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**Masters of Science Degree in Professional Studies  
Center for Multidisciplinary Studies  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
American University in Kosova**

## Capstone Project Proposal Title

**“Procedural development of the Kosovo`s Government Annual Work Plan”**

*Submitted as a Capstone Project Report in partial fulfillment of a Master of science Degree in Professional Studies at the Rochester Institute of Technology*

**Arjeta Sahiti**

**May, 2012**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AWP</b>	Annual Work Plan of the Government
<b>EC</b>	European Council
<b>EPAP</b>	European Partnership Action Plan
<b>GCS</b>	Government Coordination Secretariat of the Office of the Prime Minister
<b>Government</b>	Government of the Republic of Kosovo
<b>MEI</b>	Ministry of European Integration
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>MLA</b>	Ministry of Local Administration
<b>MoF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MPA</b>	Ministry of Public Administration
<b>MTEF</b>	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
<b>MKSF</b>	Ministry of Kosovo Security Force
<b>MJ</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>MEST</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
<b>MIA</b>	Ministry of Internal Affairs
<b>OPM</b>	Office of the Prime Minister
<b>OLSS</b>	Office of the Legal Support Services of the Office of the Prime Minister
<b>PM</b>	Prime Minister
<b>SPO</b>	Strategic Planning Office of the Office of the Prime Minister

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I would never have been able to finish my report without the guidance and advice from my three advisors, Mr.Eset Rama Director of Government Coordination Secretariat, Mrs.Jolanda Trebicka-consultant in our office and Mr.Mentor Sadiku- Director of Department for Policy Coordination and European Integration in Ministry of Health.

My deepest gratitude goes to my mentor Dr. Brian Bowen, for his excellent guidance, feedback provided and giving me suggestions and recommendations throughout the capstone project work.

Finally, this capstone project I dedicate to my daughter Arda, for being my joyful inspiration all this time.

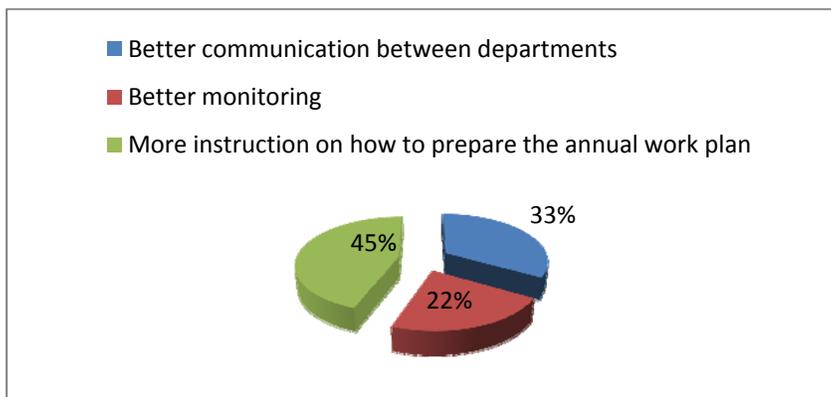
## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

There is an important need for mentoring and ensuring an effective implementation of The Government Annual Work Plan. There is currently a process of preparing the Annual Work Plan (AWP) and monitoring the implementation of such Annual Work Plan of the Government of Kosovo that needs to be refined. Governments all over the world are involved in planning their activities in order to be able to set their effective mechanisms regarding the implementation of their policies. The project addresses the need for issuing the guidelines for improvement of that process, as well as the main procedures and approaches regarding the preparation of the AWP of the Government and monitoring its implementation.

This Capstone project provides guidance on how to approach all of the different steps associated with preparation, monitoring and reporting of the Annual Work Plan (AWP) of the Government.

According to the answers in the questions *How could improve planning process* (See Figure 1) Government officials think that preparing detailed instructions is the first step in this direction. Better communication and better monitoring are very important issues that have been identified and have been addressed.

**Figure 1. How could improve planning process**



Source: Figure 2.5: Recommendations to improve the Government annual planning

The Government should draft concrete, functional and useful annual work plan by offering: clear instructions on how to prepare annual plans, developing process of communications between ministries, developing monitoring system to ensure implementations of the annual work plan, and increasing capacities through ought the professional training.

Training programs are more than necessary in order to increase capacities in all government structures. Considering ourselves as young public administrations it is essential to provide professional trainings to government employees. Answers from the questionnaire show us that government officials have had 20% enough training program for preparation of the AWP and 80% of them think that they did not have enough training program in this regard.

**Figure 1: Training programs for drafting AWP**



Source: Figure 4.6: Training programs for drafting AWP

This project includes analyses and provides assessment of the current situation and possible recommendations in how to develop a clear process of preparing the annual work plan and monitoring its implementation. It offers first hand information about difficulties in preparing the Government Annual Work Plan that helps the government officials to understand the problem. It provides clear instructions to all ministries and institutions involved in the preparation of the AWP of the Government, with a comprehensive approach aimed at describing all the aspects linked to this process.

The Annual Work Plan of the Government should provide a mechanism to monitor the priority activities so that delays are noted and action taken to ensure that progress continues, and finally provide a framework by which the government can report to the Assembly and to the public on its accomplishments during the past year.

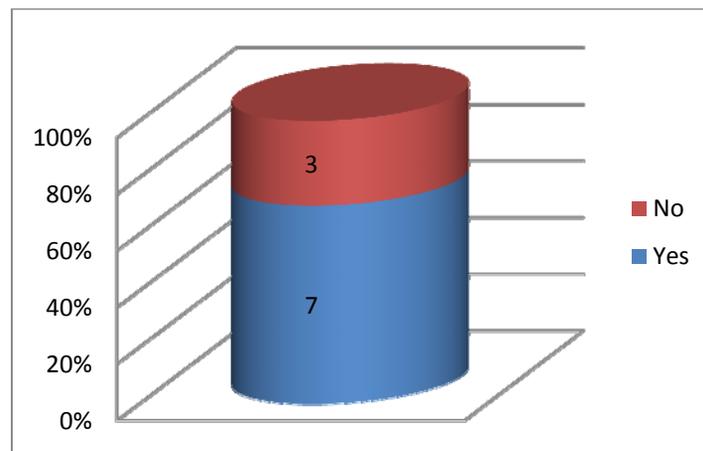
## **CHAPTER 1 – CURRENT PLANNING AND SHORT COMINGS IN PREPARATIONS OF THE KOSOVO GOVERNMENT ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

The improvement of the processes, procedures and approaches connected with the preparation of the Annual Work Plan of the Government and the monitoring of its implementation had been under way since the establishment of Kosovo Government.

### **1.1 Legislative framework**

Until 2011 there was a lack of any `enforced` document which determined the procedure how the ministries should prepare their annual work plan. The letters sends each year from Government Coordination Secretariat GCS to the line ministries failed to provide them with clear instructions and, actually, they were not enough binding. Besides this, as a result of lots of training, practicalities and work experience, The Government Coordination Secretariat continuously increased the quality of the documents from one year to the other.

**Figure 2.1: Need for detailed guidance for preparing the Government Annual Work Plan**



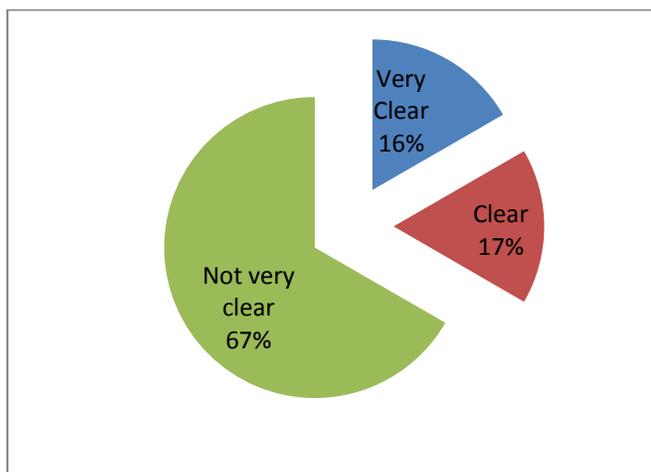
The main problem was that there were not stable and permanent structures that coordinated the work on preparing the annual work plan in line ministries. Every year the ministers or General Secretaries have appointed a special officer who would coordinate the activities within ministries. As the Figure 1.1 shows, 7 respondents (officials from ministries) declare that there is a need for detailed guidance for preparing Government AWP, while only 3 of them declare that there is no need for detailed guidance for preparing AWP.

The Government of Kosovo had approved the new “Regulation of rules and procedure of the government of the Republic of Kosovo no. 09/2011”. This regulation determines that “The Government shall approve by the end of December of each year a Government Work Plan for the following calendar year`. This Annual Work Plan shall be the principal implementation planning document of the Government, whose purpose shall be to provide a list of concrete actions needed to achieve implementation of the medium term priorities of the Government. (Article 47)<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2 Government Annual Work Plan Preparation

The process of preparation of the `Annual Work Plan` is specified in Article 48 which clearly states that “The Secretariat<sup>2</sup> shall coordinate the preparation of the annual work plan of the government in close cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for European Integration, the Legal Office and the Strategic Planning Office...`The Secretariat` shall issue guidelines and instructions on how the preparation and monitoring of the annual work plan would be done”

**Figure 1.3: Clarity of work plan preparation**



The survey has offered in information about the clearness of the Rule of procedures of the Government, Figure 1.2 shows that 67% of the interviewed were answered that the process of preparing AWP described in the Regulation of Rules and Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo is not clear, which states the need of the guideline for details regarding the AWP.

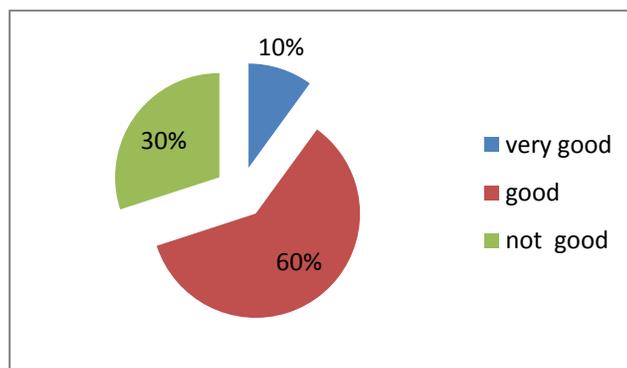
<sup>1</sup>Regulation of rules and procedure of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo No. 09/2011

<sup>2</sup> Regulation of rules and procedure of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo No. 09/2011

### 1.3 Cooperation with ministries

According to the cooperation with ministries, interviewed officials, 60% of them, were declared (see: **Figure 1.3**) that the cooperation with the ministries is good, but 30% of them say that the cooperation is not good, and only 10% of them think that cooperation is very good.

