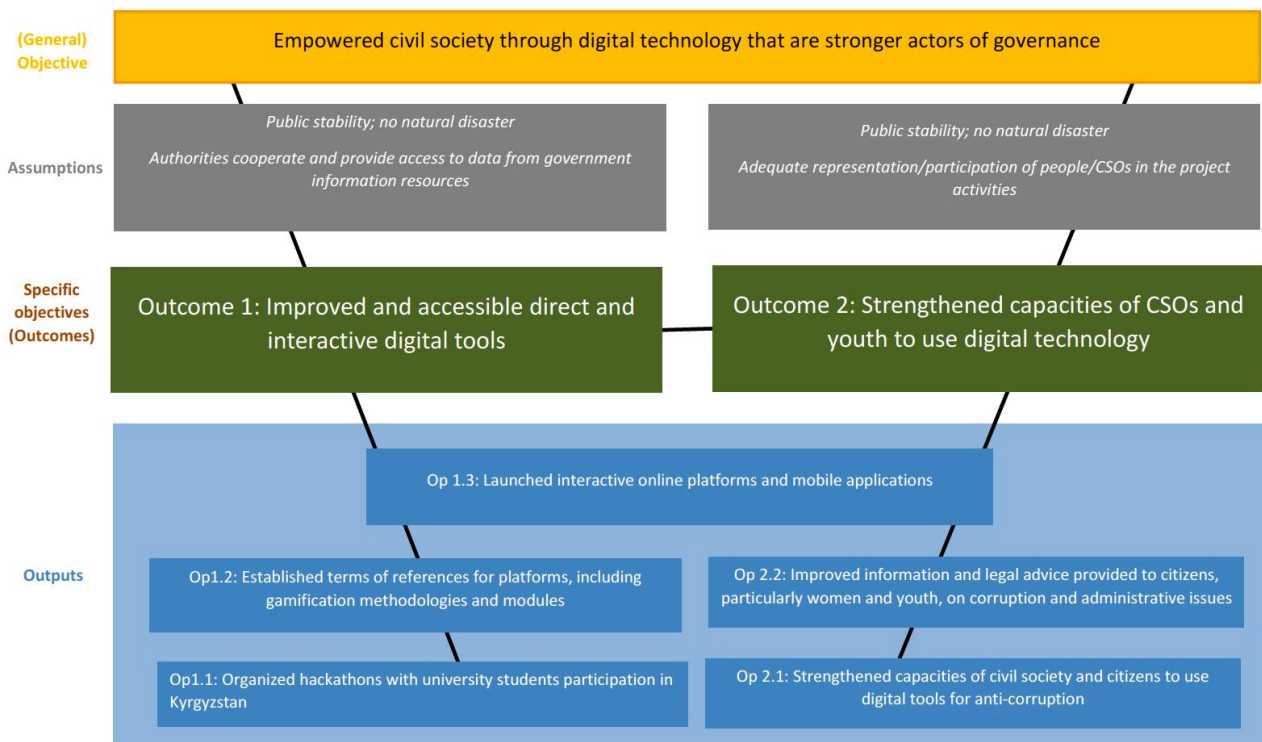


Figure 1 ToC developed for the MEL DT4CE

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The final evaluation of the DT4CE project aimed to deliver an external, independent, and evidence-based assessment, with a focus on its impact, sustainability, and overall performance. It analysed the project’s achievements and its contribution to positive or negative changes, while generating actionable learning to inform future programming in the Kyrgyz Republic and the wider region. Specifically:

- **Assess impact and sustainability** – Provide an independent, systematic, and objective assessment of the project’s results, evaluating outcomes against the initial goals set in the project’s MEL framework and determining the extent to which net benefits are likely to be sustained over time.
- **Review performance** – Examine the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness (including innovation and inclusion aspects), and coherence of the project, as well as the quality of its implementation.

¹⁰ ICNL Analysis. Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Amendments to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic on Noncommercial Organizations, https://www.icnl.org/wp-content/uploads/2024.04-Final-Analysis-of-the-KR-Law-on-Foreign-Representatives_eng-vf.pdf

¹¹ Kyrgyzstan’s new procurement law hides one third of public spending from scrutiny. <https://www.open-contracting.org/2022/09/14/kyrgyzstans-new-procurement-law-hides-one-third-of-public-spending-from-scrutiny/>

- **Generate learning** – Document lessons learned and identify good practices, producing clear, forward-looking, and actionable recommendations to guide TI-S, TI-K, CSO subgrantees, and other stakeholders in designing and implementing future related work at the national and regional levels.

The Scope of the evaluation: The evaluation covered almost the **entire implementation period** of the DT4CE project from **1 January 2022 to 30 November 2025**, with the aim of providing an external, independent assessment of the project's **impact, sustainability, and overall performance**. The geographical scope was limited to the **Kyrgyz Republic**, where the project is implemented through a consortium led by **Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S)** and implemented in partnership with **TI Kyrgyzstan**. The project has a **total budget of EUR 1,052,632**, funded under the **EU Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic**.

The evaluation assessed **key results and activities**, including four civic tech platforms (**Bilem.kg, Jol.kg, JMD.kg, and TSA.kg**), and its eight mobile apps, hackathons for youth, the **subgranting scheme** covering **10 local CSO initiatives** with a budget envelope of **EUR 160,000**, the **analytical** papers and a variety of capacity-building, legal support, and digital civic empowerment efforts. Specific areas of interest include digital inclusion of women and youth, and legal helpdesk services.

Evaluation Users: The **primary audience** for the evaluation will be TI-S, the project partner in Kyrgyzstan, and other core stakeholders. The findings will support the consolidation of project results and inform the strategic design of future initiatives.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation applied a **utilisation-focused, mixed-methods** approach grounded in OECD-DAC and UNEG standards. The evaluation assessed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of the DT4CE project, with a particular focus on civic space, digital engagement, and public accountability mechanisms in Kyrgyzstan. The Evaluation Matrix (EM) served as a central analytical and methodological tool in the project's final evaluation. It was designed to align with the OECD-DAC criteria, the cross-cutting EU priority of added value, and the dimensions of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). Structured around **seven evaluation questions**, the EM operationalised each criterion through a total of **99 indicators**, ensuring systematic inquiry and comparability across findings.

Each evaluation question was accompanied by sub-questions and indicators, tailored to the project's design and context in the Kyrgyz Republic. For example, EQ1 focused on alignment with national reform priorities, TI-S and TI-K institutional strategies, and EU programming priorities, with indicators capturing both documentary evidence and stakeholder perceptions. Similarly, EQ2 assessed both internal coherence between project components: digital platforms, sub-grants, advocacy, and external coherence with other EU and donor-funded anti-corruption efforts.

The matrix integrated a broad range of data collection methods, including desk review, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), media content analysis, and platform usability testing. Triangulation was explicitly built into each evaluation question, combining documentary sources (e.g. Logframes, strategic documents, reports) with primary data from implementing partners, CSOs, digital developers, and beneficiaries. Key documents included the KR National Development Strategy 2021–2026, TI-S and TI-K strategies, the EU Multiannual Indicative Programme, project proposal, ROM reports, and sub-grantee outputs.

Indicators also covered the functionality and uptake of digital tools (e.g. Bilem.kg, Jol.kg, JMD.kg, TSA.kg), inclusion of marginalised groups, and institutional responses to platform data. Several indicators tracked how the project responded to external risks such as shrinking civic space, while others assessed the likelihood of sustainability through exit strategies, co-financing, and institutional integration of tools.

In practice, the EM was used to guide the design of evaluation instruments, including interview guides, survey questions, and observation templates. It enabled the evaluation team to maintain consistency across data sources, frame comparative judgments, and map evidence directly to the evaluation criteria. The final synthesis drew on the EM to identify strengths, gaps, and lessons learned, while also ensuring accountability to EU-funded results frameworks and the implementing partners' strategies.

Methodological Approach: The evaluation was guided by the project’s Theory of Change and intervention logic, enabling a structured assessment of activities, outputs, outcomes, and intended impacts. The evaluation assessed the extent to which implementation remained aligned with its core logic. Where adaptive management responses were observed, for example, such as adjustments to sub-granting cycles or platform deployment in response to contextual constraints, these were considered in the analysis of how outcomes were pursued in practice.

The evaluation incorporated both a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and a Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) perspective, focusing on power dynamics, barriers to access, and intersectional factors like geography, age, disability, and socio-economic status. The project documentation was also reviewed to assess how gender equality and social inclusion were integrated into the implementation of grants.

Data was disaggregated by sex and age where possible. Special attention was paid to the inclusion of female stakeholders, youth, persons with disabilities or seniors, and rural residents in civic tech platforms and sub-grant activities. In line with UNEG guidance on human rights and gender equality, the evaluation also explored whether women’s participation translated into gender-responsive outcomes and addressed risks, including sextortion, online harassment, gender-based cyberviolence, and digital exclusion arising from barriers such as limited affordability, lack of device ownership, low digital literacy, and restrictive social norms.

Data Collection and Analysis: Primary data was collected through **28 KIIs** and **one focus group**, engaging **31 stakeholders** (13 male, 18 female). Stakeholders included CSOs, youth, platform users, hackathon winners, TI-K and TI-S staff, and EU Delegation representatives. Tools included:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus group discussions
- Field observation
- Short feedback questionnaires
- Secondary sources: subgrantee reports, digital platform analytics, survey data, and the needs assessment

Mixed Methods and Triangulation: The evaluation applied a convergent design combining qualitative and quantitative data. Triangulation drew on project M&E data, digital analytics, and desk reviews tools and methods were selected to capture anti-corruption results, such as increased access to legal information (e.g. Bilem.kg), improved service delivery, and citizen engagement via civic tech.

Quantitative sources included the project’s monitoring and evaluation data (e.g. number of users, proposals, votes, outreach events, and training participation) and digital platform analytics (including user statistics from Bilem.kg and JMD.kg platforms), site visits to civic tech platforms and sub-grantee offices, interviews with nine sub-grantees and eight national and local stakeholders, and desk review of relevant documents such as the MEL framework (2024), ROM Report (2024), interim project progress reports (2023 and 2024), the relevant Kyrgyzstan country Reports from other development partners. These were cross-checked with implementation milestones and budgetary data from Progress Reports (2023, 2024) and the ROM report (2024).

Qualitative evidence came from structured interviews with project staff, sub-grantees, local CSOs, training participants, hackathon participants and panel members, and platform users, as well as desk reviews of national frameworks (e.g., SDG 5 reporting, national gender strategies, transparency laws), training materials, and the project’s communication outputs. Mobile applications were evaluated to determine if the previously reported outcome remained accessible and effective.

Sampling Strategy: Sampling ensures geographical and demographic diversity. Stakeholders were selected from Bishkek, Naryn, Osh, and Jalalabad, targeting:

- Youth and women (40% of respondents).
- Nine CSOs sub-grantees, amongst them recipients of grants, various capacity building training events, and civic tech platforms experts.
- Hackathon partners, participants and panel members.
- NGOs representatives, participants of CSOs capacity building course (non-grantees), including on their use of digital tools Jol.kg, Bilem.kg, TSA.kg, JMD.kg and e.g. legal and DV/GBV chatbot use.

Ethics and Safeguards: The evaluation adhered to UNEG ethical guidelines, informed consent protocols, and data protection measures. Sensitive topics such as digital safety and restrictions on civic space were handled with discretion. Travel and logistics minimise environmental impact by clustering field visits and using digital tools where feasible.

A field mission to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, was conducted between 3 and 7 November 2025, with follow-up interviews conducted remotely throughout November. The field mission to Bishkek was conducted as part of the final evaluation of the DT4CE project, to collect primary data, validate preliminary findings, and assess project achievements and sustainability on the ground. A total of 31 individuals were consulted, comprising 28 through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and 3 through a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Of those interviewed, 13 were male and 18 were female, ensuring a relatively strong representation of female voices, particularly from civic tech actors, legal aid providers, and grassroots CSOs.

The mission engaged with 13 civil society organisations (sub-grantees and capacity-building training participants), including nine sub-grantees and regional partners from Batken, Naryn, Jalalabad, and Bishkek. At least 5 participants were youth, including hackathon winners, platform developers, and youth panel members. Key stakeholders interviewed included project staff from Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) and the TI Secretariat (TI-S), CSOs, including sub-grantees, legal professionals, gender experts, and representatives of the EU Delegation to Kyrgyzstan. The discussions focused on project relevance, implementation challenges, sustainability prospects, and the evolving civic space in Kyrgyzstan.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The stakeholder analysis was informed by the initial desk review, the stakeholder matrix compiled by the project team, and discussions held during the evaluation inception meeting on 4 September 2025. Stakeholders were identified based on their roles in the implementation chain, their thematic contributions, such as gender mainstreaming, digital tools, and civic monitoring, and their potential to provide relevant data on outcomes and emerging impacts. The analysis also considered the need for triangulation across institutional, operational, and community levels.

Vulnerable groups were integrated into the evaluation through a combination of direct and indirect consultations. These included students from universities participating in civic hackathons and elderly groups represented by the CSO grantee, the Resource Centre for the Elderly. A group of national gender experts were consulted through a dedicated focus group to assess inclusion and support gender-sensitive recommendations for future programming.

The evaluation engaged a broad range of stakeholders involved at different levels of the DT4CE project, including TI-S, TI-K, and civil society subgrantees across Kyrgyzstan. Each group played a distinct role in informing the process and validating the findings, as explained hereunder.

Transparency International Secretariat, as the overall lead and contract holder with the European Commission, was responsible for strategic oversight, compliance with contractual obligations, donor liaison, and coordination across project components. In its role as the coordinating entity, TI-S provided inputs on the project’s conceptual framework, results architecture, and adaptive adjustments during implementation. Key staff involved in project management, finance, policy, and regional oversight were consulted to explain the project’s design logic, governance structures, coordination with the donor, and challenges encountered during implementation. Their contributions helped the evaluation team understand the rationale behind the intervention, the evolution of its Theory of Change, and expectations regarding scalability, innovation, and sustainability.

Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K), as the primary national implementer, was responsible for day-to-day project operations in the Kyrgyz Republic. This included contextualising the activities, developing civic technology platforms, managing sub-granting procedures, coordinating with national stakeholders, and ensuring local outreach and visibility. The project manager, executive leadership, communications staff, and technical personnel were interviewed to explore implementation dynamics, platform development and outreach, monitoring systems, and capacity support provided to CSOs. Their inputs were essential for assessing the project’s relevance, effectiveness, and adaptive capacity in the Kyrgyz context.

Civil society subgrantees, as the main implementing actors at the grassroots level, offered first-hand perspectives on project delivery in diverse local contexts. Public authorities and local government partners were considered but not available. To address this data gap, the evaluation triangulated institutional insights using: official policy documents and legislative reforms, feedback from civil society actors with direct experience attempting to engage with public authorities. Consultations with the beneficiaries from Batken and Naryn were included in data collection. These discussions also explored institutional constraints and the prospects for sustaining digital civic engagement in rural settings. Through this multi-level stakeholder engagement, the evaluation ensured that the views of strategic, operational, and local actors were reflected in the analysis.

LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

Limitations of the evaluation	Mitigation measures
<p>Public authorities and local government partners were included in the stakeholder engagement strategy; however, several key informants were ultimately unavailable for consultation, which limited the institutional depth of the evaluation. This included representatives from the Ministry of Digital Development, the High Technology Park, and the General Prosecutor’s Office. Despite multiple outreach efforts, interviews with these entities could not be arranged within the evaluation timeframe. As a result, institutional perspectives on the alignment of digital tools with public service modernisation, the capacity of the local tech ecosystem to support long-term sustainability, and the justice system’s responsiveness to citizen-generated feedback could not be comprehensively assessed.</p>	<p>The mitigation was beyond the evaluation team’s control to engage with state actors. To address this data gap, the evaluation triangulated institutional insights using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official policy documents and legislative reforms (including the 2024 amendments on foreign representatives law, media, and procurement legislation) • Feedback from civil society actors with direct experience attempting to engage with public authorities <p>This approach ensured that the evaluation remained evidence-based and methodologically sound, even in the absence of direct interviews with state actors. Institutional findings later in the report are clearly attributed to these secondary sources and stakeholder triangulation, rather than unverifiable assumptions. While institutional collaboration was limited, this is itself a key finding of the evaluation and not a shortcoming of the evaluation process.</p>

<p>The planned focus group discussion with journalists was also not conducted due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter and the shrinking civic space in Kyrgyzstan. Journalists expressed reluctance to participate in group settings where digital security and media freedom were to be discussed, particularly in relation to anti-corruption reporting. To respect their concerns and ensure their safety, the evaluation team opted not to proceed with the FGD. As a result, direct insights from media actors on the role of digital platforms in promoting transparency and accountability remain limited.</p>	<p>Secondary Source Triangulation was used, incorporating insights from existing media monitoring reports, prior research on media freedom, and relevant survey data, partially filling evidence gaps. To partially compensate for the lack of direct interviews, the team reviewed outputs and statements by independent Kyrgyz media outlets that are now based abroad or operating under legal pressure inside the country. This included open-source publications and investigative pieces published by platforms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kloop.kg (whose operations were suspended by court order in 2023). • Azattyk Media (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty – Kyrgyz Service), including statements following its website blockage in 2023. • 24 kg, which continues to face pressure while reporting independently within the country.
<p>Political sensitivity surrounding anti-corruption discussions in rural areas</p>	<p>Evaluation focused on platform functionality and user experience rather than explicitly political topics, triangulated findings with analytics. For example, how easy they were to access and whether they were useful for solving everyday problems, like reporting bad roads or finding legal documents. To make sure the findings were still reliable, the evaluation team used several sources to cross-check the information, including: Website and app usage data from different regions; Feedback forms from training participants; Reports and updates from local organisations that received grants; Notes from the November 2025 evaluation field mission. This helped build a clear picture of how the platforms were used in rural areas, even though it was not possible to explore political topics in depth.</p>

II. EVALUATION FINDINGS

RELEVANCE

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

- 1.1 How well did the project's objectives align with the relevant national reform priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic, strategic priorities of TI-S, TI-Kyrgyzstan, and EU priorities?
- 1.2 To what extent did the project design and objectives respond to the needs, priorities, and capacities of final beneficiaries, including women, youth, rural residents, and persons with disabilities?

1.1 How well did the project's objectives align with the relevant national reform priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic, strategic priorities of TI-S, TI-Kyrgyzstan, and EU priorities?

Alignment with National Reform Priorities of the Kyrgyz Republic

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has placed digital transformation, e-government and transparency at the centre of its national reform process. The National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018–2040 outlined the contours of the country's digital transformation. The national concept “Sanarip Kyrgyzstan” (Digital Kyrgyzstan) 2019–2023 and the subsequent Concept for the Digital Transformation of the Kyrgyz Republic 2024–2028 emphasise one of the strategic goals as:

“Providing high-quality digital services, improving the efficiency, effectiveness, openness, transparency, accountability and anti-corruption of the public administration system, increasing the level of citizen involvement in the processes of state and municipal decision-making through the digital transformation of the public and municipal management system”.¹²

Kyrgyzstan joined the Open Government Partnership Local initiative in 2020, while Bishkek was among the first municipalities in Central Asia to champion reforms fostering open and transparent local self-governance.¹³ During the project's design and early implementation phase, OGP action plans prioritised citizen feedback mechanisms, participatory budgeting, and transparency in public procurement and service delivery. However, in May 2024, the OGP formally designated the Kyrgyz Republic as inactive due to civic space restrictions and lack of progress on open government commitments. Despite this suspension, the objectives of the DT4CE project remained consistent with the original OGP agenda and local-level transparency goals promoted prior to the country's designation as inactive¹⁴.

The DT4CE project's digital tools have demonstrated strong alignment with national priorities on transparency and civic engagement, particularly in the context of Kyrgyzstan's Open Government commitments at the time of the design. Several interviewed stakeholders, including civil society actors and sub-grantees, noted that the platforms complemented broader transparency efforts and filled critical gaps in civic engagement and participation. Although institutional stakeholders were not available for interviews during the evaluation, their participation in project roundtables and platform events was documented and perceived as constructive.

12 The Concept Of Digital Transformation "Digital Kyrgyzstan" - 2019-2023
https://adam.kg/media/uploads/2022/04/15/sanarip_kyrgyzstan_koncepciya.pdf

13 Action plan. Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, 2025- 2025, 7th April 2025.

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/action-plan-bishkek-kyrgyz-republic-2025-2025/>

14 Open Government Partnership, 'Kyrgyz Republic Inactivity Resolution' (OGP, 10 May 2024)

https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Kyrgyz-Republic_Inactivity-Resolution_20240510.pdf accessed 6 December 2025.

Nonetheless, the evaluation recognises that formalised cooperation mechanisms between civil society-led civic tech initiatives and state institutions were not fully established. While TI-K and partners emphasised the importance of maintaining independence and non-governmental control over these tools, some informants saw potential added value in exploring modalities for structured collaboration, including through shared dissemination, training, or data exchange. Therefore, in terms of relevance of design and approaches, the evaluation finds that institutional embedding of civic tech solutions developed by civil society remains a key challenge and opportunity for future scale-up. This highlights both a constraint and a future opportunity for deeper institutional embedding, while respecting the autonomy of civic platforms.

Against this backdrop, DT4CE's objectives, developing digital platforms for enhanced civic engagement such as **public procurement monitoring, local infrastructure (roads) reporting, civic initiatives and access to legal information**, and building digital literacy among citizens and CSOs, fit squarely within national priorities to use digital tools to make public services more accessible, transparent and accountable.

The project's focus on **digital participation of women, youth, rural residents and persons with disabilities** also reflects national goals to expand digital inclusion under Sanarip Kyrgyzstan and related digital readiness work supported by government and development partners.¹⁵ National data indicate that only 45% of rural women have regular internet access, and that less than one-third of ICT students are female.¹⁶

Despite this, the project's outreach was not sufficiently tailored to overcome these systemic barriers, limiting its relevance for underserved audiences. The project did not include a dedicated engagement strategy or systematic tracking of their participation, as clarified in internal documentation and discussions with the donor.

Despite political restrictions, the project remained aligned with the national priorities throughout its implementation, as the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan signed a Decree in June 2025, supporting the previous course on digitalisation, and enforcing "National Development Program until 2030", where digital transformation and good governance are outlined among key functional and cross-cutting priorities. In particular, it stipulates commitment to implementing e-government and digitalising the economy and public services to enhance efficiency and transparency.

Even where later amendments to the Public Procurement Law reduced transparency for some categories of state spending, international assessments still highlight **public procurement transparency and complaint mechanisms** as key anti-corruption reform needs in Kyrgyzstan.¹⁷ In this sense, the project's procurement-related objectives remain fully consistent with the broader reform agenda, even if the legal and political environment became less favourable during implementation.

Alignment with TI-S and TI-K Strategic Priorities

Transparency International's **Global Strategy 2021–2030, "Holding Power to Account for the Common Good,"** prioritises:

- strengthening institutional checks and balances,
- enforcing anti-corruption standards,
- greater transparency, accountability and equity in influence over public decision-making
- and activating social oversight, particularly through civic engagement and digital tools.¹⁸

DT4CE directly operationalises this strategy by equipping citizens and CSOs with **digital platforms to monitor public procurement and infrastructure projects, submit complaints, follow up on state actions, and access legal information**, all of which help hold power to account in practice.

¹⁵ Advancing Digital Transformation in Kyrgyzstan: A Joint Effort for Sustainable Development, UNDP Kyrgyzstan.

<https://www.undp.org/kyrgyzstan/press-releases/advancing-digital-transformation-kyrgyzstan-joint-effort-sustainable-development>

¹⁶ Source: Gender and Digitalisation. UNDP 2025

¹⁷ Baseline Report of the Fifth Round of Monitoring of Anti-Corruption Reforms in Kyrgyzstan. The Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan. OECD, 2024. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2024/11/baseline-report-of-the-fifth-round-of-monitoring-of-anti-corruption-reforms-in-kyrgyzstan_9180017b/187f45b3-en.pdf

¹⁸ Transparency International. Our Strategy. Holding Power to Account – A Global Strategy Against Corruption 2021-2030.

<https://www.transparency.org/en/the-organisation/our-strategy>

At the national level, TI-Kyrgyzstan explicitly defines one of their objectives and priorities as **assisting individuals and organisations in the implementation of their constitutional rights and freedoms, with particular regard to using international experience to reduce corruption, develop technology and resources to aid with this, and increase civil society's participation in combating corruption both nationally and internationally.**¹⁹ DT4CE is one of TI-K's flagship projects and is fully aligned with this mission: it builds and tests concrete tools (platforms and apps) that embody TI-K's programmatic focus.

Overall, the project can be seen as a direct implementation vehicle for both TI-S's global strategy and TI-K's country-level priorities in anti-corruption, transparency, and digital civic engagement.

Alignment with EU Priorities and the EU–Kyrgyz Bilateral Framework

EU cooperation with Kyrgyzstan for 2021–2027 identifies **“Governance and Digital Transformation”** as a core priority, alongside the rule of law, human rights, and support for civil society.²⁰ The **Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)** signed in June 2024 further underscores EU–Kyrgyz collaboration on **good governance, digital transformation, human rights, and civil society engagement** as central pillars of the relationship.²¹ DT4CE's objectives mirror these EU priorities. The project contributes to:

- **Rule of law and public integrity**, by supporting the monitoring of procurement and infrastructure spending.
- **Digital transformation**, through the development and use of civic-tech platforms, is aligned with national digital strategies.
- **Civil society empowerment and human rights**, by enhancing citizens' ability to access information, express concerns safely, and participate in decision-making.

COHERENCE

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

2.1 To what extent was there internal coherence between the project's components (digital platforms, sub-grants, capacity building, advocacy) to achieve intended results?

2.2 To what extent was the project coherent with other anti-corruption and governance initiatives in the Kyrgyz Republic, including EU-funded programmes?

2.1 To what extent was there internal coherence between the project's components (digital platforms, sub-grants, capacity building, advocacy) to achieve intended results?

Interviews revealed strong alignment between the project's objectives, digital platform development, capacity building, and sub-grantee interventions. For example, student hackathons were designed to support platform development; students contributed to user interface design and content ideas. According to interviewees, this process supported both their IT learning and civic awareness, as some of them initiated several petitions on the platform jmd.kg.

Sub-grant projects actively integrated TI's digital platforms into their activities. For example, one regional project focused on digital literacy for rural populations and encouraged the use of the road-reporting platform. Another targeted youth digital literacy through the civic initiatives digital tool.

¹⁹ Transparency International Kyrgyzstan. Mission, Goal, Priorities. <https://en.transparency.kg/o-nas/missija-celi-priority.html>

²⁰ Kyrgyz Republic Multi-annual Indicative Programme, 2021-2027. https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-01/mip-2021-c2021-8987-kyrgyz-republic-annex_en.pdf

²¹ EU-Kyrgyz Republic Relations. June 2024.

https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/EU_Kyrgyzstan_relations_2024-06.pdf

This integrated approach contributed to increased platform visibility and usage, as evidenced by significant growth in Google Analytics data.

Within capacity-building activities for NGOs, a session on TI-K's digital platforms was included. The platform presentation and Q&A were embedded in all information sessions, online and offline trainings, and the closure event for the sub-grantees. A special ToT session for sub-grantees was organised in collaboration with other formerly EU-funded initiatives – the Internet Society- to discuss the practical use of digital platforms and their features, enabling participants to integrate them into their own projects and providing them with resources on digital literacy. Some sub-grantees in Issyk-Kul also presented their own projects during the training. This contributed to broader awareness of digital platforms among NGOs and to an increased understanding of their potential to enhance participation and access to information about government services, such as public procurement.

Advocacy efforts, originally a project component, were heavily constrained by new legislation targeting NGOs and the media. Because of the risk associated with the new “foreign representatives” registration requirement, TI-K could not safely engage in public advocacy. In response, the team strengthened the analytical component and initiated two research papers linked to digitalisation and public procurement, which were published on the project's platform *bilem.kg*. These published and disseminated studies may serve as evidence bases for other actors to pursue advocacy on improving procurement procedures. This shift represents a logical adaptation within the project chain. The project also began publishing more news on the platforms to increase interest in these studies and promote their use. For example, in the second year alone, the websites *jol.kg*, *bilem.kg*, *tsa.kg*, and *jmd.kg* recorded a cumulative total of over 141,775 visitors, with *jol.kg* accounting for 53,949 visits and *jmd.kg* showing steady growth following its October 2024 launch, suggesting increased traction through content engagement strategies²².

There is currently no overarching gender-responsive digital strategy in Kyrgyzstan. While the DT4CE project was not mandated to influence national ICT policy, the platforms and civic tech solutions developed could contribute to broader awareness on digital inclusion and women's digital rights. Within its scope, the project sought to engage women and youth as users and co-creators of digital content and to include them as one of the key target groups for the sub-grant component. However, several stakeholders noted that more strategic engagement on structural digital inclusion issues, including data equity and gender-sensitive platform design, could be explored in the future. Given the political constraints and limited formal dialogue channels with government institutions during implementation, the project adapted its approach by focusing on community-level participation, visibility, and the inclusion of women in civic engagement processes. These actions contributed to its designated gender marker score of 1 and indicated areas for potential scale-up in future interventions.²³

2.2 To what extent was the project coherent with other anti-corruption and governance initiatives in the Kyrgyz Republic, including EU-funded programmes?

The project fits well within the broader national digital governance ecosystem and complements rather than duplicates existing initiatives. The initiative is fully consistent with national policies promoting digitalisation, openness, and participatory governance. Sub-grantees noted that local government representatives welcomed the platforms, perceiving them as practical and constructive instruments with significant potential to improve interactions with citizens.

External coherence with other donor-funded initiatives was weak, and this evaluation was unable to collect data on this. No formal mapping or coordination mechanisms with other anti-corruption or governance initiatives were established at the design or inception stage. It was reported that collaboration on relevant

22 DT4CE Year 2 Narrative Report 21 March 2025, 9–10

23 Source: FGD with gender experts and Gender and Digitalisation. UNDP 2025

EU-funded initiatives, such as “Justice For All,” was limited, partly due to constraints or a lack of follow-through on their side, which affected the project's ability to maximise synergies in this area.

In line with the ROM recommendations, the implementing partners consulted relevant actors and responded to emerging opportunities. For example, TI-K reports that it engaged with the Internet Society Kyrgyzstan Chapter (ISOC), which implemented the “Sanarip Insan” project (2021–2024), resulting in a fruitful collaboration: ISOC conducted a Training of Trainers (ToT) for DT4CE sub-grantees on digital literacy and shared its training materials to support further rollout. This served as a useful peer-learning and coordination space among the sub-grantees themselves.

The project also initiated collaboration with the Civic Engagement for Development (CED) project funded by the Swiss Cooperation Office. CED shared its CSO database, which was combined with TI-K’s contacts to support promotion, dissemination of surveys, and outreach for the sub-grant program.

EFFICIENCY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

- 3.1 How economically were financial, human, and technical resources used to deliver the intended outputs and outcomes?
- 3.2 How efficient and adaptable were project management and coordination mechanisms, including decision-making processes between TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees?
- 3.3 Were activities implemented according to planned timelines, and if not, how effectively were delays addressed?

3.1 How economically were financial, human, and technical resources used to deliver the intended outputs and outcomes?

The project made efficient use of available financial and technical resources to deliver its core outputs, particularly under the sub-grant and youth engagement components. However, certain aspects of the resource allocation and management structure posed limitations to economic efficiency as explained hereunder.

DT4CE has a total budget of EUR 1,052,632.00, with the EU funding of EUR 1,000,000 from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025. The budget aligns with planned activities. Approximately EUR 593,652 (56%) of the budget was allocated to human resources²⁴, with the Secretariat absorbing much of the implementation burden, including procurement, MEL systems, and capacity development, followed by **Other Costs and Services (EUR 193,646.40)** and **Sub-Grants for Civic Activism (EUR 160,000)**. Smaller amounts were spent on **travel (EUR 28,470)** and **per diems (EUR 12,192)**.²⁵ The **sub-granting mechanism (EUR 160,000)** supported civic initiatives and competitions, such as blog contests, designed to engage youth and amplify citizen voice, thereby representing a direct contribution to project outcomes.²⁶ For example, the sub-grantee Aytumar Public Association reported conducting a blog competition as part of its civic engagement activities, targeting young people through social media and educational institutions. The other example is inter-district competition held among five districts of the Naryn region (Ak-Talaa, Jumgal, Kochkor, At-Bashy, Naryn). The goal of the competition was to encourage citizen involvement in the legislative process through the JMD digital platform.kg, where teams from the specified districts were required to develop and submit their legislative initiatives. Winners were determined by a public vote and the number of votes received, with the final results announced on October 25, 2025.²⁷ The sub-granting mechanism, which accounted for approximately 15% of the total budget, represented a relatively low-cost yet high-output component of the

24 Source: DT4CE budget and Par. Efficiency. ROM Report.2024

25 Interim Financial Report (01/01/2023–31/12/2023)

26 See: Narrative template Final report - Aytumar PA (DT4CE), p. 2.

27 Source: Sub-grant report “Eletayim” Public Association

project. It directly enabled the implementation of civic tech initiatives, hackathons, and local competitions that contributed to project outcomes, with comparatively lower administrative overhead and higher local visibility. This qualitative judgment is based on triangulated feedback from implementing partners, activity-level reporting, and relative cost-effectiveness within the overall project structure.

High costs associated with platform and mobile application actual development comparing with initially planned, raised concerns regarding long-term value for money. According to project reports, initial platform development costs were aligned with market rates at the proposal stage. Still, implementation was affected by post-2022 inflation and service price hikes following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which made it difficult to secure development companies at the initially estimated rates.

Feedback collected through the project's evaluation sub-grantee feedback tool shows that **7 out of 10 CSOs rated the project timeline with a score "3" out of 5**, citing also issues such as students' summer break interruptions, short mobilisation windows, and limited time to demonstrate civic tech impact²⁸. Despite these challenges, all ten sub-grantees submitted final activity and financial reports, and **output-level targets were met**: 10 CSOs reached, five civic tech tools developed, and several youth engagement events delivered.²⁹ Most output targets were met or exceeded, particularly in relation to platform development, sub-grants awarded, hackathon participation, and CSO outreach. Capacity-building for CSOs and youth was effective in raising awareness and equipping them with tools. Evaluation interviews with nine sub-grantees and participants in hackathon events confirmed increased familiarity with open government concepts and civic tech applications.³⁰

Advocacy components were under-delivered due to the restrictive political environment and lack of enabling conditions for legislative initiatives. The evaluators were informed that the **project faced challenges in budget planning and design. The absence of a modular structure in the project design presented considerable obstacles throughout implementation.** This lack of modularity made it challenging to allocate resources flexibly or adapt to the project structure as circumstances evolved.