**Figure 1.4: The cooperation with ministries**



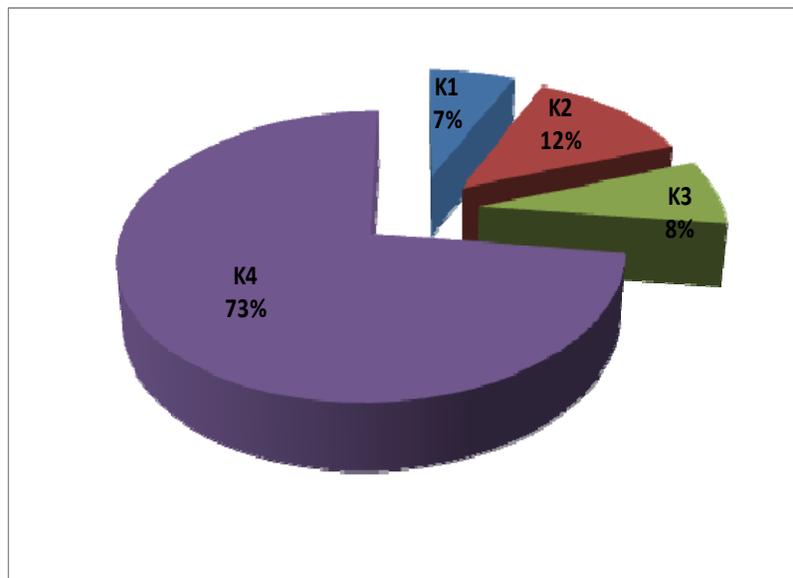
The cooperation is forced not only by Regulation of rules and procedure of the government of the Republic of Kosovo no. 09/2011, but also by the Reregulation no.01/2011 on Departments for European Integrations and Policy Coordination in Ministries.<sup>3</sup> These departments despite other obligations are responsible to cooperate and communicate with GCS regarding process of planning and reporting AWP. In article 1.5 is specified that these department are responsible to “Coordinate efforts in securing contributions for development of the European Partnership Action Plan (EPAP) and Annual Work Plans, and ensure their compliance with Medium term Expenditure Framework and other strategic documents”<sup>4</sup>

During previous years, reports and plans were sent to various addresses, such as `The Office of the General Secretary`, `The Coordination Secretariat`, `Prime Minister`s Cabinet` etc. This has caused a considerable amount of confusion which often resulted in the `GSC` officials not being sure which ministry has submitted the documents and which not.

<sup>3</sup> Decision no.02/02 date 02.03.2011 of the Government of the Republic of Kosova

<sup>4</sup> Reregulation no.01/2011 on Departments for European Integrations and Policy Coordination in Ministries

**Figure 1.5: Example: Frekuensi of the planned activities for 2009**



As the **Figure 1.4** shows, we can notice that 73% of activities for 2010 from all ministries are planned to accomplish in Quarter 4(Period: October-December) and, the other part of planned activities to be realized in: Q1 (Period: January-March) – 7%, Q2 (Period: April-June) – 12% and Q 3 (Period: July –September) - 8%.<sup>5</sup>

The main reasons why the `Annual Work Plan` has not been `acted` as an effective document includes<sup>6</sup>:

- A lack of clear and detailed instructions on how to combine and to structure the plan,
- Ministry submissions have been prepared by ministries staff who in many cases were not professionally and practically connected to other parts of the budget/planning process
- Once received by the `Prime Minister's Office`, the submissions have not been adequately assessed or coordinated with other planning processes, particularly with the `European Partnership Action Plan` (EPAP).
- The `Government Coordination Secretariat` did not have an adequate authority to return submissions that arrived inadequate directly for ministries or to make any appropriate corrections into them.

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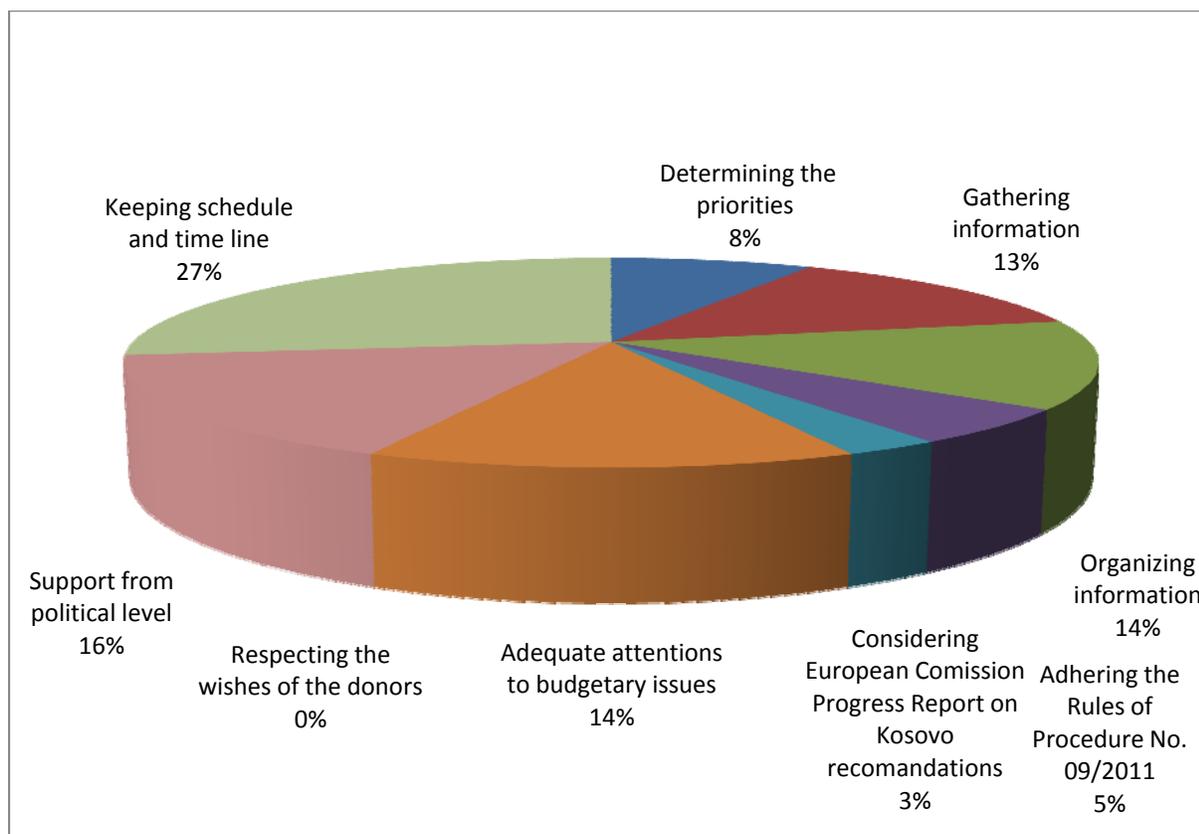
<sup>5</sup>Analyze of implementation of Government Annual Work Plan for 2011; Ref. No 199/2011

<sup>6</sup>Analyze of implementation of Government Annual Work Plan for 2009; Ref. No 201/2009

## 1.4 Main Problems on drafting AWP

In the question to government officials in ministries to prioritize the main problems in dealing with the government's annual work plan as we can see in **Figure 1.4.1**, 27% of them answered that keeping schedule and time line is the main problem, followed by 16% support from the political level, lack of adequate attentions to budgetary issues and organizing information 14%, gathering information 13%.

**Figure 1.5: The main problems in dealing with the government's Annual Work Plan**



The `GCS`- officials have found many other obstacles/mistakes that were faced this process such as<sup>7</sup>:

- There were no connections found between objectives and strategic priorities of the Government
- There were a substantial mixed or confused objectives with daily activities
- Also, there were a large number of objectives for one ministry

<sup>7</sup> Analyze of implementation of Government Annual Work Plan for 2009; Ref. No 201/2009

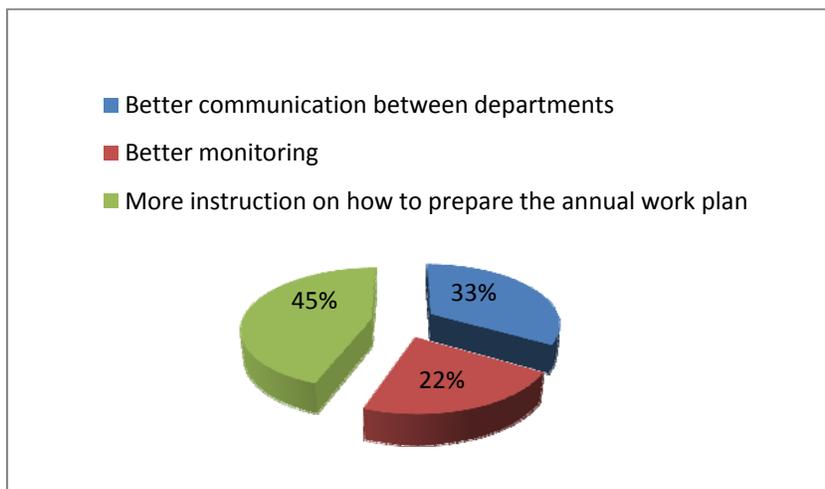
- Templates were very different from the original ones,
- As well as different types of format, fonts, text size, colors, graphics, annexes
- Different types of budgeting activities

Therefore the AWP is not only a planning, monitoring and reporting tool, but also a very powerful communication tool that, if effectively used, can deliver important messages to different groups in society.

Given its central role it, is important to increase its quality from year to year, in order to be able to deliver the results the Government expects from it.

In the question *what can we do to improve the Government Annual Planning*, 45% of government officials declare that more instructions on how to prepare the Government AWP is need, while 33% of them think that better communications between department could improve Government annual planning, and 22% think that better monitoring is the right answer to improve Government annual planning.

**Figure 1.6: Improving the Government annual planning**



Source: Figure 2.5: Recommendations to improve the Government annual planning?

This in turn places significant demands on the civil servants that are in charge of its preparation, both at the level of the OPM, but even more importantly at the level of line ministries.