All platforms were launched with delays due to a number of external and internal factors, as documented in the ROM review. This delay has also affected the preparation of user manuals, the conduct of in-person awareness sessions, and the establishment of helpdesk functions to assist users.³¹ Despite some resource and planning constraints, the team demonstrated adaptability and resourcefulness in managing and sustaining the digital platforms, ultimately supporting the project's continued success and operational efficiency.

The decision to develop four separate digital platforms, with eight mobile apps (4 on Google Play Store and four on Apple App Store), enabled thematic focus but created additional operational demands in design, content management, and user engagement. Several stakeholders questioned whether a consolidated platform might have offered a more sustainable and user-friendly solution. In particular, some interlocutors noted that while tsa.kg, jol.kg and jmd.kg have a relatively limited audience compared to bilem.kg (as confirmed by Google Analytics), their outreach and results might have been significantly stronger if they had been combined with bilem.kg or with the government platform Tunduk. While integration with Tunduk is not feasible, consolidating all platforms under Bilem.kg could increase civic engagement and, consequently, overall efficiency. While each platform served a distinct purpose, their maintenance and outreach required duplicated efforts in communication and technical support.

Sub-grants were successfully implemented by regional NGOs and contributed directly to the project's outreach goals. However, the six-month implementation period was too short. The onboarding and contractual proceedings led to the sub-project's duration being revised, limiting the scope and depth of engagement. Some sub-grantees reported that the compressed timeframe affected geographic coverage and

28 Source: Analysis of the Evaluation Sub-Grants Programme Feedback, November 2025.

29TI-K Interim Narrative Report, August 2025, pp. 7–10.

31 Ibid.

the robustness of data collection. This finding correlates with the results of DT4CE's internal assessment of the sub-grants component through feedback forms, where 7 out of 10 respondents indicated a short project timeline as a challenge. These constraints were partly due to delays in launching the sub-grant component, caused by internal and external approval processes, and to the fact that this component was linked to reaching other project milestones, such as launching digital platforms and mobile apps, which were delayed in the first project phase. The sub-grants were initially planned to be announced only after all platforms, and their corresponding mobile applications were developed. However, the development process was delayed, partly due to bureaucratic hurdles with the App Store.

The respective roles of TI-S and TI-K in project delivery also affected the economic use of human resources. TI-K was responsible for day-to-day coordination, platform moderation, expert engagement, and capacity-building activities. TI-S oversaw administrative functions, including sub-grant contracting and compliance. While this division of labour was functional, the added coordination layers sometimes created bottlenecks. TI-K carried out the majority of training and technical content development. TI-S supported and co-organised the internal trainings for TI-K on project management and digital security, and external trainings for other CSOs on internal governance of CSOs, conducted Gender equality and Inclusion workshop, IT Safety and Privacy, Fundraising, Internal Governance and Accountability trainings, and provided expertise on Public Procurement analysis. According to KIIs, the Gender Equality and Inclusion workshop was generally appreciated by participating NGOs. However, several informants noted that similar content had already been covered by other organisations. According to participant feedback forms, prior knowledge levels varied considerably, suggesting that peer learning was a valuable aspect of this capacity-building component.

EQ 3.2 How efficient and adaptable were project management and coordination mechanisms, including decision-making processes between TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees?

Internally, the project encountered a number of coordination issues. The role of TI-S as lead applicant was not consistently reflected in substantive technical engagement. Apart from administering the sub-grant scheme and delivering a GESI training workshop, TI-S had limited involvement in field-level implementation as per the DoA. All members of the TI-S team are based in Berlin.

Nevertheless, project management arrangements provided a stable operational base, especially through TI-K, which played a key role in coordinating local implementation. However, coordination between TI-S and TI-K presented efficiency challenges. The internal approval processes required by TI-S introduced delays in activity implementation, most notably in launching the sub-grant program. Some delay in launching mobile apps, in addition to external factors, was also partially attributed to challenges of coordinating app registration through TI-S.³² These delays shortened implementation windows and required adjustments to initially planned activities and budgets.

Despite this, sub-grantees generally reported positive experiences with project coordination. TI-K and TI-S provided timely guidance and structured support. These support mechanisms were based on systems developed by TI-S, which designed financial reporting formats, budget control tools, staff-time documentation procedures, and sub-granting templates. TI-S also delivered training sessions to ensure the correct application of these compliance systems. Project staff were described as responsive and available for queries.

Some sub-grantees experienced administrative challenges, particularly with the requirement to translate receipts into English and to submit e-invoices. These requirements were seen as demanding by smaller organisations, though in the case of e-invoices, **they were linked to national fiscal regulations rather than project-specific policies**. However, these were mitigated through extensive support from TI-S and TI-K, who provided structured guidance on project planning, implementation, and reporting. This support strengthened the administrative and operational capacities of participating CSOs.

There were also instances in which co-applicant coordination caused confusion about reporting procedures or delayed feature updates on the platforms. Nonetheless, most issues were resolved in a timely manner, and sub-grantees appreciated the consistent, extensive support provided by TI-K and TI-S throughout implementation. This KII finding also aligns with the feedback assessment forms of sub-grantees, where 7 of 10 respondents rated the support provided by the project staff as the highest.

³² Project Interim Narrative report 2024, p.17

EQ 3.3 Were activities implemented according to planned timelines, and if not, how effectively were delays addressed?

The project experienced considerable delays due to internal coordination issues (within TI-S and TI-K) and external factors (e.g., changes in procurement law and the adoption of the Law on Nonprofit Organisations, which introduced the status of “non-profit organisations performing functions of a foreign representative”). This was well recorded by the EU-commissioned ROM in 2024. Project progress was affected by changes in project management and the time required to establish implementation protocols. A no-cost extension was considered but not pursued, in part due to administrative complexity and questions about added value.

Not all project activities were implemented within the originally planned timeframe. Technical and procedural challenges, including registration processes and app store compliance requirements, delayed the launch of digital platforms and mobile applications. These delays were predominantly external in nature, but also reflected the time required for coordination and decision-making between TI-S and TI-K. The project team explained that the delays were largely caused by external factors, including Apple’s fee structure, Google’s removal of Kyrgyzstan from its list of supported countries, and the challenges of coordinating app registrations through TI-S. Both the Google Play Store and Apple App Store were often slow to respond, requiring the project to send numerous follow-up emails. The Apple registration process, in particular, involved submitting a long list of documents and required setting up a new device for ID verification, further complicating the process. Despite these obstacles, the project successfully navigated them, and as reported by the project, the Apps were registered in the Apple App Store on 24. 09.2024.

The ROM report identifies and explains several delays in the DT4CE project, specifically highlighting the following issues:

1. **Delays in Platform Development:** The report states that key digital platforms (e.g., jol.kg, jmd.kg, tsa.kg, and the upgraded version of bilem.kg) were not operational by the time of the ROM review in December 2024. Although they were launched in mid-2024, their full functionality was still pending. This limited the project's ability to demonstrate concrete digital outputs at the outcome level during most of the implementation period.
2. **Consequence for Outcome Measurement:** The delay in launching interactive platforms constrained the ability to measure usage, user feedback, and actual contributions to civic empowerment, especially among youth, women, and rural citizens. There is limited evidence of change attributable to the platforms during the ROM review period.
3. **Delays in Public Procurement Portal Collaboration:** The project initially planned to build a civic monitoring tool using open procurement data. However, changes to the structure and accessibility of the national procurement portal (zakupki.gov.kg) rendered it unusable for the project's civic tech plans, leading to the cancellation of that component and necessitating a pivot in platform development.
4. **Staff Turnover and Internal Delays:** TI-K experienced internal delays due to staff turnover and the relocation of its office, which disrupted continuity and delayed timely follow-up on implementation steps. This was especially critical in the transition between hackathons and platform launches.
5. **Delays in Subgranting and Innovation Grants:** The ROM noted that subgrants to local CSOs and innovation grants faced postponements due to late platform development and protracted consultations on digital tools. As a result, the ability of grantees to deploy or pilot their outputs was curtailed in the second year.

The short timeline for sub-grants, resulting from delayed launch, was managed effectively by the sub-grantees under the circumstances, though many reported that a longer duration would have allowed for more comprehensive coverage. Some organisations had to scale down their activities or reduce survey sample sizes to align with available time and resources. One organisation has specifically indicated that, without time

constraints, they would be able to extend their survey nationwide.³³ Additionally, an assessment conducted by the project among sub-grantees revealed that 7 out of 10 respondents considered the 6-month implementation period insufficient.³⁴

In response to the Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission conducted in late 2024, six key recommendations were issued to strengthen the performance, sustainability, and strategic orientation of the “Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment” (DT4CE) project in Kyrgyzstan. These recommendations addressed areas including project timelines and risk management, Logframe revision, coordination with EU interventions, institutional engagement, sustainability planning, and the integration of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI). TI-S made efforts to respond to the ROM recommendations, yet several important points were only partly addressed or still need resolution. For instance, recommendation R4 advises creating a sustainability strategy that details both with financial and institutional plans to ensure each result of the Intervention continues, including any developed tools and opportunities for future collaborations with the private sector and CSOs. These plans should also guarantee ongoing accessibility of all materials and resources for the intended target groups.

EFFECTIVENESS

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

- 4.1 To what extent were planned outputs and outcomes achieved, and what evidence demonstrates progress towards the intended results?
- 4.2 How effectively did the project integrate gender equality and social inclusion considerations into its design, delivery, and results, and what outcomes were achieved for priority groups?
- 4.3 What internal and external factors most influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results, and how effectively did the project respond to risks, including changes in civic space?

EQ 4.1: To what extent were planned outputs and outcomes achieved, and what evidence demonstrates progress towards the intended results?

The evaluation finds that the project was highly effective in achieving its intended outputs and outcomes. Evidence from platform usage data, beneficiary interviews, project documentation, and sub-grantee reports demonstrates consistent and measurable progress across all key components, particularly youth engagement, digital literacy, platform development and usage, and civic participation.

At the **outcome level**, the project was largely effective in developing accessible, interactive digital tools and in mobilising youth and civil society stakeholders around them. Platform reach expanded substantially, with over 1,085,223 new visits recorded by 1 December 2025 (against a target of 1 million), and user registrations reached 2,358, surpassing the 500-user target by more than 4x. Project reports show that across all digital platforms, 39.5% of users identified as female in 2024.³⁵ The project provided further information, based on Google Analytics, indicating that female users accounted for 57,24% by the end of 2024 and 67,65% in 2025 across all platforms.

A high level of user satisfaction (99%) further confirms that the platforms were generally perceived as user-friendly and accessible in the initial phase. The petition feature on jmd.kg requires users to submit specific personal information, complying with national legal standards for citizen-driven legislative proposals.

Registration on the jmd.kg platform was carried out via email, as on other platforms. However, to post an initiative or vote on any initiative available on the platform, users had to complete verification to prevent bot voting.

33 KII notes of Final evaluation, November 2025.

34 Project document “assessment of sub-grants feedback forms”. November 2025

35 Transparency International Kyrgyzstan, DT4CE Year 2 Narrative Report (21 March 2025) 10.

At first (based on hackathon ideas), the platform used passport checks and facial recognition for verification. However, as online fraud spread rapidly, many users were reluctant to share passport details. As a result, the verification system was redesigned by the project to use a one-time password (OTP) sent to a mobile phone number as in the Kyrgyz Republic, mobile numbers are linked to a specific person. This change also made verification faster and more convenient for users.

From the perspective of social inclusion, more comprehensive data on the accessibility of these digital platforms for people with disabilities, especially direct feedback from people with disabilities, who often face significant barriers to digital access, information, and public participation, would have strengthened the evaluation findings. However, based on the evaluation team's observations, the project did not sufficiently tailor the platforms to meet the needs of people with different disabilities in terms of either accessibility or content. Many core features cannot be easily adapted to become fully accessible for people with disabilities, including for users with visual, cognitive, or hearing impairments.

Language remains an important consideration for maximising accessibility across the platforms. While three platforms provide interfaces in three languages, some content is not yet fully harmonised across all language versions. For example, on the jmd.kg platform and its mobile application, Russian is currently the primary working language, and certain instructions in the mobile application appear in English. Expanding the consistent availability of key information and functions in Kyrgyz would further strengthen inclusiveness and user reach. This may require some funds to be allocated.

Hackathons proved highly successful at attracting young participants, with 708 youth engaged across four events in 2023, exceeding the intended total of 500. This mobilisation served as a key entry point for platform engagement and digital learning, especially among students. Additionally, 57 CSOs were engaged in 2024 and 37 in 2025, well beyond the expected threshold of ten CSOs, suggesting strong interest from organised civil society. Despite this momentum, some GESI capacity-building components remained underdeveloped. The evaluation underscores that a core objective of the intervention was to foster inclusive citizen engagement, with particular emphasis on youth, women, and marginalised groups. **Within this context, the limited participation of young women in hackathons is highlighted not as a shortcoming in achieving the indicator but as an area warranting greater attention in the design and outreach of future activities.**

Of the 708 youth who participated in hackathons, only 19% were young women. This figure is below the national average for women in STEM fields (31.3%), pointing to missed opportunities in project design or outreach to support female digital engagement. Training materials were uploaded, and the number of developed gamified modules met the target. Data mostly confirming that expected 65% of sub-grantees improved their use of technology is available through the sub-grantees' feedback forms, where five respondents rated their improved digital capacity with the highest score "5", three respondents rated "4" and 1 person rated "3". The feedback assessment forms, however, did not incorporate GESI-related questions to assess whether the project worked equally well across different vulnerable groups (e.g., youth, women, older persons, rural citizens, persons with disabilities).

Furthermore, while 46 CSOs were trained and 261 citizens (175 female, 101 male and 5 n/a) received anti-corruption and other consultations concerning good governance, several capacity-building indicators, including the number of online trainings and targeted needs-based sessions for women and vulnerable groups, were only partially met by the project itself, sub-grantees helped fill this gap and their work should be recognised as an important part of the project's achievements.

Youth engagement and innovation.

The hackathon and internship components were among the most successful aspects of the project. For example, **participation in hackathons exceeded targets by 41%**, with over 708 students (134 young women and 574 young men) involved against a planned 500³⁶. These events were not stand-alone; they served as

the **ideation space for the design of the four digital platforms** later launched under DT4CE. As such, they directly contributed to Output 1 (youth mobilisation) and Output 2 (development of digital civic tools). Another example: an **internship program started in 2023, continued throughout 2024 and until 2025**, consistently supporting platform operations. Based on information from the project staff, after the first hackathon, **several professors requested an increase in the number of available internship positions for students**. As a result, the **project accommodated 18 interns (6 female and 12 male), exceeding the initially planned 3 participants**. Interns were not limited to technical roles; they contributed substantively by uploading documents and commissioning some groundwork for platforms content and development, supporting both content generation and public engagement. IT interns gained considerable experience by actively participating in the development of real products under the guidance of experienced mentors, enhancing their work portfolios. After familiarising themselves with the project and consulting with the team, a political science intern decided to shift the focus of their upcoming thesis to a study on public procurement. He later joined the DT4CE staff as a helpdesk officer, contributing to advancing the project.

The nine MoUs signed with universities and stakeholders, surpassing the target of 6 and achieving 150%. Interviews with university staff and students revealed **positive unintended outcomes**: at least two universities began organising their own hackathons without project funding, and others launched business laboratories inspired by the project model.

Interviews with the hackathon winners revealed that the prize money they received was instrumental in furthering their participation **and innovation beyond the scope of the project**. Several winners used their monetary awards to enter a national technology competition, where they ultimately emerged victorious. One team specifically highlighted how **their prize money was invested in developing a start-up**—an application designed to remind senior people to take their medications. These examples **demonstrate the catalytic effect of the hackathon initiative, with student innovation extending well beyond the project's original boundaries**.

These outcomes confirm the project's **effectiveness in fostering digital civic competencies among youth and in embedding a culture of civic-tech engagement in academic institutions**.

Several sub-grantee initiatives made valuable contributions to youth engagement and civic innovation. For instance, IDEA collaborated with university students to co-develop digital tools and run civic awareness campaigns on topics such as budget transparency and anti-corruption.³⁷ Insan Leilek engaged youth in remote areas of Batken through awareness events and citizen surveys targeting service delivery challenges.³⁸ Kaniyet organised hackathons that mobilised students and young professionals to design community-oriented civic tech prototypes, including digital platforms for reporting local problems.³⁹ These efforts supported the project's broader objective of strengthening youth participation in public life, even if the project's central indicators did not always capture it. Integrating such results into the monitoring and evaluation framework would ensure a more comprehensive assessment of how the project enhanced local innovation ecosystems and civic agency.

Capacity Building for Citizens and NGOs.

The training component was equally impactful, especially for regional NGOs. Capacity-building activities for CSOs were primarily launched in 2025, informed by several needs assessments conducted by project staff during information sessions with CSOs in Bishkek and Naryn in late 2024, as well as an online Q&A information session on sub-grants held in December 2024.⁴⁰ Over 150 CSOs were contacted and informed about project opportunities, including training and sub-grants. The main training, delivered as a retreat, was held in Issyk-Kul in July 2025 and brought together both sub-grantees and non-sub-grantee NGOs.