## **CHAPTER 2- PROJECT DESCRIPTION, METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSES**

Regarding this capstone project, the following steps taken for the proper data collection includes:

Three types of questionnaires: one for `Government Coordination Secretariat official`s that work every year in preparation of Government Annual Work Plan and, one for the officials in line ministries that are oblige to draft their ministerial annual work plan and one for the key stakeholders: Ministry of European Integration; Ministry of Finance; Legal Office within OPM; Director of Strategic planning Office within OPM

For the first group 6 questionnaires were distributed to the Officers that actually work on harmonizing and coordinating the preparation of the Government Annual Work Plan in Government Coordination Secretariat.

Six officers were answered from their experience for different issues related to the preparation, organizing, monitoring and reporting regarding Government Annual Work Plan, as well as, giving opinions in how to improve the current situation.

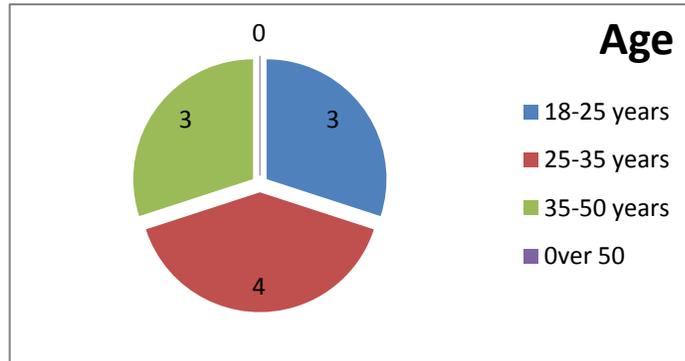
For the second group, 10 questionnaires were distributed to 10 different ministries: Ministry of Local Administration (MLA), Ministry of Public Administration (MPA), Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW), Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP), Ministry of Health (MH), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Ministry of Kosovo Security Force (MKSF) and Ministry of Justice (MJ).

Government officials were asked to answer in different questions. From the answers we were able to clearly underline which are the problems that they faced during the preparations of their plans, including technical problems, instructions from GCS, difficulties in gathering information in their ministries etc.

The Government official`s interviewed for the process of preparing annual work plans, most of them were from 25-35 years old and no one of them were over 50. This fact gives as a

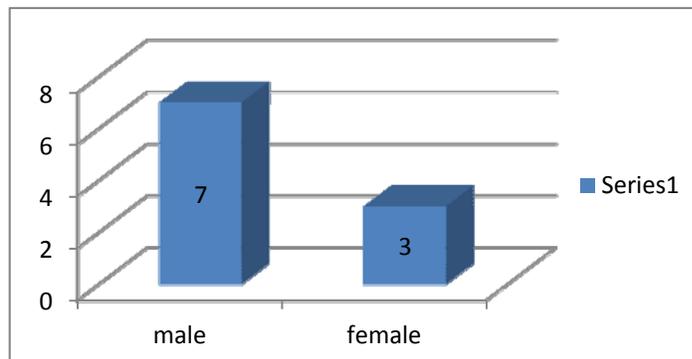
picture of the yang generations of officials that work in our administration, as we can see in the Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1: Age structure of government officials in ministries who deal with preparatin of AWP**



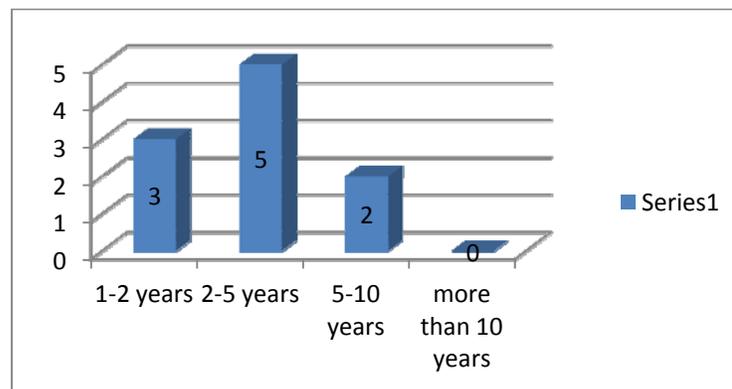
The gender structure of the officials is shown in the figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.2: Gender strukture of Government officials in ministries who deal with preparation of AWP**



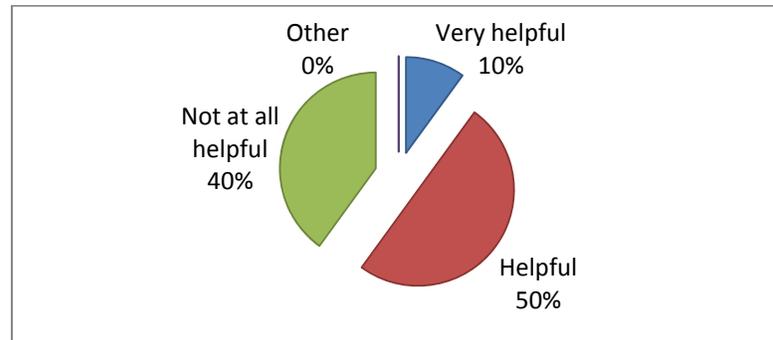
Most of these officials work in the current position for 2-5 years, some of them work for 1-2 years and only 2 of them work in the current position more than 5 years. It explains the fact that there were not the same officials that work in the planning process for a long period. These facts are shown in the Figure 2.3.

**Figure 2.3: How long are you working in this position**



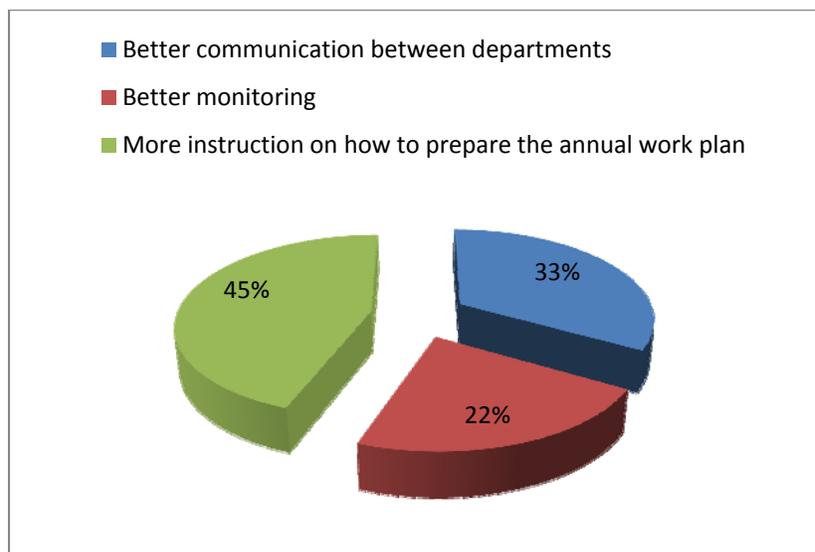
According to the current situations, officials in ministries were answer that GSC instructions were 50% helpful 40% think that GSC instruction are not at all helpful, and only 10 % think that the GCS instructions are very helpful

**Figure 2.4: GSC instructions-how helpful are**



Officials in GCS, not only has given answers for different problems and in ministries but also they gave recommendations how to improve Government annual planning process. The most important issue that is described in the Figure 2.5 is to have more instructions on how to prepare the annual work plan (45%), followed by better communication between departments (33%) and better monitoring (22%).

**Figure 2.5: Recommendations to improve the Government annual planning?**



Answers from the questionnaire were very useful and determined the way of writing this capstone project. Many important issues were addressed and we could get a real picture of whole process.

## **CHAPTER 3- ANNUAL WORK PLAN AS THE MAIN OPERATIONAL TOOL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVA**

Governments all over the world are involved in planning their activities in order to be able to set an effective mechanism for implementing its policies. The planning is performed at both strategic and operational levels, where the first focuses on setting out the medium term objectives and directions of activity, while the operational level translates those broader objectives into very concrete actions, usually within an annual framework.

### **3.1 Main planning documents of the Government of Kosova**

In Kosovo, there are five main planning documents that deal with various aspects of the planning system.

- First of all there is the ***Program of the Government*** that sets out political priorities of the ruling party or coalition and expresses its approach towards development strategy in majority of policy areas. The Program of the Government is a four year planning document that is developed by the ruling party or coalition after the elections for the whole term of its mandate, setting out its overall aims, often in general terms.
- The second important medium term planning document is the ***Mid Term Expenditure Framework-MTEF***, which links policy planning with the fiscal possibilities of the country and spells out a medium term view on the macroeconomic development and the consequences for spending limits of individual ministries. The MTEF thus allows ministries to have a clear view on the availability of funds in the medium term and plan their policies in a more “down to earth” approach. The MTEF covers three years and is updated annually in order to reflect the changes that may occur on the economic scene both at international and national levels.
- Taken into account that EU integration is one of the most obvious strategic priorities of the Government, the third important medium term planning document is ***European Partnership Action Plan-EPAP***, which shows how the European Partnership short and

medium term priorities that were agreed with the European Council-EC will be implemented during a three year period.

- The two operational planning documents are the annual budget and the AWP. The *annual budget* of the country divides available financial resources along different policy areas implemented by the Government. On the other side is the **AWP**, which identifies the most important actions that the Government (through its institutional system) will implement during the course of the year.

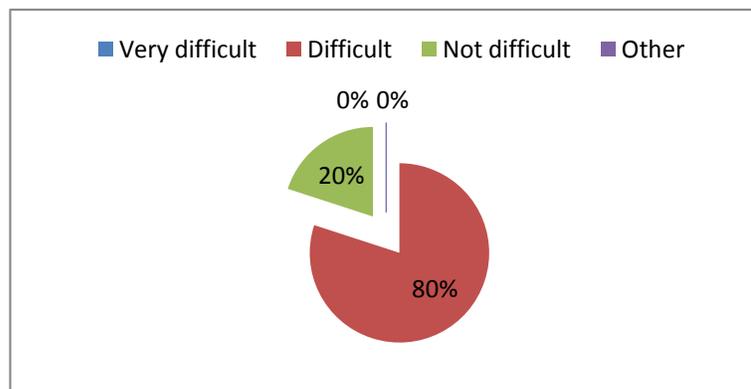
It should be understood that the AWP is not a stand alone or separate planning process, but rather a process through which all the other planning documents are distilled in order to arrive at very concrete steps that should be performed and actually accomplished within the timeframe of one year. Therefore in its structure the AWP is very closely linked to the Government program, the annual budget, the EPAP and sector planning documents and should be regarded as a unified action plan for their implementation.

### 3.2 Harmonizing main Government planning documents

It is very important to understand that the AWP is actually the sole document setting out what is planned across the entire span of Government activity for the coming year and, through its monitoring system, what progress is being achieved, and where there is a need for improvement of performance and assistance to produce the results.

Government Coordination Secretariat officials declare that harmonizing the Government Annual Work Plan with strategic document is difficult (80% of respondent) and only 20% of them declare that it is not difficult. This is shown in the Figure 3.1.

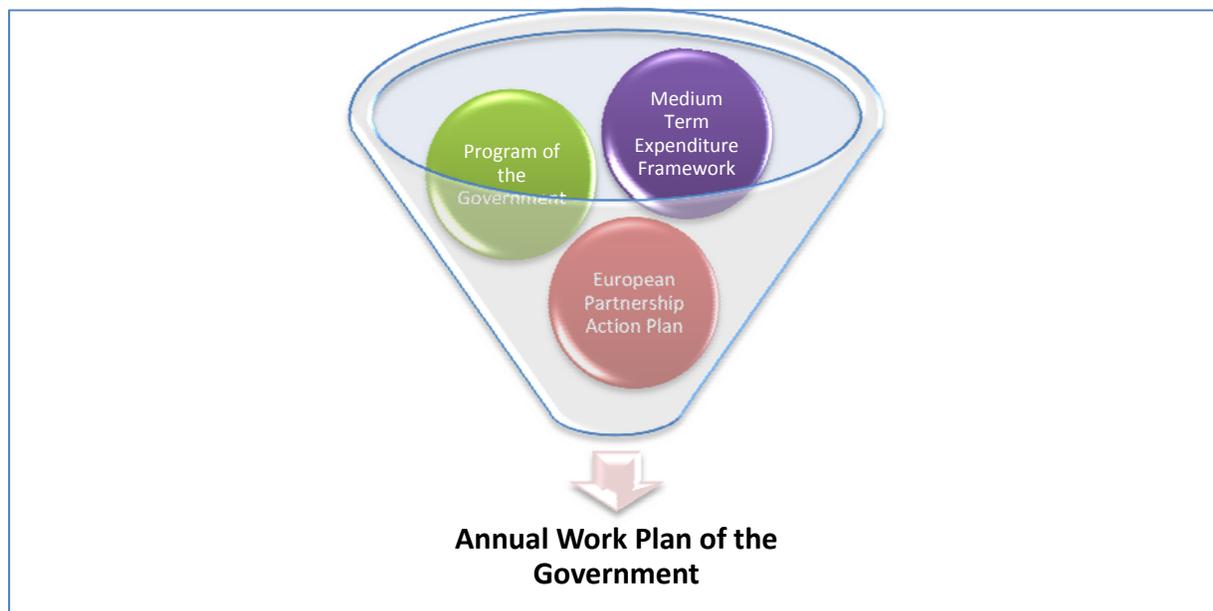
**Figure 3.1: Harmonizing the Government strategic documents in Annual Work Plan**



For the GCS of the OPM to be able to effectively manage the whole AWP preparation and monitoring process, it is essential to build close cooperation with institutions responsible for running processes associated with preparation of the above-mentioned documents and namely: the Strategic Planning Office of the OPM in dealing with establishment of the Government Priorities, the Ministry of Economy and Finance being responsible for both the MTEF and the Annual Budget and the Ministry of European Integration working on the EPAP.

The picture below (**Figure 3.2**) presents a graphical image of how the role and link of the AWP to other important planning documents of the Government should be understood

**Figure 3.2: The role and the link of the AWP with other important planning documents**



Based on the results of implementation of the AWP, the Government can develop its Annual Report, which serves as the main record to the Assembly, the international donor organizations and to the citizens.

Preparation of the Annual Report is another task of the GCS during which it has to manage all the line ministries in order to arrive at a good final result that can later be communicated by the Prime Minister to the citizens of Kosovo, members of the Assembly and other target audiences. All of the above mentioned reasons clearly show the importance of the AWP as one of the most important operational planning documents of the Government. And the Government Coordination Secretariat is the key driving force behind the whole process.

## **CHAPTER 4 - PREPARATION PROCESS OF THE ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

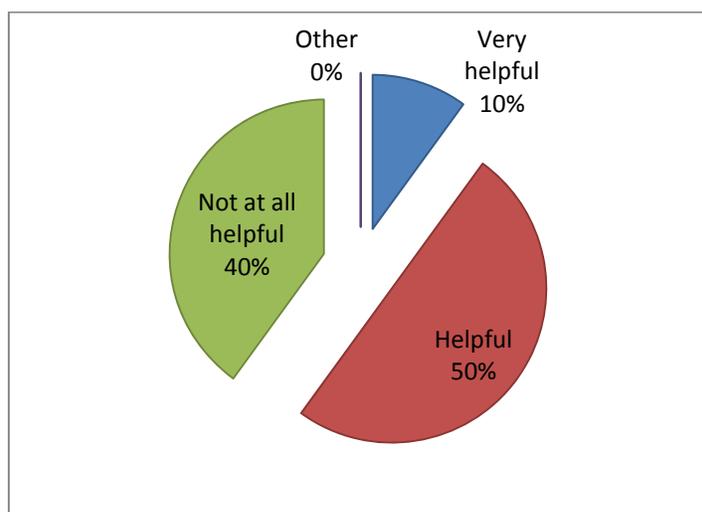
This chapter describes the process of preparation of the AWP in general and sets out recommendations for internal processes within ministries.

### **4.1 Whole Process – Step by Step**

The preparation of the AWP will usually start no later than early November each year, by the GCS sending out letter to the line ministries asking them to prepare and hand in the submissions for the next year's AWP. The letter will include clear instructions for ministries for preparation of the submissions, a strict deadline for handing them to the GCS, as well as name and contact details of the GCS's person to contact in case of any questions.

In the question how helpful do you see the GCS instruction for preparing your ministry annual work Plan (**Figure 4.1**), 50% of government officials in ministries declare that the instruction from GCS are helpful, but 40 % of them said that the instructions are not at all helpful.

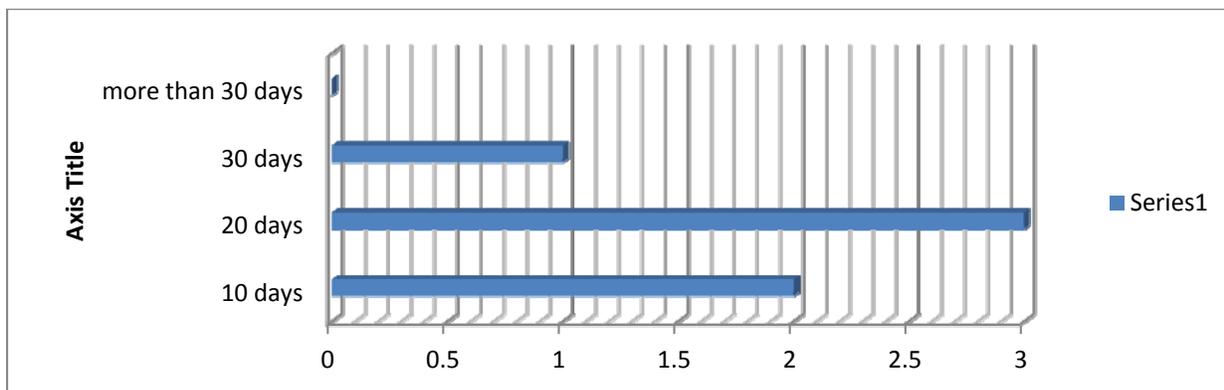
**Figure 4.1: Helpfulness of instruction for preparing Annual Work Plan**



At the same time, together with sending out the letter, GCS will organise a joint meeting for all ministries, in order to provide relevant instructions to the representatives of the ministries and answer any questions that may have arisen in ministries.

At least two weeks will be given to the ministries for preparation of their submissions, so that they would be able to come up with quality submissions that are well developed and internally consulted and discussed.

**Figure 4.2 : Preparation of AWP in ministries**



As the **Figure 4.3** shows, most of officials in ministries were answered that they have spent 20 days to prepare Government Annual Work Plan, after receiving the information from their departments and unites.

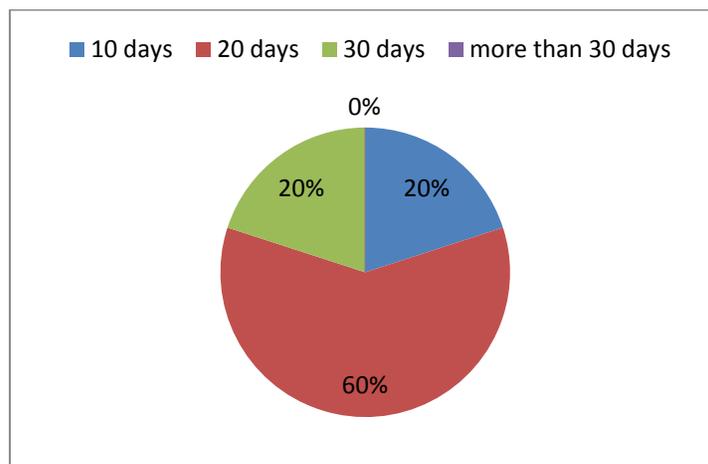
Table 3.1 Describe the whole process step by step how the process should develop from asking for submissions in ministries until the final stage of the preparation of the AWP.

**Table 3.1: Preparation of the AWP**

GCS asks for submissions (Early November)	Submissions sent to GCS (Late November)	Preparation of the AWP (Mid-December)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GCS</b> sends out letter to line ministries with clear instructions for submissions</li> <li>• <b>GCS</b> organizes joint event for line ministries to clarify instructions</li> <li>• <b>Ministries</b> start internal processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ministries</b> prepare submissions and discuss them internally</li> <li>• <b>Ministries</b> consult with GCS in case of any confusion</li> <li>• Respective <b>Minister</b> signs the submission and sends it to GCS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>GCS</b> checks the submissions and corrects them, if needed</li> <li>• <b>GCS, Political advisors of PM and Ministries</b> agree on the final version</li> <li>• <b>GCS hands in AWP</b> for approval of the Government</li> </ul>

If there are any questions or incomprehension the ministries should consult the responsible officials within the GCS in order to avoid any misunderstanding during preparation of the submissions. According to answers of the GSC officials they need at least 20 days to prepare the AWP after receiving submissions from ministries.

**Figure 4.3 Preparations of AWP in GCS after submissions from ministries**



Once the submission has been drafted, it is highly recommended to discuss it within the ministry and only then send to the GCS. The submission for the AWP should be signed by the respective minister in order to indicate that it is approved at the political level of the ministry.