Interviewed CSOs valued the training to varying degrees, highlighting particularly useful topics such as digital tools and digital security (cybersecurity), institutional and project management, operating in restrictive civic space (with a comparative and practical focus), and gender mainstreaming. Regional NGOs were especially

³⁷ Narrative Final Report. IDEA, DT4CE (15 November 2025)

³⁸ Narrative Final Report. Insan Leilek, DT4CE (undated, submitted September 2025)

³⁹ Narrative Final Report. Kaniyet, DT4CE (undated, submitted September 2025)

⁴⁰ DT4CE Project Interim Report, 2024, p.11

appreciative, noting that they learned not only from lectures but also through peer learning and knowledge-sharing with more experienced, long-established NGOs. As a result, peer learning and networking emerged as additional strengths of the capacity-building course.

Under the Sub-grant component, according to the project's progress documentation, over 1,200 citizens were trained in digital literacy, civic technologies, and the use of e-governance tools such as Tunduk, with a strong emphasis on inclusion of women, rural residents, and youth. Women accounted for 47 per cent of participants, and 61 per cent were under 30⁴¹. Sub-grantees tailored their training modules to regional contexts, which enhanced accessibility and local ownership. Several organisations reported that participants remained in contact with trainers after sessions, suggesting knowledge retention and willingness to apply newly learned skills⁴². In parallel, capacity development was extended to the organisational level. Sub-grantees reported improvements in governance practices, including the adoption of safeguarding policies, volunteer engagement protocols, and digitalised financial procedures. These changes were particularly meaningful for regional NGOs that had not previously received structured institutional support⁴³. This component advanced **Outcome 2**, by strengthening civic actors' capacity to engage with public systems through digital means.

Platform Uptake and User Reach. Analytics from the project's digital platforms provide strong quantitative evidence of effectiveness: From January 1, 2024, to December 1, 2025, **total platform views reached 1,085,223**, with the majority occurring in early 2025. This figure is a **six-fold increase** from the 2024 usage data (135,659 views).

In total, DT4CE developed a total of 467 instructions. Of these, 32 instructions created in 2025 were directly influenced by user engagement and the questions submitted through the helpdesk. In addition, the project conducted a needs assessment in local tax centres to identify which tax-related instructions were most needed and later amended the Bilem.kg portal accordingly. The project also published more than 1,252 news articles, and according to Google Analytics, they have been viewed over 89,000 times. Most articles focus on services available to citizens, legislative changes, and updates on road construction.

The helpdesk database as of 10th November 2025 included 267 inquiries by users (101 male and 163 females (3 -n/a), mostly received through bilem.kg and WhatsApp channels. The queries covered a wide range of issues, including apostilles and the legalisation of documents abroad, procedures for enrolling kids in school/kindergarten and registering a land plot, fraud complaint procedures, a complaint about a shortage of water in a multi-storey building, and the lack of the government's response, and so on. The helpdesk provided the necessary information, sometimes with templates and contact information for follow-up actions, helping people stay informed and prepared, demonstrating the effectiveness of this project component. The project received 41 positive feedback responses in which users directly expressed their appreciation. In addition, Helpdesk received 18 anonymous feedback form submissions, of which 17 were positive and one was negative.

Bilem.kg accounted for over 994,500 views (over 90%), confirming high public demand for legal templates, administrative forms, and how-to guides.

Demographic data shows broad usage, with the highest engagement among adults aged 35–54 and sustained use among older adults (up to 23% of adults aged 55+).

Women comprised the majority of users (63–70%), corroborating interview data that they face greater barriers in accessing in-person services and therefore benefit disproportionately from digital alternatives.

Other platforms (jmd.kg, jol.kg, tsa.kg) saw more targeted use, particularly among youth aged 18–24, indicating successful audience segmentation based on platform function.

However, some platforms recorded lower traffic than expected. Sub-grantees cited **limited communication budgets** and **lack of government endorsement** as barriers to wider adoption. Some proposed integration with the national Tunduk e-government system, which could enhance visibility but was beyond the project's

41 DT4CE Project, Progress Report, Transparency International Kyrgyzstan, 2025

42 DT4CE Project, Year 2 Narrative Report (21 March 2025), 6–9.

43 Based on the revisions of the Sub-grantee presentation materials.

scope. These findings confirm the **relevance, reach, and utility** of the platforms for diverse user groups, even in the absence of institutional integration.

Institutional Response and Local-Level Change.

There is also emerging evidence that platforms contributed to institutional responsiveness:

In one region, the sub-grantee working to increase public outreach about the digital platform jol.kg held meetings with two district authorities. During these meetings, they demonstrated the platform's features and invited municipal staff to register to follow and respond to citizens' complaints. In **follow-up activities**, a sub-grant supported citizens in documenting service delivery gaps, particularly road conditions and accessibility challenges during frequent disasters in the region. Their reports, including YouTube video documentation, led to **municipal decisions to include the construction of three pedestrian crossings and two vehicular crossings** in the 2026 Municipality plans. This is a clear and direct link between citizen-generated content and local government action. Informants also noted that the **structured format of digital submissions reduced fears of retaliation**, especially in smaller communities, making civic participation safer and more accessible. These examples illustrate how the project contributed not only to civic awareness but also to **tangible changes in service delivery** and institutional behaviour, thereby advancing Outcome 2 **Effectiveness of the Sub-Grant Scheme**. Evaluation finds that the sub-grant component also performed well despite a short time frame:

The sub-grant component demonstrated notable effectiveness throughout its implementation. Of the 37 applicants, **10 sub-grantees were competitively selected**, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability within the project management process. This rigorous selection ensured that only the most qualified organisations participated, contributing to the overall success of the scheme. Interviews conducted by the evaluation team with **nine sub-grantees indicated a high rate of achievement**: eight reported meeting **or surpassing their intended objectives**. The single exception involved a delay in results owing to an unexpected change in leadership within the local municipality, underscoring how external political circumstances can impact sub-grant activities. The project's feedback assessment forms also indicated such observed challenges by sub-grantees as digital divide especially in regions: lack of smartphones, weak digital skills among target groups; difficulties promoting Telegram bot regionally; summer vacation season as an obstacle to reach youth; platforms interruptions during high traffic; weak state institutions' websites; gap between government digital requirements and rural preparedness (though project helped reduce this gap).

Training sessions implemented under the sub-grant scheme were well received, with **60-90% of participants providing positive feedback**. Moreover, the level of interest in these digital literacy activities exceeded initial expectations, with **some NGOs subsequently approached by neighbouring municipalities seeking to replicate the training**. This points to a **demand-driven expansion of the project's benefits**.

In addition to their core activities, **sub-grantees played a pivotal role in promoting digital platforms at the community level**. Their efforts included a variety of outreach initiatives, such as **awareness-raising events, community theatre performances, and collaboration with local media outlets**. These activities not only increased platform visibility but also **contributed to broader community engagement**.

EQ 4.2: How effectively did the project integrate gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) considerations into its design, delivery, and results, and what outcomes were achieved for priority groups?

The project was marked with a Gender Marker Score 1, indicating that gender equality was a significant but not principal objective. In line with this, the intervention integrated gender considerations through several channels. The ROM review noted that the project adopted a number of gender-responsive measures, such as appointing a Gender and Inclusion Focal Point within TI-S to advise on women's empowerment issues, gathering insights from women and gender-focused CSOs on access to information needs, and conducting a study on Kyrgyz women in decision-making⁴⁴. Sub-grants aimed to engage women-led organisations and strengthen their capacities for gender mainstreaming. On this level, the project mainstreamed gender

⁴⁴ ROM Report 2024.

equality and social inclusion (GESI) considerations across its design, implementation, and outputs, with tangible outcomes for priority groups, especially women, youth, elderly individuals, and rural populations.

However, **engagement with persons with disabilities (PwDs) was ad hoc rather than systematic and while the project took steps to integrate gender and inclusion considerations at the proposal review stage, the effectiveness of GESI mainstreaming in delivery and results remains limited, despite the window of opportunity to include people with disability, as one of the most socially excluded group in term of digital access and public participation, during the design and implementation.**

Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) were incorporated into the project through technical support to sub-grantees at the design stage. Still, the degree of mainstreaming varied across proposals and was not consistently reflected in implementation. According to the internal review document⁴⁵, ten project proposals submitted under the sub-granting scheme were screened by the project's Gender Advisor and Project Manager. As a result of this review, the majority of sub-grantees updated their proposals to include vulnerable groups in the description of target beneficiaries and adapted their outreach approach. For example:

- *The one CSO sub-grantee revised its application to include targeted legal awareness activities for women and proposed offering legal advice through online consultations accessible to persons with limited mobility.*
- *The CSO sub-grantee added language on reaching youth, particularly in rural areas, and committed to using plain Kyrgyz and Russian in its communication materials to improve accessibility.*

However, the **majority of proposals remained generic in their treatment of GESI.** While they referenced broad groups such as “women” or “young people,” few included specific measures to ensure participation, access, or tailored delivery⁴⁶. Only one proposal referred to persons with disabilities, and none included concrete budget lines or structured activities directly benefiting people with disabilities. One sub-grantee developed a chatbot with a hotline for the victims and survivors of the DV/GBV. Additionally, **no sub-grantee proposed collecting gender-disaggregated or intersectional data beyond basic monitoring statistics⁴⁷.**

The evaluation found that most proposals improved gender and inclusion language, with some NGOs noting that 20–25% of their focus groups included women with disabilities. However, the outcomes of these interventions remain unclear, as sub-grantees reported insufficient time for outcome-level monitoring. Therefore, the proposed interventions lacked depth, in addition, and most partners showed limited familiarity with applying GESI in practice. The selection of sub-grantees balanced experienced and less experienced CSOs, including regional actors, and helped reduce the gap between Bishkek and underserved areas. While initial GESI capacities were uneven, several partners strengthened inclusive practices during implementation. For example, one NGO conducted digital skills sessions for young persons with disabilities, and another NGO sub-grantee adapted its outreach to elderly groups.

Overall, the project contributed to improved GESI awareness and practice among participating organisations.

There is also **no evidence that project implementation was systematically tracked against GESI outcomes.** The absence of follow-up tools or outcome-level indicators on social inclusion limits the ability to assess actual results achieved for marginalised or priority groups. While the project did not include outcome-level indicators or follow-up tools specifically focused on social inclusion, this limited the evaluation's ability to assess concrete outcomes for marginalised groups. Although this cannot be considered a design shortcoming per se, further investment in capacity-building, guidance materials, and structured M&E tools would be required to translate these commitments into measurable outcomes for women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other at-risk populations.

As for the inclusivity, the multilingual nature of the digital platforms (Kyrgyz, Russian, and English) further supported linguistic inclusion, with the exception provided earlier, while sub-grantees were encouraged to adapt training formats for participants with limited digital literacy. For example, civil society partners working

⁴⁵ *Gender Mainstreaming of Project Proposals TI KR_JA* (October 2025)

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid

with senior people reformatted training materials using larger fonts and simpler layouts to support ease of understanding. Delivery mechanisms reinforced this inclusive approach. In several regions, sub-grantees mobilised volunteers to provide personalised support to elderly and first-time technology users. One regional NGO notably responded to a mid-project request from a local organisation of persons with disabilities, adapting their youth training model to incorporate participants with disabilities and expanding activities without additional funding. This example reflects a flexible and responsive delivery model, though it also highlights the absence of systematic disability inclusion at the project's inception. Disability-focused considerations were addressed reactively, rather than being embedded into the project's core framework. In terms of concrete outcomes, **women were the largest group of digital literacy training** participants and platform users, comprising between 63 and 70 percent depending on the platform⁴⁸. Interview data and sub-grantee reports suggest that participation not only increased women's familiarity with digital tools but also contributed to improved confidence in navigating online public services and civic engagement tools. These qualitative outcomes were particularly noted among first-time users in rural areas, indicating that the project made tangible contributions to digital inclusion for women.

Qualitative evidence from interviews indicates that women gained confidence in navigating online government services and engaging with authorities. Youth engagement was particularly strong on platforms such as Jmd.kg and Jol.kg, which attracted users aged 18–24. Elderly participants, initially hesitant, reported greater confidence and active use of public e-services after village-level training. In rural communities, the decentralised training model enabled broader access, especially for women and youth who might otherwise face mobility or financial barriers. One of the project's notable innovations was the development of a Telegram bot **specifically for women survivors of violence**, which provided confidential, 24/7 guidance on protection steps. This targeted intervention demonstrated how digital tools could be leveraged to meet the safety and informational needs of at-risk groups. However, evaluators identified only a very weak connection between this particular intervention and improved governance, as the outcome level results are not reported yet.

EQ 4.3: What internal and external factors most influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results, and how effectively did the project respond to risks, including changes in civic space?

The project was implemented in a rapidly changing and increasingly restrictive civic environment. It also operated under a dual coordination model between TI-S and TI-K, which presented both opportunities and challenges. It is important to acknowledge that the dual structure was a prerequisite for the grant agreement and not a design choice made during implementation. This conditionality shaped both strategic oversight and operational roles throughout the project cycle. Despite these challenges, the project responded to external risks with caution and adaptability, while maintaining the capacity to deliver its core components effectively. Externally, the political environment deteriorated significantly since project's initiation in 2023. The introduction of new legislation targeting NGOs and media actors, alongside legal uncertainty regarding the registration of foreign funded non-profits, created an atmosphere of ambiguity and risk for project partners. On 2 April 2024, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic signed amendments to the Law on NonProfit Organizations- introducing the status of “non-profit organisations performing functions of a foreign representative.” The amendments entered into force on 15 April 2024 and require foreign-funded NGOs engaged in broadly defined “political activities” to register as foreign representatives, subjecting them to enhanced reporting, disclosure requirements, and potential suspension or liquidation for non-compliance⁴⁹

Transparency in public procurement decreased following legal amendments, while high turnover within key government institutions hindered efforts to formalise cooperation. These constraints **limited the project's ability to pursue advocacy-oriented activities and weakened the potential for government buy-in**. They also affected the timeline for the sub-grants, as the team had to verify whether local CSOs were still willing to

⁴⁸ DT4CE Year 2 Narrative Report (21.03.2025), p. 10, Annexes 3 and 4.

⁴⁹ Reliefweb, ‘Kyrgyzstan: Civil Society under Threat as President Japarov Signs Repressive “Foreign Representative” Law’ (15 April 2024) <https://reliefweb.int/report/kyrgyzstan/kyrgyzstan-civil-society-under-threat-president-japarov-signs-repressive-foreign-representatives-law-enru> accessed 27 November 2025.

apply under the emerging legal risks associated with the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic No 72 of 2 April 2024 on Amendments to the Law “On NonProfit Organisations”. Uncertainty around the law’s implications persisted into early 2025, requiring careful risk assessment and communication with prospective applicants. In response, the project adopted a cautious visibility strategy. Rather than relying on traditional media campaigns, the project maintained direct outreach through its platforms, mailing lists, and social media. Advocacy activities were replaced with analytical research outputs to avoid legal complications under the new law. These decisions, taken in consultation with national NGOs and international stakeholders, reflect a prudent and rights-aware approach. The project also engaged selected government counterparts and initiated several memoranda of understanding. However, these were not formalised due to institutional instability on the government side. For example, while the MoU was signed with the Ministry of Transport, it was challenging to finalise and implement the MoU with the Ministry of Digital Development, as there was a turnover of the decision-makers who had been involved in the project initially.

IMPACT

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

- 5.1 What measurable or observable changes can be attributed, fully or partially, to the project at institutional, community, or individual levels?
- 5.2 To what extent did the project contribute to strengthening public integrity, transparency, accountability, and civic engagement in anti-corruption efforts, and how did sub-grants contribute to these results?

EQ 5.1 – What measurable or observable changes can be attributed, fully or partially, to the project at institutional, community, or individual levels?

The project contributed to several observable outcomes, primarily at the individual and community levels, with some indications of broader institutional uptake. For example, the reported increase in public awareness and digital literacy is evidenced by the growing number of visitors engaging with the **Bilem.kg** platform. Increased platform use and outreach were facilitated by thoughtful content development by TI-K, including through its helpdesk function and youth engagement; and TI-S’s procurement adjustments, MEL redesign, and development of sub-granting and NGOs capacity building programs, incorporating a platform promotion component. According to 41 instances of positive feedback collected by the helpdesk, some users were able to resolve specific administrative issues after consulting the platform, indicating that the platform served as an accessible and reliable source of civic information.

Hackathon participants improved their technical skills and developed further interest in digital innovation. Several student teams continued participating in other hackathons beyond the project scope, often maintaining the same team composition. As noted by academic stakeholders, the hackathon model was subsequently adopted by some universities as a format for business laboratories, reflecting unexpected institutional interest in participatory innovation. Youth participation also



“The project taught us how to turn civic ideas into digital solutions. We never had that before in our university.”— Student intern, 2024



“We organised our own hackathon inspired by DT4CE—students were genuinely excited to join civic tech efforts.”— University partner, 2025



“The prize money helped us enter a national tech competition—and we won.”— Hackathon winning team, 2024

Figure 2. Testimonial from the direct beneficiaries

laboratories, reflecting unexpected institutional interest in participatory innovation. Youth participation also

led to instances of civic activism, with several digital petitions launched by students and youth groups involved in the project or its sub-grants. While the petitions did not reach high numbers of signatories, they illustrate the early stages of engagement in digital civic action.