Once the GCS receives the ministerial submissions it will go through them and perform the quality check of three types:

- 1. Conformity with instructions** – looking at the formal compliance of the submissions to the rules laid out;
- 2. Conformity of the substance of activities** – evaluating the quality of the activities and taking out of the list those that are of minor concern for the Government wide policy making or are ongoing, permanent tasks of the ministry. This means that activities like establishment of working groups, informing stakeholders, preparing quarterly reports and similar tasks should not be included in the AWP as they are self-evident daily tasks of ministries;
- 3. Conformity with Government priorities** – checking that the activities proposed by the ministries for Part A of the AWP (this is explained in section 3.1 below) are really linked with Government policy priorities and support their implementation during the year.

During the quality check the GCS may consult with ministries in order to get extra information, to agree on a more precise formulation of activities, or to update the explanatory information of the activities if they are missing or need improvement.

The Strategic Planning Office of the OPM will also be reviewing submissions to the Part A in order to check their conformity with the Government priorities and sector strategies and planning documents adopted by the Government. Once the permanent steering committee on integrated planning is established by the Government it will be involved in this task as well.

Once all of the submissions are checked and improved, the first version of the consolidated AWP should be prepared and sent for final harmonisation to the ministries and to the political advisors of the Prime Minister.

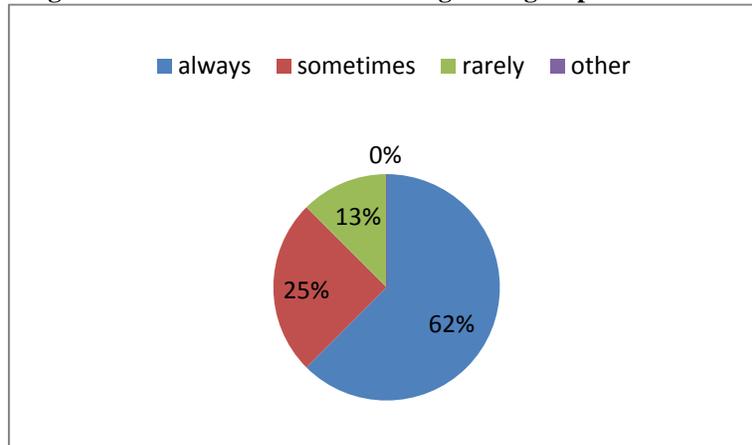
The harmonisation process should be completed no later than mid-December in order for the Government to approve it by the end of December, in time for the AWP to become active as of January 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **4.2 Preparation of the submissions in the ministries**

The internal process for the preparation of the submissions of the AWP for the next year within the ministries should start approximately at the end of October, by setting up an internal ad hoc working group that would deal with preparation of the submission of the AWP. It is highly recommend establishing a working group for this purpose, although some ministries can find different ways to organize the process.

Based on the statistics that the **Figure 4.2.1** shows, we understand that government officials in ministries have always difficulties in establishing working groups. 62% of them declare that they have always difficulties in establishing work groups, 25% have sometimes difficulties and only 13% have rarely difficulties in establishing work groups in their ministries.

**Figure 4.4 : Difficulties in establishing work groups in ministries**



Regarding this the working group should be established by a formal decision of the minister in order to give it a clear mandate for operation and also ensure that all units within the ministry and subordinated institutions fully cooperate with the representatives of the group in preparation of a quality submission for the AWP. The decision on establishment of the working group should be communicated to all heads of the departments and a copy of the decision should also be sent to the GCS of OPM.

Alongside creation of the working group ministry has to appoint one person as a focal point for the GCS of the OPM so that he/she would receive all of the information sent by the GCS in regard to the OPM. Once focal point is appointed, the ministry is obliged to send a letter to the GCS of the OPM stating his/her name, surname, title of position, as well as all contact details. (If, as is possible, the Government takes a decision that within each ministry the work on AWP and EPAP should be assigned to the same people, the need for appointing the focal point will become invalid.)

The appointed focal point of the ministry should also be the chairman of the working group. The chair of the working group (who is also the focal point of the ministry) should be the one responsible for timely preparation of the submission of the ministry's proposal for AWP.

He/she would ensure all communication with the GCS and also would represent the ministry in all meetings devoted to preparation of the AWP. Position of a deputy chairman of the working group should also be established, so that there would always be two people in the

ministry aware of the whole AWP preparation process, all news and activities related to this issue, as well as to be able to convene meetings of the working group.

*There are three reasons* why the working group should be established as early as possible. First of all, it would allow for the group to convene fast once the GCS sends out the invitation to prepare and submit the ministry proposals for AWP. Second, the group should in parallel start thinking about the ministry priorities for the next year that would form the Part B of the AWP (this is explained in section 3.1 below). And third, it would allow time to clearly assign officials that should participate in the training workshop organised by the GCS for explaining the instructions for preparation of the submissions.

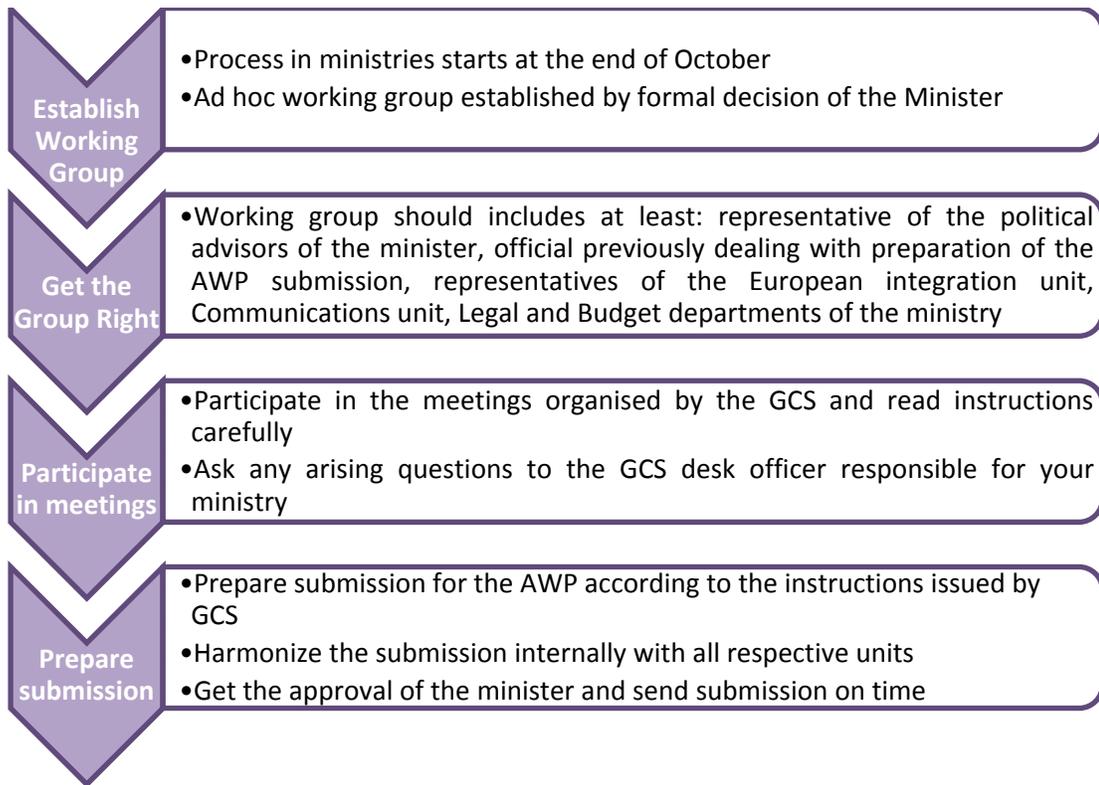
Because preparation of the submissions for the AWP covers different aspects of the work of the ministry, it is highly recommended that the working group includes at least the following representatives of the ministry:

- Nominated focal point for preparation of the AWP;
- Official in charge of preparation of previous submission of AWP (if available);
- One of the political advisors of the minister;
- European integration officer of the ministry;
- Representative of the Communications unit of the ministry;
- Political spokesperson of the minister;
- Representative of the Legal Department of the ministry;
- Representative of the Budget Department of the ministry.

If the ministry decides to go for a wider group it can take a decision to include a representative from each sectorial policy area the ministry is responsible for. This approach would bring in more knowledge about different policy areas that the ministry is responsible for, but at the same time it will make harder to coordinate and manage. Therefore a careful selection of the members of the working group should be maintained, in order to make sure that the key policy units are represented.

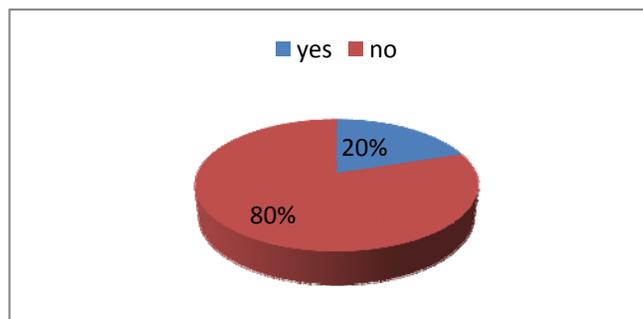
In the figure 4.5 is described the process of preparing Annual Work Plan in the figurative way.

**Figure 4.5: Process of preparing Annual Work Plan**



Regarding the trainings of the officials in ministries who are responsible for process of the AWP, 80% of interviewed officials were declared that they didn't had enough training about this issue (See **Figure 4.6**). This explains the fact that every year we had different structures of officials in ministries that are appointed to deal with this process, and always is the need for training officials regarding this process.

**Figure 4.6: Training programs for drafting AWP**



### 4.3 The structure of government annual work plan

The AWP of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo consists of two principal parts and sets out the major activities that different ministries are intending to accomplish during the respective year.