Some NGOs reported that the platforms supported under the project were actively used for their sub-grant implementation, suggesting a degree of operational uptake. Although the scale of institutional capacity improvement cannot be quantified, the use of digital tools developed under the project points to increased familiarity and willingness to engage with technology-based solutions.

At the local level, one sub-grantee used a combination of civic monitoring and online advocacy, including a video campaign, to prompt a municipal decision to repair a local road. While isolated, this example demonstrates the potential of the project's digital tools to support citizen-led problem solving.

EQ 5.2 – To what extent did the project contribute to strengthening public integrity, transparency, accountability, and civic engagement in anti-corruption efforts, and how did sub-grants contribute to these results?

The project contributed to strengthening civic engagement and participatory governance by introducing and operationalising four digital platforms that enabled citizens and civil society organisations to engage with public processes. By the end of the implementation period, several impact-level targets were achieved or exceeded, although the concentration of results in late 2025 indicates that the effects remain emergent rather than consolidated. While the platforms created avenues for citizen and CSO engagement in public processes, evidence of institutional responsiveness to this input remains limited at this stage.

Citizen reporting through digital tools increased from zero at baseline to a total of 144 reports by 2025, surpassing the target of 100. Most reports (100) were generated through the roadmarking functionality of Jol.kg, with an additional 44 reports submitted via JMD.

In parallel, civic engagement through JMD's initiative features also showed notable uptake, with 44 civic initiatives, 388 verified users, and 828 votes cast. The most supported initiatives included **“Against mandatory five-year government service for medical graduates”** with 127 supporting votes and **“We demand the introduction of a clear legal provision on harassment”** with 88 votes.

The strongest results were recorded in legislative engagement. Against a target of two citizen-led initiatives and 250 participants, the JMD platform facilitated 44 proposals and attracted 828 votes and 388 verified users.

These outcomes demonstrate a clear capacity of civic technology to mobilise public participation when accompanied by targeted outreach. However, nearly all engagement occurred within a short period in October 2025, highlighting that civic mobilisation was driven by concentrated campaigns and other factors rather than continuous, organic use of the tools. At the same time, it may be premature to assess long-term usage patterns, as the platforms only began operating at full capacity recently. Parliamentary activities were largely suspended from spring through autumn due to recess and the self-dissolution of parliament in September, with elections held on 30 November 2025. Engagement with the legislative initiative platform is still in its early stages.

The broader anti-corruption impact remains limited by the late launch of several platforms (December 2024), which did not allow sufficient time for public recognition or behavioural change. Petitions were drafted, but none reached significant thresholds. While some CSOs strengthened internal procedures on transparency and digital security following project supported sessions, these changes have not yet translated into measurable shifts in public integrity or accountability practices.

At the outcome level, the project achieved strong results in increasing platform reach and expanding participation. By December 2025, the platforms registered over 1,085,223 visits (against a target of one million) and 2,358 registered users, significantly surpassing the 500-user target. User satisfaction reached 99%, confirming that the platforms were generally user-friendly, accessible and well received. Hackathons exceeded their targets, engaging 708 youth across four events, and CSO participation was considerably higher than anticipated, with 57 CSOs involved in 2024 and 37 in 2025.

Subgrants played a constructive role in mobilising youth, developing small-scale digital initiatives, and raising awareness within communities. However, most sub-grantees operated within compressed six-month

schedules, which limited their ability to demonstrate outcome-level change, deepen user engagement, or ensure sustainability.

Overall, the project demonstrated clear potential for digital tools to enhance civic engagement and participatory governance. The rapid uptake of the platforms, reaching the two-year visitor target within the first year, indicates strong public demand, particularly for Bilem. According to Google Analytics, by 1st December 2025, the four platforms had attracted nearly one million visits and over 110,000 active users, starting from 17 January 2025 (when the project enabled use of Google Analytics), with more than 2,800 downloads of official document templates. These outcomes support the project’s theory of change: that equipping citizens with simple and understandable tools to navigate government processes can build confidence, normalise interaction with public institutions, and gradually foster demand for more responsive services. While notable achievements were recorded, particularly in the initiation of legislative proposals, these results are still fragile and require sustained visibility, institutional anchoring, and user engagement beyond the project’s timeframe to translate into broader transparency and integrity outcomes.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The analysis draws on TI’s guidance⁵⁰, which stresses outcome-oriented monitoring, stakeholder perception, and behavioural change as markers of impact, even when long-term systemic shifts may still be emerging. The project made measurable progress at intermediate and outcome levels. Several tools, such as Jol.kg and JMD, had documented use and generated visible outcomes (e.g., marked roads, legislative proposals). However, institutional uptake of specific project components, such as e.g. road fixing platform, remained limited, and the political space narrowed during the implementation period, constraining broader systemic impact. While changes in policy or law were not fully achieved, the project fostered nascent behaviour change in CSO practices, introduced digital norms around secure communication, and activated local networks. The funding supported practical civic engagement initiatives and co-created digital tools, laying a foundation for future policy influence, especially if political conditions improve.

Figure 3. Impact Assessment Table

Impact Indicator	Observed Change / Evidence	Assessment
CSO capacity to use digital tools	Sub-grantees applied digital skills (e.g., password protection, content creation); platforms developed in the Kyrgyz language The project enhanced GESI awareness and implementation among participating organisations. For instance, women reported using the MobileApp to access services related to gender-based violence and domestic violence.	Positive, but sustainability is constrained by a lack of IT staff. No evidence that project implementation was systematically tracked against GESI outcomes
CSO behaviour change	Increased awareness and partial uptake of practices post-training	Moderate; follow-up support would enhance institutionalisation
Civic engagement & outreach	Youth participation in hackathons, feedback loops via digital platforms, and visible use in communities	Strong short-term engagement; long-term effects pending scale-up
Policy/systemic change	Tools linked to some civic outcomes (e.g. complaints acted upon); no formal policy reforms recorded	Early-stage signals; not yet systemic

⁵⁰ Transparency International. Are We on the Road to Impact? A Guide for Monitoring Transparency and Accountability Work, 2014.

Institutional uptake	Limited engagement by authorities due to a restrictive context	Weak; future opportunities depend on political space
Visibility and international leverage	TI-S ensured global visibility and regional peer learning	Moderate added value;
Use of funds for impact	Grants (EUR 160,000) and platform development (EUR 75,000+) enabled direct civic action;	Efficient in outputs;
Sustainability prospects	Platforms in use, but some partnerships with universities and CSO uptake need formalisation. The security of the digital platforms is being addressed (data privacy policy, servers, storage, disaster recovery plan).	Mixed; dependent on post-project funding and localisation

SUSTAINABILITY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

- 6.1 Are the benefits of the project, including digital platforms and capacity-building results, likely to continue after project funding ends?
- 6.2 What institutional, financial, or political factors support or hinder the sustainability of results,

EQ 6.1 – Are the benefits of the project, including digital platforms and capacity-building results, likely to continue after project funding ends?

There is evidence that certain capacity-building results are likely to continue beyond the project’s lifetime, including capacity and institutional development reported by the CSOs and demonstrated by TI-K. Several sub-grantees reported changes to their internal procedures based on the training received. These institutional changes suggest a degree of internalisation of knowledge and skills introduced through the project. One of the sub-grants effectively leveraged the project’s support of its own digital platform to pilot participatory governance mechanisms at the municipal level, despite operating in a politically constrained environment. For example, according to the final report, between July and November 2025, one sub-grant piloted a digital citizen feedback platform in two municipalities. The platform collected 53 proposals, 17 of which were formally addressed by municipal authorities. Over 120 people participated in public forums, and 30 youth were trained in civic tech tools. One municipality agreed to continue using the platform after project completion, demonstrating a tangible example of participatory governance enabled through sub-grant support.

The intervention developed practical digital tools, including a citizen proposal submission portal and a plan-tracking system with automated alerts, that supported accountability and dialogue between local authorities and civil society. These tools responded directly to the lack of municipal-level open government mechanisms and were well received by civil society actors.

According to the interviewed sub-grantee this CSO’s project catalysed some institutional uptake: the Bishkek Mayor’s Office independently implemented a feedback scoring system inspired by the sub-grantee’s proposal. However, political instability, such as leadership changes at the municipality, delayed implementation timelines and disrupted established communication channels. Several deliverables were finalised after the project’s end date, suggesting that while institutional interest exists, long-term anchoring and policy integration remain uncertain.

Some sub-grantees developed digital literacy and civic education tools, such as video tutorials and training content, which remain publicly accessible through social media channels and YouTube. For example, one sub-

grantee's instructional video in the Kyrgyz language, designed for elderly users of the **Tunduk** platform, has reached over 15,000 views on YouTube within a few months, indicating both relevance and potential for continued outreach.

With regard to digital infrastructure, TI-K has expressed its intention to maintain the **bilem.kg** platform after project completion, at least for a transitional period. In addition to partial sustainability already secured through Open Society Foundations (OSF) funding, TI-K plans to introduce a donation feature to further support maintenance. There are also indications that other platforms developed under the project could be consolidated and sustained under TI-K's management, although long-term technical and financial sustainability is not guaranteed without additional support. TI-S provided critical transitional support to enable this handover, including system documentation and capacity development

EQ 6.2 – What institutional, financial, or political factors support or hinder the sustainability of results, particularly for priority groups?

Institutional sustainability: The capacity of local NGOs to sustain results varies considerably. Many operate with limited administrative structures and high staff turnover, often linked to short-term project funding. Tailored and longer-term capacity development would be needed to ensure continuity, especially for smaller or regionally based organisations.

Despite these challenges, the sub-grantee demonstrated strategic adaptability, grounding its work in local open government processes and engaging both civil society and officials in the use of digital tools for monitoring and civic participation. The experience underlines the relevance of decentralised, bottom-up approaches to civic tech in politically sensitive contexts and the need for more responsive and context-aware administrative modalities in grant implementation. Similarly, the platforms developed under the direct implementation component, particularly Bilem and JMD, demonstrated user uptake and institutional anchoring efforts, including TI-K's commitment to maintain Bilem beyond the project. However, capacity and resource gaps continue to challenge full localisation and handover.

Financial sustainability: The sustainability of civil society efforts is constrained by both legal and donor-related trends. Recent amendments to the legal framework governing NGOs have restricted their financial operations and increased administrative burdens. In parallel, changes in donor priorities have reduced the availability of grants focused on transparency, accountability, and governance, limiting follow-on opportunities for sub-grantees. While some bridge funding has been secured, for example, through OSF support to TI-K, future continuation will require diversified funding models and more predictable support.

Political factors: An increasingly restrictive civic space affects the operational environment for many NGOs marked by the Law No. 72 From 2 April 2024 on Amendments To The Law Of The Kyrgyz Republic “On Non-Profit Organizations” which introduced significant changes affecting both foreign and domestic NGOs⁵¹ This and increasing repression, has contributed to a climate of fear, self-censorship, and disengagement, particularly among CSOs working on rights-based and accountability themes⁵² Such organisations must register in a special state register, submit annual audit reports, and disclose their status in public materials. The law grants state bodies extended powers to inspect, suspend, or dissolve non-compliant NGOs. The threat of legal sanctions, pressure on independent media, and the targeting of civil society actors also contribute to a climate of uncertainty. As a result, some organisations have shifted away from governance-related work towards less politically sensitive sectors such as environment, youth, or social services, affecting the sustainability of outcomes related to anti-corruption and civic engagement.

If platforms are seen as affiliated with a particular political agenda, donor, or opposition group, their use may become polarised. Citizens and officials alike may avoid them to protect their neutrality or safety. For example,

51 See also: Venice Commission, Kyrgyz Republic – Law on Non-Commercial Organisations and Related Provisions – Compilation of Legal Texts CDL-REF(2024)034 (Council of Europe 2024) [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-REF\(2024\)034-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-REF(2024)034-e) accessed 6 December 2025.

52 See also “Kyrgyzstan: A growing climate of fear and self-censorship – new assaults on independent media, civil society and online activism”. 21 October 2024. <https://iphronline.org/articles/kyrgyzstan-a-growing-climate-of-fear-and-self-censorship>, accessed 6 December 2025.

government-imposed limitations on internet access, blocking of specific websites, or the requirement to use government-controlled platforms may limit the accessibility or visibility of civic tech platforms, particularly during politically sensitive periods (e.g. elections, protests).

While no formal policy change was expected within the project's duration, the studies on public procurement contributed to upstream sustainability. Following the roundtable and dissemination, the Department of Public Procurement and the General Prosecutor's Office submitted the findings to Parliament. Although parliamentary review was delayed due to the institution's self-dissolution in autumn 2025, the recommendations are aligned with reform directions identified in the State Anti-Corruption Strategy for 2024–2026. TI-K has confirmed that the World Bank referred to the findings in its discussions with government counterparts on procurement reform. These developments point to the studies' relevance and potential for sustained impact in shaping legislative and institutional approaches to procurement governance, even beyond the project lifecycle.

EU ADDED VALUE

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

7.1 What did EU support uniquely enable in terms of scale, partnerships, credibility, visibility, or policy

The project benefited from the European Union's support in terms of financial scale and normative positioning, particularly in the sensitive context of shrinking civic space in Kyrgyzstan. The EU's involvement enabled Transparency International to maintain credibility and legitimacy when engaging with national counterparts and provided a degree of protection for local civil society actors working on digital anti-corruption initiatives. According to the Project Manager, the EU's support allowed the project to navigate politically sensitive issues (e.g. whistleblower protection, public procurement monitoring, and citizen engagement in governance) that would have been difficult to pursue under bilateral funding modalities. For instance, procurement-related analyses and digital tools were accepted by authorities partly because they were framed within a broader EU-funded governance initiative, reducing the perception of foreign interference. This also facilitated access to key stakeholders, including participation from public agencies in closed-door roundtables and consultations.

The project's adherence to EU procurement rules and digital governance standards not only ensured compliance but also lent legitimacy to its outputs, shielding implementing partners from potential political pushback. This strategic benefit, though not always explicitly articulated in project documentation, played a central role in facilitating work on controversial issues such as digital transparency and whistleblower protections.

However, the added value of the EU was not consistently leveraged during implementation. The EU Delegation's engagement was mainly limited to project oversight, financial and narrative reporting, and feedback on results. Moreover, visibility of the EU's role remained modest. Communication products were produced, and EU logos were present on project materials, but there was no strategic use of the EU's platform to promote democratic values or digital rights. As explained during the data collection, the political climate made it difficult to amplify messages without putting local actors at risk, which partially explains the cautious visibility approach.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Relevance.

The project was highly relevant, aligning with Kyrgyzstan's national digitalisation strategies, including Sanarip Kyrgyzstan, and the President's 2030 Development Programme. The project directly contributed to digital inclusion, civic participation, and anti-corruption goals. Its objectives were also in line with the strategic priorities of Transparency International's global and national chapters, as well as the EU's 2021–2027 cooperation framework. The platforms developed addressed practical gaps in public participation, legal awareness, and infrastructure monitoring, while responding to the needs of women, youth, and rural communities. The project addressed clear and pressing needs of grassroots civil society actors, especially in rural and underserved regions. Tools such as Bilem, Jol, and JMD filled gaps in civic education, reporting, and legislative participation. Stakeholders confirmed that these platforms were highly relevant and user-friendly. The implementation took place at the time when some CSOs shifted their focus away from transparency-related work to less politically sensitive areas, reflecting how civic space constraints impacted project relevance over time. Thus, some actors perceived a dilution of the original anti-corruption ambition due to donor risk aversion.

Coherence

The project demonstrated adequate internal coherence. Components such as hackathons, sub-grants, and platform development were well-integrated, with TI-K and TI-S ensuring alignment across activities. Sub-grantees benefited from TI-S's structured guidance and technical support. Internal coherence across project components was generally strong: hackathons informed platform development, sub-grants promoted platform use, and training content was adapted to beneficiary needs. However, vertical and external coherence remained weak with other donor or government-led initiatives. Ad hoc alignment occurred in response to ROM reviews, but a coherent strategic approach to collaboration was not embedded in project design or implementation. Several stakeholders noted limited engagement with public institutions. While the project did meet with representatives from the Ministry of Digital Development and members of Parliament, overall institutional follow-up and integration opportunities were constrained because of changes in government leadership, such as the replacement of the Minister of Digital Development, and the eventual dissolution of Parliament in 2024, reduced continuity and limited the feasibility of sustained dialogue or formal uptake in the final project phase. Therefore, the legislative initiatives submitted via JMD were not taken up, Opportunities to align with Open Government Partnership (OGP) or broader digital governance reforms were limited in this cycle of implementation due to the lack of political will from the state institutions, due to the suspension of the country from the OGP.

Efficiency

The project made largely effective use of resources, delivering outputs in line with its Logframe and maintaining high user satisfaction, **in line with the Logframe and receiving positive feedback from CSOs and youth participants. The sub-granting mechanism, in particular, proved to be a lean and responsive modality that enabled visible civic engagement at the local level.** However, structural inefficiencies were evident and may have affected operational agility. The division of responsibilities between TI-S and TI-K, while appropriate to their respective mandates, contributed to a multi-layered implementation structure. This, in combination with donor-mandated EU PRAG procedures and internal integrity safeguards, resulted in complex approval processes that delayed the launch of the sub-granting component. The six-month duration of sub-grants may have posed challenges for achieving broader geographic reach and iterative learning. Some stakeholders reflected on the decision to maintain four separate platforms, suggesting that a more unified approach could have enhanced coherence. While the sub-granting process enabled a range of CSO-led initiatives, a few stakeholders found it somewhat complex and administratively demanding. Several CSOs also noted that the limited timeframe created pressure on implementation and constrained opportunities for deeper learning, planning for sustainability, and ensuring long-term impact. Hackathons were efficiently run, and youth engagement exceeded expectations. Despite delays encountered during implementation, these were

effectively managed, and the project successfully delivered the agreed outputs and contributed to the intended outcomes.