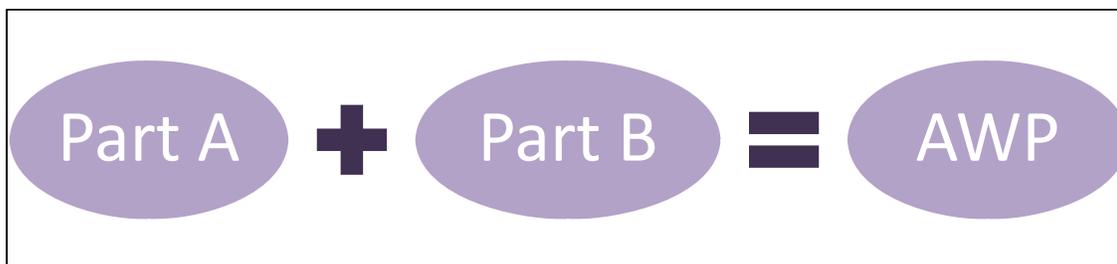
**Part A** of the AWP deals with government-wide horizontal priorities, in which the majority of ministries will find one or several priorities under which they will be able to identify one or several activities that will be aimed at reaching that priority.

For example, a priority dealing with improving business environment in Kosovo will not include only activities of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, but also activities of the Ministry of Transport and Communication, Ministry of Energy of Mines, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and others.

**Part B** of the AWP spells out the priority areas and activities of individual ministries. Because the government wide priorities are limited in number and do not cover all of the different policy areas ministries are working on, Part B is the place where ministries should clearly spell out their most important policy objectives in different policy areas and define major activities that will be realised during the year in order to bring the accomplishment of the objective closer.

For example, one of the main priorities for the Ministry of Public Administration within the broader context of public administration reform is to work on implementation of different components of the e-government system. There are particular tasks and activities that are associated with this objective that the Ministry has to perform during the year in order to contribute to achieving this objective, including drafting specific laws, secondary legislation or carrying out an information campaign on the first e-services to be made available to the public.

**Figure 4.7: Structure of the Annual Work Plan of the Government**



## **CHAPTER 5 - THE CONTENT OF ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

This chapter of the Manual deals with different aspects associated with the preparation of the AWP. It describes the whole process, starting from laying down the timeframe for the whole process and then goes further on with describing templates and instructions for the ministries, as well as the approach that should be used by the GCS to check the submissions and arrive at the final aggregate version of the AWP.

### **5.1 Contents and preparation of the Part A of the AWP**

Part A of the AWP consists of a limited number of Government priorities that is set either in the MTEF or in a separate Government decision on the priorities of the Government.

Part A is sent to the ministries with a prefilled field of Strategic Priorities of the Government that are numbered, and the only thing that the ministries have to do is to fill in respective parts of the table setting out clear objectives they will be working on within each priority, as well as major activities that have to be accomplished during the year.

The table below sets out an example of the template of Part A that would be sent by the GCS to all ministries together with a request to hand in their submissions for the AWP.

**Table 5.1: Example – template of Part A of the AWP**

<b>Strategic Priority of the Government No. N</b>							
Ministry	Objective No. N.N	Activity No. N.N.N.	Deadline	Financial impact	Other involved institutions	Reference to EPAP	Reference to planning document

Explanations how the fields should be filled in by the ministries:

- **Strategic Priority of the Government No. N** – This field of the table is prefilled by the GCS and the ministries cannot modify it.
- **Ministry** – in this field the ministry has to fill in its officially acknowledged abbreviation.

- **Objective** – in this field the ministry should write a clear objective that is linked with the particular Strategic Priority of the Government. The objective should be formulated according to the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) methodology of setting the objectives. The ministry should put an individual number to each new objective that is set under each Strategic Priority. The number of the objective should start with the number of the respective Strategic Priority and followed by the number of the objective. No ministry may propose more than 3 objectives for each individual Strategic Priority.
- **Activity** – a clearly defined activity should be written in this field. Only activities of major importance can be indicated here, e.g. drafting a piece of primary or secondary legislation, preparing a plan, carrying out an important investment or development project. All activities dealing with study visits, setting up working groups and other technical things routinely performed by the ministry will be automatically deleted by the GCS, as they do not bear the necessary importance for the Government as a whole and are matters of internal planning by the ministry. An activity should be a single task or work of the ministry and not a combination of several that differ from one another.

It is important that ministries have a thorough look on the Government adopted documents in their field (namely EPAP and sector planning documents) and besides introducing new activities, select the most important activities also from these documents, so that there would be a consistency in ensuring implementation of Government policies.

All activities should be numbered and the number should be constructed in a way where the first digit represents the number of Strategic Priority of the Government, the second digit – respective objective and the third digit – individual number of activity under respective objective. Not more than 5 activities can be proposed by the ministry for each individual objective! If the number of activities will exceed 5, the GCS will automatically reduce all of those activities starting from the sixth one.

Examples of formulations of unacceptable activities<sup>8</sup>: *Review sub-sectorial strategies with an aim of addressing priorities of the Ministry and Government, Prepare statistical data to provide decision-makers with necessary information to draft policies and strategies, Coordinate all activities with the Agency on Coordination of Development and European Integration in order to accomplish duties related to the European integration process, Accomplish obligations deriving from the European Partnership, Monitor and report, efficiently and timely, on Ministry activities for the performance of duties and responsibilities related to the European integration process, Provide laboratory services, Prepare and implement projects in the sector, Cooperate with stakeholders, Provide administrative and technical services for all organizational units, Prepare and monitor budget with all its specificities, Collect, process, maintain and distribute, efficiently, the administrative data in compliance with regulations in force, etc.*

- **Deadline** – this field should indicate the deadline by which the respective activity should be accomplished. The deadline should be set according to the following format – Month. Year. There can be no indications of the deadlines in the format of quarters. If the ministries will hand in the deadline in the format of quarter, it will be automatically transferred by the GCS in the appropriate format of the AWP presuming that the deadline is the first month of the indicated quarter of the year. No “continuous” deadlines can be indicated here!
- **Financial Impact** – a total cost in euro of carrying out the particular activity should be indicated in this field. The costs should be indicated according to the budget appropriations approved for the particular activity by the Government. In order to complete this field, it is highly recommended to consult the Budget department of the ministry. The amount of money indicated in this field in no way can be regarded as a request for additional funding! The sole purpose of the field is to have clear information on the costs of Government activities.
- **Other involved institutions** – full titles of other ministries or government institutions that are or will be involved in carrying out a particular activity should be indicated in this

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<sup>8</sup> These examples are taken from AWP 2010 and should not be regarded as only mistaken ones, but rather a general trend.

field. Once the aggregated version of the AWP is prepared, the GCS will turn them into abbreviations and set out a common table of abbreviations.

- **Reference to EPAP** – if the activity is also included and foreseen in EPAP there should be a clear identification of its EPAP reference number. During the preparation of the aggregated version of AWP the MEI will check the correspondence of the numbers in order to ensure their correctness. It is essential that the ministry provide a clear link to EPAP as it will be later used by both the GCS and MEI for reporting purposes.
- **Reference to planning document** – full title of the Government adopted planning document (other than EPAP) should be indicated, if the particular activity is foreseen there or is directly linked with implementation of the planning document.

**Table 5.2: Example of the well described activity:**

<b>Strategic Priority of the Government No. 1 <i>Improving of public services</i><sup>9</sup></b>							
Ministry	Objective No. N.N	Activity No. N.N.N.	Deadline	Financial impact	Other involved Institutions	Reference to EPAP	Reference to planning document
MPA	1.Cut red tape placed on businesses by 15% by the end of 2011	1.Introduce a one-stop-shop approach in providing all kind of licenses and permits to the businesses	November 2011	1.500.000 EUR	Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Trade and Industry	-	Public Administration Reform Strategy 2010-2013

<sup>9</sup> Example from Government Annual Work Plan of Kosova for 2011

## 5.2 Contents and preparation of the Part B of the AWP

The Part B of the AWP describes those policy areas of the work of individual ministries that do not relate to the Strategic Priorities of the Government, but are regarded as the most important ones for the particular year and can be regarded as ministry priorities.

Ministries should notice that not more than 5 priority objectives can be set out in Part B for each individual ministry. This means that a thorough weighing of all policy areas should be performed and only the most important objectives for the development of particular sector should be included in Part B of the AWP.

The table below shows an example of the template for Part B that the ministries will receive from the GCS together with a request to hand in their submissions for the AWP.

**Table 5.3: Example – template of Part B of the AWP**

<b>Full Title of the Ministry</b>						
Objective of the Ministry No. N	Activity No. N.N	Deadline	Financial impact	Other involved institutions	Reference to EPAP	Reference to planning document

Explanations how the fields should be filled in by the ministries are the same as for the Part A of the AWP with the difference that in Part A you have strategic priority of the Government while in Part B you should start with objective of the ministry directly.

## 5.3 Technical Requirements for the AWP

The AWP is prepared in a format of MS Excel to make the formatting, structuring and searching easier for any user of the document. Therefore all of the submissions for the AWP, as well as quarterly reports on the implementation of the AWP, should be prepared in the same format. No exceptions to this rule will be allowed. The ministries are responsible for ensuring that staff appointed to work on the preparation of the AWP is able to use MS Excel at the basic user level.

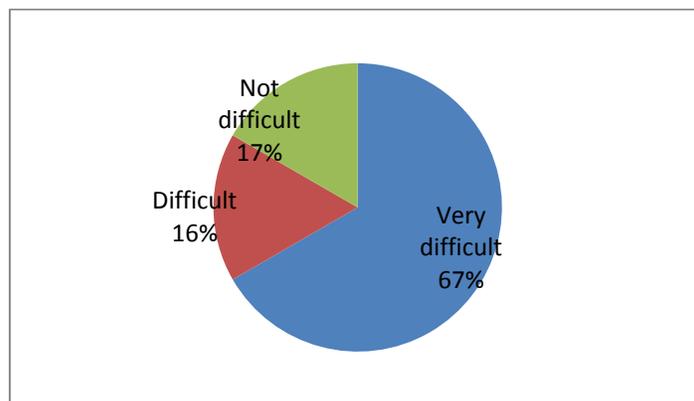
The ministries should strictly follow the instructions issued by the GCS as no exceptions to these instructions will be allowed. The ministries are not allowed to modify the tables prepared by the GCS or to voluntarily add extra columns to the templates.

For all submissions the font “Book Antiqua” should be used with a font size of 11 for any text and numbers. No highlighting or other font colour other than black should be used. No comments or track changes should be left or included in the final version of the submission that is sent to the GCS for the preparation of the aggregate version of the AWP.

## **CHAPTER 6 - MONITORING THE GOVERNMENT ANNUAL WORK PLAN**

Monitoring the implementation of the Government Annual Work Plan is an essential part of the whole process. According to the results from the questionnaire shown in **Figure 6.1**, 67% of officials from GCS declare that this process is very difficult. Only 17% of them think that this process is not difficult.

**Figure 6.1: Difficulties in monitoring AWP**

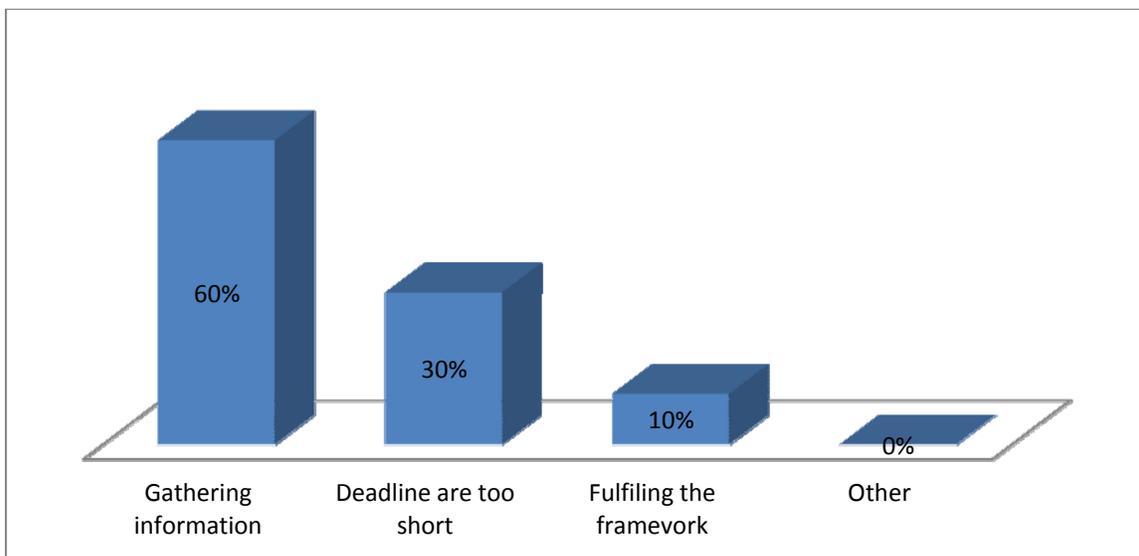


The results from monitoring provides the Prime Minister, his political advisors and the Government in general with the most up to date information on how the planned actions are being implemented, whether some things should be speeded up or if assistance is required.

The reporting and monitoring process of the AWP is based on the quarterly reports that the line ministries submit to the GCS upon its written request. They are then analysed through several prisms and a quarterly report providing aggregate view on the implementation is provided to the Prime Minister. Based on this analysis prepared by the GCS the Prime Minister and his political advisors are able to see how different line ministries are dealing with implementation of their tasks, what is the overall implementation rate of the AWP and also areas that are underperforming.

Most problematic issue during reporting for implementation of annual work plan is seen the gathering of information (60%), followed by deadlines about reporting for fulfillment of AWP (30%), fulfilling the framework is not seen as a problem (**Figure 6.1**).

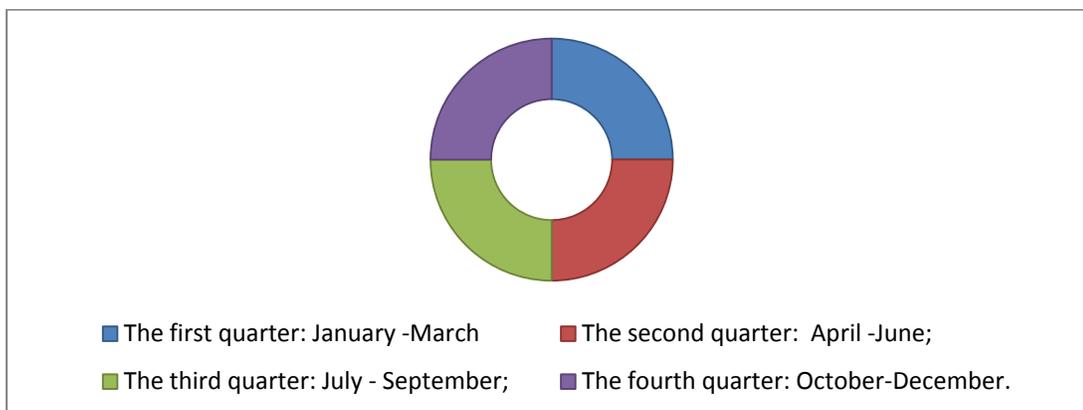
**Figure 6.2** problems during reporting for implementation of annual work plan



### 6.1 Timeframe for Reporting Requests

The whole approach for reporting and monitoring is based on quarterly reports that are required by the GCS from the line ministries and institutions based on the actions within the AWP. The year is divided into four quarters and the reporting requirements are set accordingly:

**Figure 6.3:**Time frame for reporting requests



Typically the request for the reports is sent during the last week of the month which ends the quarter and deadline for submissions is set to be two weeks from the date of sending out the request. For example, in 2011, the request for the first quarter would be sent to all ministries during the week starting with 28<sup>th</sup> March, while the deadline would be set around 8<sup>th</sup> April. Such timing allows for a quick preparation of the aggregate reports aimed for the Prime Minister and his advisors, which would normally be finished by the GCS approximately one week after receiving of the submissions from the ministries.

The reporting request for the fourth quarter is sent out together with the request for submissions of the Annual Report and typically happens around the 20<sup>th</sup> December each year. Despite the fact that the year has not fully ended the ministries already know whether or not they would be able to accomplish tasks which deadline are set to be the very end of the year. This is done with a purpose of having the overall information on the implementation of the AWP as early as possible, in case the Prime Minister would like to inform the media about the results of the Government achieved during the past year in early January, or in case he/she has to answer questions raised by the Assembly members or media on the same issue.

## 6.2 Structure of the Reporting Requests

The structure of the reporting requests should be very similar to the structure of the AWP itself. The main difference is an additional column at the end of the table respectively called either “Q1 Report”, “Q2 Report”, “Q3 Report” or “Q4 Report”.

And this is actually the only column in the request that the ministries are allowed to change or rather input the information on the progress achieved. All other columns of the reporting requests remain just as they were adopted by the Government once the AWP was approved.

**Table 6.1: Example of the Reporting Request for Part A of the AWP:**

<b>Strategic Priority of the Government No. N</b>								
Ministry	Objective No. N.N	Activity No. N.N.N.	Deadline	Financial impact	Other involved institutions	Reference to EPAP	Reference to planning document	<b>Q1 Report</b>

**Table 6.2: Example of the Reporting Request for Part B of the AWP:**

<b>Full Title of the Ministry</b>							
Objective of the Ministry No. N	Activity No. N.N	Deadline	Financial impact	Other involved institutions	Reference to EPAP	Reference to planning document	<b>Q1 Report</b>

Taken into account that all of the reporting is performed in Ms Excel tables, adding of the additional column does not create any difficulties.

Preparation of the templates that have to be sent out of to the ministries should not take more than several hours, as the only thing that the GCS desk officers should do is to filter the original Ms Excel file containing the whole AWP, so that the line ministries and institutions would receive only actions where they are mentioned as the main implementer of the policy objective and its actions (Part A), or their policy objectives and actions in Part B of AWP.

### **6.3 Instructions for Filling in the Quarterly Reports**

Together with the request for submitting quarterly reports and an Ms Excel file containing the filtered actions of the particular ministry or institution, the GCS should send out short instructions outlining that:

- Ministries and institutions are obliged to inform the GCS about the progress achieved in ALL actions. If implementation of an action has not started, it should be directly spelled out by the ministry. No blank spaces are allowed to remain under column of Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4 reporting.
- Ministries and institutions should describe the progress achieved in implementation of each action in a manner that provides enough information for the GCS desk officer to understand at what stage of implementation the particular action is. It means that the description of the progress should be focused and not too long.
- If there are any problems associated with implementation of the action – they should be clearly written down, so that the GCS desk officers would be able to assess measures that could be taken in order to overcome those problems.
- If the implementation of the action has been completed, the ministry or institution should clearly spell it out.

Once received back from the ministries, before starting the analysis of the quarterly reports, each GCS desk officer should first check whether the ministries have observed these instructions and provided all of the necessary information for carrying out the analysis. Then, each desk officer will input the assessment in the AWP monitoring file. The AWP monitoring file is formatted in a way to automatically generate all the graphs and aggregate monitoring tables that would be used for preparation of the quarterly report.

#### **6.4 Perspectives of Analysis of the Quarterly Reports**

The analysis of the submitted quarterly reports of ministries is intended for providing the Prime Minister, his/her political advisors, as well as the Permanent Secretary of the OPM with concise information on how the AWP is being implemented throughout the year.

There are several perspectives through which the analysis of the quarterly reports submitted by the ministries can and should be done:

- **Implementation rate** – showing what proportion of the AWP has been fully or partially implemented or not implemented to the date of analysis (i.e. respective quarter). This perspective allows concluding how good or bad is the overall implementation of the AWP.
- **Observation of the deadlines** – providing information on whether the implementation of the AWP is going on as scheduled, or is slightly or significantly delayed. This perspective of analysis allows identification of ministries or institutions that have problems with observing the deadlines set out by the AWP, as well as the overall quality of planning of the particular ministry or institution (i.e. are they too optimistic or too pessimistic in setting out timeframe for implementation of planned actions).
- **Key problem areas** – identifying actions of key importance for the Government (mainly coming from Part A of the AWP) that are not being implemented as planned or have faced some difficulties during the implementation. This perspective of analysis is largely based on the assessment of the GCS desk officers, their previous experience and knowledge of the key priorities of the Government.
- **Quality of the reports** – focusing on the quality of the quarterly submissions provided to the GCS by ministries and institutions, allows the identification of those that are providing good, mediocre or bad quality. This perspective of analysis allows for

judgements on the efforts put into reporting by the respective ministry or institution, as well as the quality of people working in the respective field.

- **Timeliness of the Reports** – provides basic information on whether the quarterly reports were handed in on time or with delays. This perspective of analysis allows identifying those ministries or institutions that are impeding the preparation of the report to the Prime Minister.

For each of these perspectives of analysis – implementation rate, observation of deadlines, key problem areas and quality of reports – the results are depicted separately for Part A and Part B of the AWP in order to clearly distinguish between progresses achieved in reaching the Government wide priorities and those of ministerial ones.

### **6.5 Process of Analyzing the Quarterly Reports**

Once the GCS officer responsible for record keeping receives a submission of the quarterly report of any ministry or institution, he/she should record on which day the submission was received. This information is later used for the perspective of analysis called “Timeliness of the Reports”. If the submission is sent directly to the GCS desk officer then the desk officer is responsible for letting the GCS secretary know that he has received a quarterly submission of the particular institution directly, so that the date can be entered correctly. All of the data on the timeliness of quarterly submissions should be entered into the Ms Excel file meant for aggregate results.