Effectiveness

The project met or exceeded most of its output targets and demonstrated progress at the outcome level, especially in four digital platform usage, youth participation, and ten CSO outreach. Platforms attracted 1,085,223 visits and 2,358 registered users, with generally positive user feedback. Hackathons engaged more participants than planned and encouraged youth involvement. These achievements were underpinned by key contributions from TI-S, including the redesign of the Logframe, which provided a clearer structure for tracking results, and the development of sub-granting procedures that enabled CSO mobilisation. TI-S also led the technical design of the public procurement transparency component and coordinated high-level engagement with actors such as the World Bank and ADB. Many national and international experts contributed to the capacity building of the CSOs and the development of digital solutions. These inputs added value in areas where TI-K and third parties required technical support. Sub-grants allowed for regional adaptation of activities, and CSOs improved practices in transparency and digital data handling. Although advocacy efforts were originally planned, they were restricted by contextual limitations. Overall, the project made significant progress toward its goals, though the consistency and extent of change varied, as discussed in the conclusion on Impact.

Impact

The project supported early signs of civic engagement and increased digital awareness among participating communities. Some local changes were reported, such as responses by municipal authorities to citizen feedback. The four unique tools and their connected Apps helped raise issues and boost participation, especially among young people and regional groups. Some groups also benefited from training on digital security. The Bilem.kg platform, in particular, saw strong engagement, reaching nearly one million visits and over 110,000 active users by December 1, 2025. Feedback collected by the Bilem helpdesk (41 positive responses) confirmed the platform's utility in resolving everyday issues and navigating administrative procedures. Hackathon participants reported improved technical and collaborative skills, with several student teams continuing their engagement in civic tech beyond the project. Academic stakeholders confirmed that the hackathon model was adopted in some universities as an innovation and civic engagement mechanism. Youth participation also led to small-scale civic actions, including online petitions and digital initiatives supported through sub-grants, although these remained limited in scope and reach. Overall, the project demonstrated that digital tools could enable civic engagement, particularly when paired with outreach and capacity-building. Rapid uptake, high user satisfaction (99 percent), and strong youth and CSO participation confirm relevance and latent demand. However, the compressed implementation period of sub-grants and the limited institutional anchoring of some results mean that these promising impacts remain early-stage. The project laid the groundwork for civic visibility and engagement, but further efforts will be needed to translate these into durable changes in transparency, public integrity, and accountability.

Sustainability

There is credible evidence that selected project benefits, particularly related to digital literacy, civic engagement tools, including information and knowledge gained through digital platforms, and CSO capacities, are likely to continue beyond the funding period. At the organisational level, TI-K demonstrated a strong commitment to sustainability, including the continued maintenance of the Bilem.kg platform, supported by partial bridge funding from the Open Society Foundation. TI-K also plans to activate a donation feature and further consolidate the platforms under its management, although long-term technical and financial sustainability remain contingent on future support. TI-S contributed to this transition through structured handover processes, system documentation, and targeted capacity development. One tool has already been considered by the municipal authority, and several CSOs indicated interest in continuing aspects of their work. Digital content created under the project, such as video tutorials and civic education materials, continues to circulate on public platforms. However, for most sub-grants, the short duration limited opportunities for

consolidating results, deepening user engagement, or embedding change: legal amendments adopted in April 2024 under Law No. 72 have increased administrative burdens for NGOs, requiring registration in a state registry, mandatory audits, and public disclosure of foreign funding status. These developments contribute to a shrinking civic space, marked by surveillance, risk of sanctions, and reputational concerns. In parallel, a shift in donor priorities away from transparency and governance further reduces funding availability for civic tech and accountability initiatives. The cumulative effect is a climate of self-censorship and withdrawal from rights-based programming among some civil society actors, who now shift toward less sensitive areas such as youth or environmental protection. The Kyrgyz Republic's suspension from the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in May 2024 further reduced the enabling environment for institutional uptake of civic tech initiatives. This development reflected a broader withdrawal of political commitment to transparency and citizen participation, particularly at the national level. However, despite this national-level shift, some municipal actors, including the Bishkek Mayor's Office, demonstrated interest in adopting and adapting tools developed under the project. These local engagements, while limited in scope, point to possible entry points for sustaining results through subnational partnerships. Without further investment and structured follow-up, however, these efforts may remain isolated and insufficient to ensure long-term sustainability.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

During implementation, the degree of GESI mainstreaming varied. Some sub-grantees demonstrated inclusive practices, such as adapting digital skills training for young persons with disabilities or tailoring outreach to elderly users through personalised support. The bilingual nature of platforms and adjustments for digital literacy barriers further supported accessibility. Women represented the majority of digital literacy training participants, comprising up to 70 percent depending on the platform. In interviews, women reported increased confidence using online government services, while rural participants valued the decentralised training delivery. While progress was made, there are still opportunities to more proactively and systematically integrate disability inclusion. While several activities targeted priority groups, outcome-level GESI indicators were not part of the approved Logframe, limiting the ability to assess concrete results. This does not constitute a monitoring gap but reflects the project's design scope. The evaluation observed that many partners had limited experience with applying GESI principles in practice. The Telegram bot for women survivors of violence stands out as an innovative feature, though its link to state services with good governance outcomes in this field is not yet evident. Overall, the project made tangible contributions to raising GESI awareness among participating organisations, strengthened inclusive outreach in several regions, and achieved qualitative improvements in digital access for women and rural youth. Further investment in partner capacity and integrating outcome-oriented GESI frameworks would be necessary to advance from intent to measurable impact.

EU Added Value

The EU's support was pivotal in enabling the project to operate effectively in a sensitive context. Its funding and institutional backing provided essential legitimacy to civil society actors, making it possible to advance governance-related initiatives. While certain contextual factors limited the breadth of longer-term or broader engagement, the EU's contribution was nonetheless vital in creating operational space and facilitating access. Communication materials prominently featured EU branding, reflecting its commitment to the project, even if these were not always connected to a wider narrative on EU values or reform support. Overall, EU support laid a strong foundation for project activities and fostered an environment conducive to civil society engagement, with opportunities for further strategic positioning and long-term policy influence in the future.

Factors of Success and Limiting Conditions

Success factors included the flexible funding mechanism, strong youth mobilisation, the contextual adaptability of CSOs, and the use of digital tools as safe spaces for engagement. These elements enabled relevance and responsiveness despite a restrictive civic space. Limiting factors included the delayed rollout of platforms, lack of institutional partnerships, external political environment, short implementation of windows for sub-grants, and limited MEL systems to document change. The absence of a project exit strategy and limited engagement with public institutions or policy bodies hindered the transition from pilot to systemic uptake.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Responsible Entity: TI-K with TI-S and disability inclusion experts

Linked to Finding: The disability-inclusive design and accessibility standards to benefit equally from the platforms and digital tools supported by the project.

To bridge the digital divide and ensure inclusive civic participation, it is recommended that all project-supported platforms undergo an accessibility audit by Q2 2026. The audit should assess compliance with international standards such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) and identify concrete areas for improvement. Based on audit findings, a phased action plan should be developed and implemented to ensure accessibility for persons with various disabilities, including visual, hearing, cognitive, and mobility impairments. This may include features such as screen-reader compatibility, keyboard navigation, alt-text for images, scalable text, audio captions, and plain-language options in Kyrgyz and Russian.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – INSTITUTIONAL COORDINATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Responsible entity: TI-K

Linked to Finding: The sustainability of results.

Transparency International Kyrgyzstan (TI-K) should support and prioritise the formal presentation of DT4CE-developed civic tech tools (including the petition and feedback platforms) to interested municipal authorities and the relevant line ministries before the end of the project. Where political conditions allow, TI-K may also explore opportunities to reintroduce selected platforms into national policy discussions on digital governance or public accountability in the future. The focus should be on practical relevance, usability, and continuity in citizen-facing digital services.

RECOMMENDATION 3: CLARIFY PLATFORM MAINTENANCE AND POST-PROJECT RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible entity: TI-K and TI-S

Linked to Finding: Post-project arrangements for platform maintenance and support

A technical and institutional review should be conducted by Q2 2026 for each digital platform to determine ongoing hosting, maintenance, and content management needs. Based on this assessment, a platform management roadmap should be developed and shared with relevant stakeholders. The roadmap should clearly define ownership, responsibilities, timelines, resource needs, and mitigation measures. In particular, it should include options for establishing mirror hosting arrangements on secure servers located outside the country to preserve user access in case of domestic restrictions. TI-K, as the platform owner, should lead on implementation, with technical guidance from TI-S and potential support from donors for digital security and cross-border hosting solutions.

V. LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Sustainability requires continuous support and localisation**
Some sub-grantees reported they were able to partially apply the digital skills gained (e.g. password changes, risk awareness) but lacked internal IT staff or resources to sustain platform management and other digital tools developed. This points to the importance of pairing digital tools with locally adaptable maintenance plans and capacity-building beyond the project cycle.
- **Political context influences participation and thematic focus**
Several CSOs mentioned a deliberate shift in project themes toward less politically sensitive topics such as environmental protection and digital literacy due to the deteriorating civic space. This illustrates that thematic flexibility and adaptive project planning are critical in restrictive political environments.
- **User engagement depends on interface simplicity and visible results**
Tools such as Bilem, JMD and Jol.kg had more traction when they were perceived as intuitive, responsive, and linked to visible outcomes (e.g. marked roads, legislative initiatives). This highlights the need for feedback loops and a clear, demonstrable impact to retain user interest.
- **Partnerships with universities worked well but need continuity**
Hackathons organised with universities attracted high participation. However, without follow-up integration or ongoing collaboration, some partnerships remained transactional. Sustainability of these partnerships should be institutionalised (e.g. through shared teaching modules or innovation labs, internships, and traineeships). TI-K may consider a Summer School project in collaboration with universities.
- **Visibility of the EU's Role**
In restrictive civic space environments, visibility must be carefully calibrated to avoid exposing local actors to risk. While DT4CE rightly adopted a cautious approach to in-country visibility, future interventions could enhance the EU's profile through alternative, lower-risk channels. These may include using EU Delegation websites and regional EU platforms to showcase results, highlight success stories, and promote EU support for democratic values and digital rights. Developing a visibility strategy early in the project, in coordination with the EU Delegation, would help maximise outreach while safeguarding implementing partners.

GOOD PRACTICES

- **Effective localisation of digital content**
Sub-grantees who developed short, accessible video materials in the Kyrgyz language (e.g. on how to use the Tunduk platform) demonstrated how locally relevant and linguistically appropriate content can significantly improve outreach and adoption among elderly and rural populations.
- **Youth-focused innovation mechanisms**
Hackathons provided a low-risk, creative space for youth to engage in digital civic action. They also served as pipelines for new ideas and feedback, generating prototypes and public interest even in the absence of long-term institutional support.
- **Engaging regional NGOs in all capacity-building activities at every level.** Their capacity was strengthened not only through expert-led sessions but also through peer learning with more experienced NGOs and networking, creating a foundation for future partnerships. **Benefits:** broad geographic coverage, complementary expertise, shared learning, and pooled strengths that expand reach and improve the quality of interventions.

- **Integrating Internships to Sustain Platform Operations and Build Youth Capacity**

A structured internship program was launched to support the sustainability and daily operations of DT4CE digital platforms. Originally intended for three participants, demand grew after the first hackathon, leading to the expansion to 18 interns in 2024. Interns assisted with tasks such as content development, document uploads, and public engagement, while gaining practical experience. This not only addressed operational needs but also fostered a new generation of civic tech practitioners by providing real-world learning opportunities and career pathways.

- **Distinctive Features of Digital Platforms**

Beyond numerical data, the unique characteristics of each digital platform are noteworthy. These web platforms illustrate best practices by fostering citizen engagement, enhancing transparency, and improving accessibility to public services:

- ◇ Bilem.kg is distinguished by its extensive library of user-friendly, plain-language guides. The platform contains hundreds of step-by-step instructions for accessing government services. This unique approach simplifies interactions with government institutions, making services more understandable and accessible to the general public.
- ◇ The legislative initiative platform Jmd.kg introduced an innovative mechanism in Kyrgyzstan by allowing any citizen to propose legislative changes digitally. Previously, collecting the required 10,000 signatures to submit a proposal to Parliament required visiting public spaces such as bazaars, schools, and museums. With the new platform, citizens can now participate directly and gather signatures online. This not only lowers barriers to civic engagement but also broadens public participation in the legislative process.
- ◇ The road monitoring platform Jol.kg empowers citizens to document and submit photographs of poor road conditions, resulting in a publicly visible map of road quality. This transparency contributes to greater government accountability, encourages the maintenance of road standards, and enables citizens to challenge substandard work—especially on recently repaired roads. The platform thus directly involves the public in monitoring infrastructure quality.
- ◇ The public procurement platform Tsa.kg provides practical guidance for participating in tenders and submitting complaints in cases of violations. It offers citizens and businesses a transparent and user-friendly tool to monitor procurement processes, thereby promoting fair competition and strengthening government accountability.

ANNEX I: EVALUATION TOR

GENERAL INFORMATION

Title of Consultancy: Final evaluation of “Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment” (DT4CE)

Application Closing Date: 15 July 2025

Consultancy Start and End Date: 1 September 2025 – 15 December 2025

Location of Consultancy: remote/home, with potential travel to Kyrgyz Republic in the end of October 2025.

BACKGROUND

As a global civil society organisation leading the fight against corruption, Transparency International (TI) — with over 100 chapters worldwide and a Secretariat based in Berlin, Germany — raises awareness of the damaging effects of corruption and works with partners in government, business, and civil society to develop and implement effective measures to combat it.

From January 2023 to December 2025, the TI Secretariat, together with Transparency International Kyrgyzstan, is implementing the EU-funded project “*Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment in the Kyrgyz Republic*” (DT4CE). The project aims to empower civil society through digital technology by strengthening the role of civic actors in governance. This is achieved by promoting accessible, interactive digital tools and building the capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) and youth to use technology effectively.

As part of the DT4CE project, four hackathons were implemented to engage young people in the development of civic tech tool concepts. Four online platforms — completed with mobile applications — were launched (bilem.kg, jol.kg, jmd.kg, tsa.kg) each serving a distinct purpose: delivering legal guidance, increasing transparency in road construction and maintenance, monitoring public procurement, and supporting the creation of legal initiatives (yes, a digital democracy buffet). Two policy papers analysing public procurement legislation in Kyrgyz Republic were produced. Currently a series of capacity-building workshops are conducted for CSOs and relevant stakeholders on governance and digital engagement. Furthermore, a subgrant programme is being implemented, supporting ten CSOs across the Kyrgyz Republic in enhancing their use of digital technologies to further their missions.

Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) in Berlin is looking for an independent evaluator or team of evaluators to conduct an independent final evaluation of the project Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment (DT4CE)¹, in the Kyrgyz Republic, by collecting and analysing evidence about the achieved levels of impact the action either generated or contributed to. The external evaluation shall assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the project, and provide actionable learning to inform future programming in similarly complex and fragile environments.

OBJECTIVES OF THE FINAL EVALUATION

The main purpose of the evaluation exercise is to provide an external and independent assessment, prioritising the project’s impact, sustainability and overall performance, including its achievements and contribution to any positive or negative changes. This final evaluation shall assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness – including innovation and inclusion aspects, and

especially the impact, and sustainability of the project, and provide actionable learning to inform future programming in the Kyrgyz Republic and region.

The overall objectives of the evaluation are the following:

- Provide an independent, systematic and objective assessment of the impact and sustainability, evaluating the project implementation, the outcomes of the project against the initial goals specified in the project's MEL framework and the extent to which the net benefits of the project are sustainable over time.
- Document lessons learned and good practices to generate clear forward-looking and actionable recommendations to guide TI-S, TI-K, CSO sub-grantees and other stakeholders in developing strategies for future related work at national I levels.

The key audience for this evaluation is TI-S, project partner in Kyrgyzstan and the core stakeholders of the project, to sustain the results of the project and inform the design of future related projects.

KEY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

The following proposed OECD DAC criteria and evaluation questions should be addressed during the project evaluation but are subject to discussion and agreement between TI-S and the evaluator(s) in the inception phase of the evaluation. Prospective candidates may also further prioritise or suggest alternatives to these questions in their initial proposal.

RELEVANCE AND COHERENCE (WEIGHTING = 20%)

- Were the activities and outputs of the project coherent and consistent with the project goals and objectives?
- How aligned were the project's outcomes in relation to TI S, TI Kyrgyzstan's strategic priorities, EU priorities, and relevant national reform priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic?
- To what extent did the project's interventions complement other anti-corruption initiatives in the Kyrgyz Republic?

EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND INCLUSION (WEIGHTING = 30%)

- To what extent were the project objectives achieved in comparison to initial plans, and how strongly can they be attributed to TI-S and the project partners' work?
- To what extent did the intervention logic (as set out in the logframe) remain valid throughout implementation, and how were any changes justified and managed?
- How efficiently were project activities implemented in relation to the planned budget and timeline?¹
- What internal and external factors most influenced project success in Kyrgyz Republic? How effective and responsive was the project in managing risks and adapting to challenges, particularly those related to the changing civic space for civil society in the Kyrgyz Republic?

- How effective was the project in incorporating gender and inclusion elements into its design and implementation?

IMPACT AND INNOVATION (WEIGHTING = 30%)

- To what extent did the project introduce or pilot innovative approaches, tools or mechanisms in its design, implementation or stakeholder engagement? How did these contribute to the achievement of results and add value to the project's relevance, effectiveness, or sustainability?
- To what extent can the project be said to contribute towards longer-term systemic change in public integrity, transparency and accountability or creating an enabling environment for continued anti-corruption reforms and civic engagement (in anti-corruption efforts) in the Kyrgyz Republic? What evidence exists of these contributions, and what are the factors (or other factors) contributing to those changes? How does this include the sub-granted initiatives?

SUSTAINABILITY AND EU ADDED VALUE (WEIGHTING = 20%)

- Are the benefits/use of outputs of the project – including the digital tools/platforms - likely to continue once funding has ceased, and what might be risks to this?
- To what extent can the capacity development inputs and contributions facilitated or provided by TI-S to TI Kyrgyzstan through the project be said to be independently self-sustainable for future projects?
- What lessons can be drawn from the innovative aspects of the project for future programming, including potential for replication or scaling by TI Kyrgyzstan?
- What lessons from the project can inform the design of future EU-funded initiatives aimed in generally, but particularly ones to support sustainable governance and anti-corruption reforms in the Kyrgyz Republic?

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation, including its approach and methods, will be planned, agreed and conducted in close consultation with the TI-S project team. The evaluation consultant is ultimately responsible for the overall methodological approach and design of the final project evaluation and is expected to propose methods that they consider most appropriate and that could further strengthen the quality of the data and/or close any gaps identified to achieve the aims, which should be adapted to the requirements of this ToR.

The final project evaluation should use a participatory and inclusive approach engaging relevant staff at TI-S and TI Kyrgyzstan/partner levels through structured methods. Both quantitative and qualitative data should be utilised in assessing the project. The exact methodology should be defined, discussed, and agreed upon with TI-S during the inception phase.

The final project evaluation can include but not necessarily be limited to the following methods:

- Desk review of relevant documents.

- Individual and/or group online (or possibly in person) interviews/Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with project implementing stakeholders.
- Survey/ questionnaires targeting TI staff involved in implementation and relevant external stakeholders.
- Possible travel to Kyrgyz Republic at the end of October 2025 to conduct interviews.
- The consultant should present a detailed statement of the proposed review methods in the technical proposal. The consultant is expected to refine the scope and methodology of this assignment during the inception phase in cooperation with TI-S and provide a detailed plan.

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND DEADLINES

This evaluation is expected to be a mixture of desk-based research and preparation (September 2025) with a primary data collection and stakeholder engagement visit to the Kyrgyz Republic (last week of October/ first week of November 2025), and remote report writing and online validation meeting (November – 15 December 2025).

The consultant or team of consultants is expected to deliver:

- An **inception report** outlining the proposed methodology, a list of stakeholders for interviews and FGDs, data collection tools and timeframe of planned actions, this is due in draft by 15 September 2025 for TI review and comment, and then due in final version by 30 September 2025.
- A **draft evaluation report** for review and comments by TI-S, including annexes. While considering the comments provided on the draft, the consultant(s) shall use their independent and impartial judgment in preparing the final report. This is due by 23 November 2025.
- An online **validation meeting** with key stakeholders to discuss findings and feedback on draft report, with design, facilitation and documentation of a participatory workshop, incl. PowerPoint presentation, to discuss and validate the draft report. This is due by 04 December 2025.
- A **final evaluation report** documenting the evaluation process and results following a clear structure. The evaluation report will contain the findings, conclusions, and recommendations as well as lessons learned with action-oriented recommendations. This is due by 15Dec.

Guidance and quality assurance:

- The findings should be referenced.
- The consultant's approach should be guided by the Transparency International Impact Matrix methodology.²
- The research should abide by ethical protocols including participant confidentiality and privacy, and by data protection regulations.

The final report should not be longer than 20 pages, excluding the annexes and the executive summary, and should be accompanied by a summary PowerPoint presentation. All evaluation deliverables are to be submitted in English, in electronic form, in accordance with the agreed deadlines. The consultant is responsible for the quality of the final product, including editing and quality control of language.

Annexes to the final report should be kept to an absolute minimum, only those annexes that serve to demonstrate or clarify an issue related to a significant finding should be included. Existing documents should be referenced but not necessarily annexed.

SELECTION CRITERIA

TI-S is inviting expressions of interest from individual consultants or a team of consultants to carry out the mid-term evaluation of the project. The consultant(s) should have:

Core competencies

People's skills: be able to mediate the different expectations of the different internal stakeholders to produce a strong independent assessment that will genuinely serve the learning purposes set out in this ToR.

Work style: well-planned and organised even within a fluid working environment and has a capacity for initiative with competent analytical and problem-solving skills. Maintains a strong level and flow of communication with reporting stakeholders.

Language: excellent command of English and Russian a requirement. Kyrgyz an asset.

Technical competencies

Applicants should have the following skills and experience:

- At least 7 years of proven relevant professional experience in an international development environment and Monitoring & Evaluation (MEL), of which at least 5 years in evaluating international development programmes, with a specific focus on governance, anti-corruption, and public sector reform.
- Advanced university degree in social sciences, political science, development studies or a related area. A post-graduate degree in project management, and/or related fields would be an advantage.
- Knowledge and experience of working for advocacy-oriented organisations.
- Excellent drafting and report-writing capacities.
- Proven experience in the conceptualisation and facilitation of participatory workshops and engaging a range of stakeholders in project evaluations
- Experience of evaluating gender mainstreaming and inclusive approaches in project implementation.
- Prior project/evaluation experience and a solid understanding of political and socio-economic issues in the region ESSENTIAL, with direct prior experience in the Kyrgyz Republic a significant advantage.
- Proven track record of conducting evaluations of EU-funded projects, with a strong understanding of EU evaluation methodologies, reporting standards, and Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) principles ESSENTIAL.

- Positive references or letters of recommendation from reputable international funding organisations will be regarded as a distinct advantage for the consultant.

REMUNERATION AND COSTS

The consultant(s) should provide their estimated total fee as a lump sum or as standard daily rates before any VAT or other charges. The budget available for this evaluation is EUR 15,000 (including VAT) and travel expenses (to be arranged/incurred by TI).

For Consultants based in the EU, EEA and Switzerland

Transparency International e.V. (Secretariat), (TI-S) is registered as a Business Entity in Germany with VAT identification number DE273612486. To determine the Value Added Tax (VAT) implications of this tender, we kindly request that the Consultants fill out the VAT Form for Tenders/Vendor Form (instructions inside the form) and submit the completed and duly signed form along with their email application.

Consultants who are based in Germany and do not charge German VAT must confirm their small entrepreneur status.

LOGISTICS AND SPECIFICATION

The consultant or team are expected to work between 1 September 2025 and 15 December 2025. A detailed timeline needs to be agreed upon at the beginning of the assignment.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Interested applicants must submit the required documents listed below in **English** consolidated into a **single PDF file**, in the same order to DT4CEvaluation@transparency.org and complete the application form available [here](#) by **15 July 2025**. Applications should contain these documents in English:

- A detailed technical proposal of how the assignment will be approached, including a budget breakdown and a tentative timeline.
- A letter of motivation, focusing on concrete examples relating to the necessary skills and experience requested in this Terms of Reference.
- Curriculum Vitae with a description of the applicant's profile and experience (maximum 3 pages).
- Contact details for at least two independent referees with in-depth and proven knowledge of the applicant's expertise and relevant work experience.
- A sample evaluation, as the first author, published in the last 3 years.
- A completed VAT Form for Tenders/Vendor Form (for EU only), available here: <https://files.transparencycdn.org/images/TendersVendor-Form.docx>.

Please note that only **short-listed candidates will be contacted** and that it is unfortunately not possible to provide individual feedback on applications.

The Transparency International Secretariat is committed to creating an inclusive work environment where diversity is valued and where there is equality of opportunity. We actively seek a diverse applicant pool and, therefore, welcome applications from qualified candidates of all regions, countries, cultures and backgrounds.

Selection of candidates is made on a competitive basis, and we do not discriminate based on national origin, race, colour or ethnic background, religious belief, sex, gender identity and expression or sexual orientation, marital or family status, age, or ability. We kindly ask applicants to refrain from including in their application information relating to the above as well as from attaching photos.

TI retains the right to reject any or all the applications and/or to enter additional negotiations with one or more of the tendering parties.

DATA PROTECTION

When you respond to this tender and submit your application, you provide consent that Transparency International e. V. keeps your application materials for a period of ten years according to German legal requirements. Afterwards Transparency International will delete your application and any personal data included in it. If you have any data protection questions, please reach out to dataprotection@transparency.org.

Guidelines for handling overhead and travel expenses

Overhead

Regular overhead expenses associated with the Consultants maintaining their place of business, such as rent, telephone, utilities or stationery, are included in the Consultant's professional fee, except where explicitly agreed otherwise in the contract.

Travel

Travel and accommodation expenses will as far as possible, and where applicable, be recovered from the institutions and companies hosting events or using the outputs provided by the Consultant.

Where such cost recovery is not possible, all travel is subject to prior approval by TI-S staff responsible for the financial management of the Project or TI Budget Line that will support the costs of travel. TI shall not issue travel advances to the Consultants. For accommodation or travel by air, rail or coach, they will instead have to contact TI-S which will make travel arrangements on the Consultant's behalf.

All travel booked by TI-S will include **travel health and accident insurance** with worldwide coverage and Economy class only; accommodation will aim to achieve the best value for money up to a 4-star category.

Consultants shall be entitled to invoice TI-S **only** for local transportation and visa cost (if applicable).

Subsistence allowance (per diems) and expenses for individual meals cannot be claimed. These are part of the Consultant's business expenses.

Please note that TI-S will not cover costs related to Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) or similar security training. It is the sole responsibility of the Consultant to ensure they have completed such training if they deem it necessary.

ANNEX II: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Indicators/sub-questions	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
<p>1.1 How well did the project's objectives align with the relevant national reform priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic, strategic priorities of TI-S, TI-Kyrgyzstan, and EU priorities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that project objectives explicitly referenced or responded to national anti-corruption or governance reforms ▪ Evidence of alignment between project outcomes and the strategic priorities of TI-S and TI-Kyrgyzstan ▪ Alignment of the project's thematic focus (e.g. digital civic engagement, transparency, inclusion) with EU programming priorities for Kyrgyzstan ▪ Degree to which the project filled a niche or addressed identified gaps not covered by other actors ▪ Stakeholder perception of the project's relevance to national and institutional priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review (project design documents, national strategies, TI strategic plans, EU programming documents) 4. Key informant interviews (TI-S, TI-K, EU Delegation, CSO national developments), development partners: UNDP, OSCE. ▪ Face-to-Face and online interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National development or anti-corruption strategies (e.g. KR 2021–2026 National Development Program) ▪ TI-S strategic framework, TI-K country strategy ▪ EU Multi-Annual programme , proposal, Logframe, narrative reports
<p>1.2 To what extent did the project design and objectives respond to the needs, priorities, and capacities of final beneficiaries, including women, youth, rural residents, and persons with disabilities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that a needs assessment or context analysis was conducted during the project design phase, specifically identifying barriers or priorities of target groups ▪ Degree to which project objectives and activities addressed the identified needs of women, youth, rural communities, and persons with disabilities ▪ Evidence that the project adapted its approaches to reflect differing capacities (e.g. digital literacy, access constraints) among beneficiary groups ▪ Perceptions of final beneficiaries regarding the project's relevance to their lived experiences ▪ Inclusion of priority groups in consultation processes during design or implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review of project design materials, gender and inclusion assessments, and activity plans ▪ Focus group discussions with women, youth, rural residents, and persons with disabilities ▪ Online survey of beneficiaries ▪ Key informant interviews with local CSOs, sub-grantees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project proposal, needs assessment, beneficiary mapping reports ▪ Inclusion or gender analysis conducted during design or inception ▪ FGD and survey data ▪ Reports from sub-grantees and community partners ▪ Stakeholder interviews (including those from underserved groups)
<p>2.1 To what extent was there internal coherence between the project's components (digital platforms, sub-grants, capacity building, advocacy) to achieve intended results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarity of the theory of change linking different components toward shared outcomes ▪ Evidence of coordinated planning and implementation across components (e.g. were digital tools used by sub-grantees? were advocacy efforts informed by capacity building?) ▪ Presence of feedback loops between implementation and strategic adaptation (e.g. adjusting sub-grant focus based on platform use trends) ▪ Degree of integration across teams or partners responsible for different components ▪ Stakeholder perception of complementarity or fragmentation across project streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review (project design documents, national strategies, TI strategic plans, EU programming documents) ▪ Key informant interviews (TI-S, TI-K, EU Delegation, CSO, development partners: UNDP, OSCE. ▪ Face-to-Face and online interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU coordination meeting records, donor strategies, and evaluations ▪ Reports and documents from other EU-funded or national anti-corruption projects ▪ Project reports referencing coordination or complementarity ▪ KIs with donors, UN agencies, and implementing partners ▪ Websites of the TI, OSCE, UNDP and UNODC.

Evaluation Question	Indicators/sub-questions	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
<p>2.2 To what extent was the project coherent with other anti-corruption and governance initiatives in the Kyrgyz Republic, including EU-funded programmes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of alignment with national or international anti-corruption and governance initiatives active in Kyrgyzstan ▪ Degree of complementarity or duplication with other EU-funded or donor-led projects (e.g. shared target groups, mutually reinforcing activities) ▪ Participation in formal or informal coordination mechanisms with other actors in the field ▪ Reference to or uptake of project tools, findings, or methods by other organisations ▪ Stakeholder perception of the project’s added value in the broader governance and anti-corruption ecosystem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mapping of relevant donor and government initiatives in the governance and anti-corruption sector ▪ Document review of donor coordination notes and project synergies ▪ Key informant interviews with EU Delegation, UNDP, UNODC other donors, OSCE, CoE and national stakeholders ▪ Triangulation with sub-grantee reports and external evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EU coordination meeting records, donor strategies, and evaluations ▪ Reports and documents from other EU-funded or national anti-corruption projects ▪ Project reports referencing coordination or complementarity ▪ KIs with donors, UN agencies, and implementing partners ▪ Websites of the TI, OSCE, UNDP and UNODC.
<p>3.1 How economically were financial, human, and technical resources used to deliver the intended outputs and outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ratio of budgeted to actual expenditures across key components (e.g. hackathons, digital tools) ▪ Allocation of staff time, consultant inputs, and volunteer contributions compared to output volume ▪ Extent to which sub-grant funding was optimally used to deliver visible or sustained outputs ▪ Balance between centralised (TI-S) and decentralised (TI-K and sub-grantees) resource use ▪ Efficiency gains through digital formats or synergies with other initiatives (e.g. reuse of platforms or training content) ▪ Stakeholder views on whether resources were used economically without undermining quality or scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial and procurement document review ▪ Key informant interviews with TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees ▪ Desk review of sub-grant outputs versus reported costs ▪ Triangulation through activity timelines, monitoring data, and user reach metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget vs expenditure reports (e.g. % burn rates) ▪ Sub-grantee financial and narrative reports ▪ Internal communication between TI-S and partners on resource planning ▪ Project M&E and implementation tracking ▪ Interview transcripts and validation with YES group coordinators or platform developers ▪ ROM Report
<p>3.2 How efficient and adaptable were project management and coordination mechanisms, including decision-making processes between TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarity and timeliness of decision-making structures between TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees ▪ Responsiveness to contextual changes, including adaptations due to civic space constraints or delays ▪ Existence and use of coordination tools (e.g. regular planning meetings, joint workplans, shared reporting templates) ▪ Efficiency of communication flows and feedback loops across levels (HQ–country–sub-grantees) ▪ Stakeholder perceptions of burden vs benefit in coordination processes ▪ Evidence of capacity support from TI-S to TI-K or sub-grantees that enabled timely course correction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interviews with TI-S, TI-K, and selected sub-grantees on coordination and responsiveness ▪ Review of management documents (e.g. workplans, meeting notes, internal reports) ▪ Analysis of project revisions, timeline shifts, or documented decisions ▪ Triangulation through comparison of planned and actual implementation sequences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Status of ROM recommendations ▪ Internal communication records and coordination protocols ▪ Minutes from project meetings or planning sessions ▪ Revised timelines, updated Logframes or Gantt charts ▪ Interviews with project and sub-grantee focal points ▪ Donor and partner feedback where available (e.g. from EU or civil society actors)
<p>3.3 Were activities implemented according to planned timelines, and if not, how effectively were delays addressed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Degree of alignment between original workplans and actual implementation timelines ▪ Types and frequency of implementation delays (e.g. procurement, staffing, external constraints) ▪ Documentation and analysis of causes of delays in internal reports or meeting notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparative review of planned vs actual implementation schedules (e.g. from inception, progress, and final reports) ▪ Interviews with TI-S, TI-K, and sub-grantees on the causes and management of delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Original and updated Gantt charts or workplans ▪ Internal monitoring reports and project progress updates ▪ Meeting minutes and email correspondence documenting timeline revisions ▪ Interviews with programme staff and partners

Evaluation Question	Indicators/sub-questions	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Timeliness and appropriateness of adaptive measures or mitigation strategies ▪ Stakeholder perceptions of the impact of delays on output delivery or outcome achievement ▪ Extent to which contingency planning or flexible budgeting was applied to manage delays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross-checking with donor reporting and correspondence ▪ Triangulation of activity completion dates with financial disbursement and procurement records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial tracking and procurement documentation
<p>4.1 To what extent were planned outputs and outcomes achieved, and what evidence demonstrates progress towards the intended results?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number and diversity of sub-grants awarded (e.g. 14 CSOs including informal youth and regional groups) ▪ Thematic scope and geographic coverage of sub-grantees' initiatives ▪ Number and type of digital tools or platforms developed and launched ▪ Functionality and uptake of digital civic tech solutions (e.g. active platforms, user engagement) ▪ Number and quality of mentoring sessions provided to sub-grantees ▪ Evidence of improvements in sub-grantee capacity (e.g. digital, civic engagement, anti-corruption) ▪ Number and scope of hackathons, public outreach activities, and university-based engagement ▪ Observable changes in citizen participation or local accountability practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk review of project documentation, final reports, and sub-grantee factsheets ▪ Interviews with TI-S, TI-K, and selected sub-grantees ▪ Focus group discussions with youth and community users of digital platforms ▪ Field visit observations and review of mentoring session reports ▪ Analysis of platform usability and social media or website analytics ▪ Media content analysis of coverage and campaign outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project ROM report and final narrative report ▪ Sub-grant documentation and thematic factsheets ▪ TI-Kyrgyzstan and TI-S staff interviews ▪ Sub-grantee interviews and mentoring records <p>Digital platforms and tools developed under the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bilem.kg ▪ Jol.kg ▪ Jmd.kg ▪ Tsa.kg ▪ Hackathon materials, event reports, and outreach campaign records ▪ Feedback from university stakeholders and student participants
<p>4.2 How effectively did the project integrate gender equality and social inclusion considerations into its design, delivery, and results, and what outcomes were achieved for priority groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ % of women-led or women-focused NGOs among sub-grantees ▪ Share of female participants in hackathons, trainings, civic tech events, and digital platform engagement ▪ Inclusion of gender and social inclusion lenses in digital tool design, content, and access (e.g. disability accessibility, language, gender-sensitive design) ▪ Outcomes reported by sub-grantees in terms of increased engagement or empowerment of priority groups ▪ Visibility of women and marginalised groups in awareness-raising campaigns, civic actions, or digital outputs ▪ Challenges encountered in ensuring inclusion, and mitigation measures applied ▪ Availability of gender-disaggregated data on users of digital tools or reporting apps ▪ Extent to which female participants perceived the project as safe and empowering, particularly in digital engagement and complaint mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review of sub-grant proposals, campaign outputs and digital platform content ▪ Key informant interviews with TI-K, TI-S, CSOs, youth, gender experts and journalists involved in advocacy or service delivery ▪ Platform data analysis of complaints or user reports related to gendered corruption ▪ Social media monitoring and media content review ▪ Case study development on civic initiatives or campaigns that addressed sextortion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sub-grantee reports, campaign materials, and MEL data ▪ TI-K and TI-S project staff ▪ Civic tech platforms ▪ Interview and FGD transcripts ▪ Women's rights and anti-corruption CSOs ▪ Media coverage and social media posts ▪ User analytics and anonymous survey results
<p>4.3 What internal and external factors most influenced the achievement or non-achievement of results, and how effectively did the project respond to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of major internal enabling or constraining factors (e.g. staffing, MEL capacity, technical capacity of the TI-K, coordination between TI-S and TI-K) ▪ External contextual factors affecting implementation (e.g. political sensitivity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review of project risk matrix, MEL framework, and progress reports ▪ Key informant interviews with TI-K, TI-S, sub-grantees, and journalists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interim and annual project reports ▪ Risk assessments or donor reporting documents ▪ Minutes from coordination or adaptation meetings ▪ Sub-grantee narrative reports

Evaluation Question	Indicators/sub-questions	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
risks, including changes in civic space?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> around anti-corruption, digital surveillance, shrinking civic space, media restrictions) Level of adaptive management in response to emerging risks or implementation challenges Existence and use of risk mitigation strategies in project planning and implementation Evidence of protective measures for civic actors, youth participants, and journalists involved in advocacy Monitoring of the enabling environment and civic space, and how such insights were used to inform programming Extent to which sub-grantees were consulted or supported when risks emerged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder interviews with civic space monitors or legal experts (e.g. human rights organisations or regional observers) Timeline analysis of project decisions in relation to major national events Thematic coding of sub-grantee feedback and staff reflections Focus group discussions with youth and CSO partners on perceptions of risk and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview transcripts from TI-S, TI-K, and partners Publicly available civic space reports (e.g. CIVICUS, Freedom House, local watchdogs) Internal communications and strategy notes where risk-based decisions were documented
5.1 What measurable or observable changes can be attributed, fully or partially, to the project at institutional, community, or individual levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of users reporting improved access to civic information or services via project-supported digital tools Number of public institutions, CSOs that have formally adopted or integrated project-developed tools or practices. Number of civic actions or initiatives launched by users as a result of engagement with the tools (e.g. reports submitted, petitions started, issues raised) Number of policy decisions, regulations, or administrative actions by state bodies that reference or are based on data generated through the project-supported digital tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online user survey to capture perceived improvements in access to civic information or services (linked to platforms or distributed via email/SMS) Document review of MoUs, official letters, project reports, or internal SOPs to verify institutional or CSO adoption of tools Structured interviews with government officials and platform administrators Desk review of policies and legal texts published after platform rollout Outcome harvesting focused on institutional response to platform insights Process tracing to establish causal links between platform data and policy changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Platform analytics, project MEL records, and user survey data (for reported improvements in access to civic information or services) Signed MoUs, internal institutional documents, meeting minutes, and project activity reports (for adoption of tools by institutions or CSOs) Sub-grantee reports, user-submitted content, screenshots, and outcome harvesting transcripts (for civic actions or initiatives launched) Training attendance lists, pre/post test results, and participant self-assessments (for change in knowledge or skills) Official policy documents, government orders, meeting minutes, public statements, or press releases citing platform data
5.2 To what extent did the project contribute to strengthening public integrity, transparency, accountability, and civic engagement in anti-corruption efforts, and how did sub-grants contribute to these results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of digital platforms and mobile applications launched and made publicly accessible % of users reporting improved access to civic information or services via the new platforms Frequency of use of interactive tools by targeted user groups (e.g. youth, students, CSOs) Number of public feedback submissions or interactions enabled through these tools User satisfaction scores on accessibility, usability, and relevance of the digital platforms Awareness of rights or procedures among users of the tools (measured through pre/post surveys or quizzes embedded in tools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review of project documentation (ToRs, activity reports) Direct observation and testing of platforms % of users reporting improved access to civic information or services via the new platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalised digital products (platforms/apps) Project activity reports and MEL records Screenshots, links, or app listings with release dates Developer reports or IT contractor deliverables Interview with soft and web-developers.

Evaluation Question	Indicators/sub-questions	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
<p>6.1 Are the benefits of the project, including digital platforms and capacity-building results, likely to continue after project funding ends?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Availability of an exit strategy or sustainability plan specifying responsibilities, funding pathways, and timelines ▪ Existence of institutional mechanisms or mandates for continued use and maintenance of project-supported platforms or tools ▪ Level of public budget allocation or institutional co-financing committed to sustain digital civic engagement initiatives ▪ Number of staff or units in public institutions or CSOs trained and assigned to maintain or use project-supported tools ▪ Extent to which project-supported platforms have been formally integrated into CSO or public institution operations or strategic plans ▪ Reported political support or resistance from local/national authorities toward digital civic engagement, especially for sensitive topics ▪ Level of engagement of priority groups (e.g. youth, women, persons with disabilities) in post-project planning or oversight mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document review ▪ Direct observation and testing of the platform ▪ Interview with the national partners, Implementing agency (TI Secretariat, TI-Kyrgyzstan), donor representatives, MEL focal point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project design documents, interim/final reports, exit strategy papers, and MoUs
<p>6.2 What institutional, financial, or political factors support or hinder the sustainability of results, particularly for priority groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Status of resource mobilisation or fundraising efforts post-project ▪ Number and quality of grant proposals, fundraising campaigns, or co-financing discussions initiated post-launch ▪ Instances of state censorship, pushback, regulatory changes, or risk of surveillance targeting CSOs/platform users ▪ Projected annual cost to maintain platforms vs. confirmed funding sources after project closure ▪ Number of local staff or partners with the skills and tools to update digital tools without donor support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Projected annual cost to maintain platforms vs. confirmed funding sources after project closure ▪ State AC policy analysis ▪ CSOs, digital rights experts, international partners, legal experts ▪ Local developers, CSO IT staff, capacity-building trainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintenance cost projections, budget forecasts, donor correspondence ▪ National policy updates, civic space assessments, UNODC, FCDO/UN reports
<p>7.1: What did EU support uniquely enable in terms of scale, partnerships, credibility, visibility, or policy influence that would not have been possible through other donor or domestic funding?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number and diversity of new partnerships formed as a direct result of EU funding ▪ Stakeholder perception of the EU's added value in credibility and influence (compared to other donors) ▪ Number of high-level dialogues, policy consultations, or formal engagements facilitated due to EU funding ▪ Instances where the EU's support amplified visibility of civic tech or anti-corruption innovations at national or international levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ KIIs, partnership mapping ▪ KII protocol with comparative questions, Likert-scale survey with CSO partners ▪ Media content analysis, KII 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership agreements, MoUs, project reports, stakeholder interviews ▪ Implementing partners, EU Delegation, local CSOs, sub-grantees ▪ Interview transcripts, online surveys, media mentions ▪ Government representatives, CSOs, donors, journalists ▪ Project management team, government counterparts, EU Delegation staff ▪ Press coverage, social media analytics, event participation records (e.g. OECD, EU Week, Human Rights Fora)

ANNEX III: EVALUATION TOOLS: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDES BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP, INCLUDING AND DONOR.

The TI-S is in the process of conducting an Independent Evaluation of the EU-funded project Digital Technologies for Civic Empowerment in the Kyrgyz Republic (DT4CE). The evaluation is undertaken in line with TI and OECD norms and standards for evaluation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to deliver an external, independent, and evidence-based assessment, with a focus on its impact, sustainability, and overall performance. It will analyse the project's achievements and its contribution to positive or negative changes, while generating actionable learning to inform future programming in the Kyrgyz Republic and the wider region.

The evaluation is carried out by a team of external independent evaluators, consisting of an Ms. Bunafsha Gulakova (Austria) and a data collection expert Sabina Salikhova (Georgia).

Confidentiality and informed consent: This interview is confidential, with all information received being aggregated and anonymised. No individual will be quoted nor will the organisation they represent be identified. The data collected will only be used for evaluation purposes. Your participation in the interview is voluntary, and you may withdraw from it at any moment.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROJECT STAFF:

1. What are the three most important achievements of the project to date, and what factors contributed to their success?
2. What were the main challenges during implementation, and how did the team respond to or adapt to those challenges?
3. What is the current status of the project's exit strategy or transition planning? How are local partners being prepared to sustain key results?
4. To what extent have the project's digital tools and civic engagement platforms been taken up by end users (CSOs, youth, citizens), and what indications are there of continued use beyond the project period?
5. Has a plan been developed to ensure the sustainability of digital platforms, sub-grantee engagement, and civic participation mechanisms after the EU funding ends? What specific actions are being taken to transition ownership or embed results locally?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CSOS:

1. How was the process of the grant application?
2. What have been the most meaningful results of your organisation's participation in the DT4CE project, and what factors contributed to these results?
3. How has your organisation's capacity to use digital tools for civic engagement or anti-corruption work changed during the project?
4. To what extent were the project's digital platforms or tools relevant and usable for your local community or target groups?
5. Have you faced any barriers in sustaining or applying the project's results after the sub-grant period ended?
6. What support or follow-up would be necessary to strengthen the long-term impact or scalability of your activities?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DIRECT BENEFICIARIES:

1. What motivated you to participate in the hackathon or digital platform activities, and how would you describe your overall experience?

2. **What are the most important skills, knowledge, or perspectives you gained through your involvement in the project?**
3. **Did your participation in the project influence your interest in civic engagement, anti-corruption, or digital innovation? If so, how?**
4. **Have you applied or shared what you learned in any practical way, such as in your studies, community activities, or online engagement?**
5. **Do you think public authorities are more responsive now, as a result of the tools or pressure generated by users like you? Why or why not?**
6. **What suggestions would you offer to enhance similar experiences for future students?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC AUTHORITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTNERS

1. **Have you or your institution made use of the data or feedback generated through the digital tools supported by the project? If yes, in what way. Do you find them user-friendly?**
2. **Can you point to any policy decisions, administrative actions, or public services that were adjusted as a result of information received via these tools?**
3. **Has the project influenced how your institution engages with citizens, especially youth or CSOs? If so, how?**
4. **Was there coordination with relevant national digital strategies, open government commitments, or civic engagement platforms (e.g. Tunduk)?**

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE EU DELEGATION

1. **What do you consider the three most important achievements of the DT4CE project to date, and what key factors contributed to those results?**
2. **To what extent has the project been relevant to the EU's priorities in Kyrgyzstan, including support to civil society, anti-corruption, and civic space?**
3. **How do you assess the comparative advantages of TI-Kyrgyzstan and TI-Secretariat in implementing DT4CE, compared to other implementing partners such as EU Member State agencies?**
4. **What is your assessment of the project's approach to sustainability? Has an exit or transition strategy been discussed, and what would you expect in terms of follow-up or future phases?**
5. **How do you view the project's visibility and alignment with EU communication and branding guidelines? Have communication results been adequate?**
6. **Were there any unintended effects, either positive or negative, during the implementation of the project that the EU Delegation became aware of?**
7. **Are there any key recommendations or lessons you would propose for future programming in the areas of digital civic engagement, youth participation, or anti-corruption in restrictive environments like Kyrgyzstan?**

ANNEX IV: DESK REVIEW LIST

PROJECT DOCUMENTS

Transparency International Secretariat, DT4CE Progress Report (unpublished internal report, 2025)
Transparency International Secretariat, DT4CE Year 1 Narrative Report 3.0 (Transparency International, 2023)
Transparency International Secretariat, DT4CE Year 2 Narrative Report 21.03.2025 (Transparency International, 2025)
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Annex A2. Grant Application Form – Full Application – FINAL 2022 Financial Report 2023.
Transparency International. Are We on the Road to Impact? A Guide for Monitoring Transparency and Accountability Work, **2014**,
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Internews, ‘Digital Engagement and Civic Space in Kyrgyzstan: Barriers and Opportunities’ (2022) <https://internews.org> accessed 5 October 2025.
UNDP Kyrgyzstan, **Gender and Digitalisation 2025** (Bishkek 2025)

ANNEX V: STAKEHOLDER MATRIX

Meeting Type	Stakeholder(s)	Gender	Institution / Affiliation
KII	Aram Khaghaghordyan	Male	Transparency International Secretariat
	Andrea Rocca	Male	Transparency International Secretariat
KII	Cholpon Djusupova	Female	Legal Clinic “Adilet” (CSO)
KII	Adylbek Sharshenbaev Aigul Akmatova	Male, Female	TI-K
KII	Zhanybek Zhiidebai uulu	Male	TI-K
KII	Bakytbek Satibekov	Male	NGO “Альянс по продвижению гражданских инициатив”
KII	Bekmamat Mederov	Male	NGO “ЦА институт по исследованию коррупции”
KII	Suita Attakurova	Female	NGO “Элетайым” (Naryn)
KII	Rahat Sagynbek kyzy	Female	NGO “Insan-Leilek” (Batken)
KII	Gulmairam Attokurova	Female	NGO “Kaniet” (Jalalabad)
KII	Gulira Borubaeva	Female	NGO “Serepchi”
KII	Burulai Myrzakmetova,	Female	NGO Aytumar
KII	Akylbek Aidraliev	Male	Hackathon partner / youth panel
KII	Azat Ibraev Kanykei Nazarova	Male, Female	NGO “IDEA”
KII	Irina Dmitrienko	Female	General Prosecutor’s Academy
KII	Aidana Musaeva	Female, Female	Crisis Centre “Chance”
Focus Group	UNDP Gender Specialist, Gender expert, women’s CSO reps	4 females	Various CSOs and UNDP
KII	Programme Officer	Male	EU Delegation to Kyrgyzstan
KII	Murat Karypov	Male	NGO “Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan”
KII	Chinara Aitbaeva	Female	NGO “Our Century”
KII	Gulya Abitova	Female	NGO “Resource Centre for elderly”
KII	Alena Vandisheva	Female	TI-Russia
KII	Ruta Vimba	Female	Transparency International Secretariat
KII	Satipekov Emir	Male	Hackathon partner/winner
KII	Kalibayeva Kanikey	Female	Hackathon partner/winner
KII	Maresel Madanbekov	Male	Hackathon partner/winner