After entering the date of receiving the submission, the GCS secretary sends it to the GCS desk officer that is responsible for the particular ministry or institution. Upon receiving the submission, the GCS desk officer creates three additional columns in the Ms Excel file of the quarterly submission and names them – Implementation Rate, Respect for Deadlines and Quality of Information. Please, refer to the Ms Excel template attached to this Manual.

Then the GCS desk officer should go through all of the actions, one by one, and evaluate each of them according to the instructions provided below, entering his/her evaluation in the cell related to particular action of AWP under the respective column of perspective of analysis.

Within the column called “Implementation Rate” the GCS desk officer should evaluate each action and place his/her evaluation according to the following criteria:

- a) If the quarterly report of the activity clearly states that it has been fully implemented and provides basic information about the success achieved, its implementation rate should be evaluated as FULLY IMPLEMENTED. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;
- b) If the quarterly report of the activity describes what has been done in order to implement it, but does not state it has been fully accomplished, its implementation rate should be evaluated as PARTLY IMPLEMENTED. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;
- c) If the quarterly report of the activity does not provide any information on implementation or provides completely irrelevant information, its implementation rate should be evaluated as NOT IMPLEMENTED. This tag should be entered in the specified cell.

Within the column called “Respect for Deadlines” the GCS desk officer should evaluate each action and place his/her evaluation according to the following criteria:

1. If the quarterly report of the activity provides information on its implementation, has a deadline of the respective quarter or one of the months within it and is marked as fully implemented, or has a deadline that exceeds the limits of the respective quarter, it should be evaluated as being ON TIME. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;
2. If the quarterly report of the activity provides information on its implementation, but the deadline was set to be the respective quarter or month within this quarter and it was not marked as fully implemented, it should be evaluated as SLIGHTLY DELAYED. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;
3. If the quarterly report of the activity provides no information on the implementation process and has a deadline set to be either respective quarter or any one before current, it should be evaluated as DELAYED SIGNIFICANTLY. This tag should be entered in the specified cell.

Within the column called “Quality of Information” the GCS desk officer should evaluate each action and place his/her evaluation according to the following criteria:

1. If the quarterly report of the activity provides clear and understandable information on the steps taken to implement the activity, its quality should be evaluated as GOOD. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;

2. If the quarterly report of the activity provides at least some information on the steps taken to implement the activity, but the information is partial or non-understandable, its quality should be evaluated as **MEDIOCRE**. This tag should be entered in the specified cell;
3. If the quarterly report of the activity provides no information at all or information is irrelevant to the activity, its quality should be evaluated as **BAD**. This tag should be entered in the specified cell.

Once the GCS desk officer has evaluated the whole submission, his/her task is to enter the data into the Ms Excel file according to each ministry and then the aggregate results will appear on each table. Please refer to the Ms Excel AWP file attached to this Manual.

The last but not the least important thing that should be done by the GCS desk officer is to go through the quarterly submission of the respective ministry or institution (mainly its actions in Part A of the AWP) and think whether any of the actions delayed or lacking proper information on implementation should be marked as candidates for inclusion into the report for the Prime Minister within the chapter on “Key Problem Areas”. It should be noted that only the most important actions not fulfilled as planned should be included in this part of the report.

### **6.6 Structure of the Report to the Prime Minister**

Once each responsible GCS desk officer has carried out the analysis of quarterly reports of the ministries and institutions under his/her responsibility, the results are inputted in the Ms Excel template intended for the aggregate results of the monitoring of the AWP. The Ms Excel template is attached to this Manual. The Final Report to the Prime Minister should be prepared in Ms Word in order to provide more space for text formatting. The graphics prepared in Ms Excel aggregate template can be copied easily into the Ms Word file, following the instructions indicated in the Practical Guide attached to this Manual.

The Report to the Prime Minister should involve both quantitative and qualitative information on the implementation of the AWP.

The typical Report to the Prime Minister would have following chapters:

- **Introduction** – providing brief information on the preparation of the report, and main conclusions (key messages) that the GCS would like to let the Prime Minister and his advisors know about the implementation of the AWP;
- **Implementation rate of the AWP** – providing information on the total implementation rate of Parts A and B of the AWP, as well as implementation rate broken down by individual ministries. For the third and the fourth quarter the information on the implementation rate should be shown separately for each quarter, to depict which ministries had been postponing the implementation to the end of the year.
- **Observing the deadlines** – providing brief information on how the planned deadlines for the implementation of the AWP are met by different ministries and how large are differences between the planned deadlines and the real implementation dates. This information should be shown both in ministry by ministry manner and in aggregate.
- **Key Problem Areas** – providing qualitative assessment by the GCS desk officers about areas and actions within the AWP that seem to be encountering more problems and might not be implemented by the end of the year. This chapter should include not more than ten main problem areas (actions) that might be of interest to the Prime Minister and should not include any minor issues. This chapter should start to appear on the Report to the Prime Minister only from the third quarterly report. Of course, if everything goes according to the plan, there is no need of this kind of chapter!
- **Quality of Submissions** – providing information on how good or bad are the reports on the implementation of the AWP provided by different ministries.
- **Timeliness of the Reports** – providing short information on how the different ministries comply with the deadlines for submitting their quarterly reports and thus influence the speed of the report to the Prime Minister.
- **Appendix on Methodology Used** – explaining the criteria used by the GCS in preparing the analysis of individual submissions of ministries and how the results were reached.

Once the GCS receives submissions prepared by the ministries and institutions, it is essential that the first thing all of the GCS desk officers do is check whether all of the instructions had been observed. If the GCS desk officers spot some inconsistencies with the instructions, he/she

should contact the ministry or institution that had prepared that submission and ask for improvements or clarifications.

There should be quality checks of three types:

- a) **conformity with instructions** – looking at the formal compliance of the submissions to the rules laid out;
- b) **conformity of the substance of activities** – evaluating the quality of the activities and taking out of the list those that are of minor concern for the Government wide policy making or are ongoing, permanent tasks of the ministry. This means that activities like establishment of working groups, informing stakeholders, preparing quarterly reports and similar tasks should not be included in the AWP as they are self-evident daily tasks of ministries;
- c) **conformity with Government priorities** – checking that the activities proposed by the ministries for Part A of the AWP are really linked with Government policy priorities and support their implementation during the year.

During the quality check the GCS desk officers should consult with ministries in order to get extra information, to agree on a more precise formulation of activities, or to update the explanatory information of the activities if they are missing or need improvement.

Only when all of the initial submissions have been cleared by the GCS desk officers can the work on the aggregate version of the AWP begin. In the beginning it should be a technical task of one or two GCS desk officers to prepare an Ms Excel file that would include all of the policy objectives and actions proposed both for the Part A and Part B of the AWP. Once this technical task is accomplished, it would take one or two days for all of the responsible GCS desk officers to go through the whole AWP and look at how to better structure the information so that it would make sense to any external reader of the document. Through this screening they should also make sure that there are no duplicate or very similar actions planned by different ministries or institutions under one or several priorities or policy objectives.

The aggregate or final version of the AWP should create a full and complete picture on how the Government would implement its priorities or specific sector policy objectives within the current year.

## **CHAPTER 7- MANAGING THE PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Annual Report of the Government has to provide a clear picture of the main results achieved as a consequence of consistently implementing the AWP during the course of the year. There are several target audiences of the Annual Report who will be reading the document – the citizens (as electorate and key beneficiary), the journalists (as a watchdog of the Government), the Assembly (as employer of Government) and international donor organisations (as partial financiers of development) – therefore it is important to focus on providing each of them with success stories that will be of importance to these audiences.

It should be noted that the Annual Report is both a communication tool for the Government as a whole, but also of the Prime Minister as the main person responsible for effective and efficient running of the Government. The Annual Report should also focus on demonstrating clear links with other key planning documents, especially the Government Program that spells out key promises made by the Government to different target audiences prior to its adoption.

In order to prepare a good quality Annual Report, it is important that the GCS actively communicates not only with line ministries which are the main providers of the information, but also with political advisors of the Prime Minister who should be actively involved in prioritising achievements and linking them to the Government Program, and also the Strategic Planning Office which should provide a link to Government's medium term priorities showing how the annual achievements are feeding into a broader picture of Kosovo development.

Again, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of European Integration should actively be involved in the process of proof-reading the submissions of the ministries in order to safeguard that no important or substantial achievements are unintentionally left out by the line ministries.

## **7.1 Timeline for Preparation of the Annual Report**

The Annual Report preparation process should start in mid December together with work on the fourth quarter (final) reports of the ministries on implementation of the AWP. The starting point of the process would be the letter from the GCS to all ministries asking for submission of the ten most important achievements of the last year. The structure and contents of the submissions are discussed in sub-chapter 4.2.

The ministries would typically be given some two to three weeks to complete the task and send their submissions for the Annual Report back to the GCS of the OPM.

Once the submissions are received by the GCS, desk officers should perform initial screening and see whether all of the required information has been submitted or not. If some inconsistencies with the request are found, the GCS desk officers should go back to ministries asking for clarification and updating of the submissions.

After the initial screening of the submissions, the work on preparation of the first draft of the Annual Report could start. The desk officers of the GCS would prepare the initial draft of the Annual Report and send it for review to the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MEF and the MEI.

The political advisors of the Prime Minister would be asked to check whether the draft has all of the main aspects that the Prime Minister wants to communicate once he speaks about the main achievements of the past year, while all of the other bodies would be asked to check from their perspective whether the key achievements of the government have been brought out by the line ministries.

The review process by the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MEF and the MEI should not take longer than a maximum of one week. Taking into account the limited timeframe for preparation of the Annual Report, all of the involved parties should do their best to comply with and observe the tight deadlines.

Once the feedback is received from the involved parties, the GCS should finalize the draft, making all of the necessary improvements signalled by the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MF and the MEI (involving the focal points of the respective line ministries, if needed), and send it for a short consultation process to all line ministries, asking them to have a look on the draft and correct or add any missing information.

Once the ministries would come back with their approval of the draft or any corrections, the GCS should finalize the draft Annual Report and send to the political advisors of the Prime Minister, so that they could once more go through the document and decide to which Government meeting it should be sent for approval.

**Table 7.1: The indicative calendar for preparation of the Annual Report could look like this:**

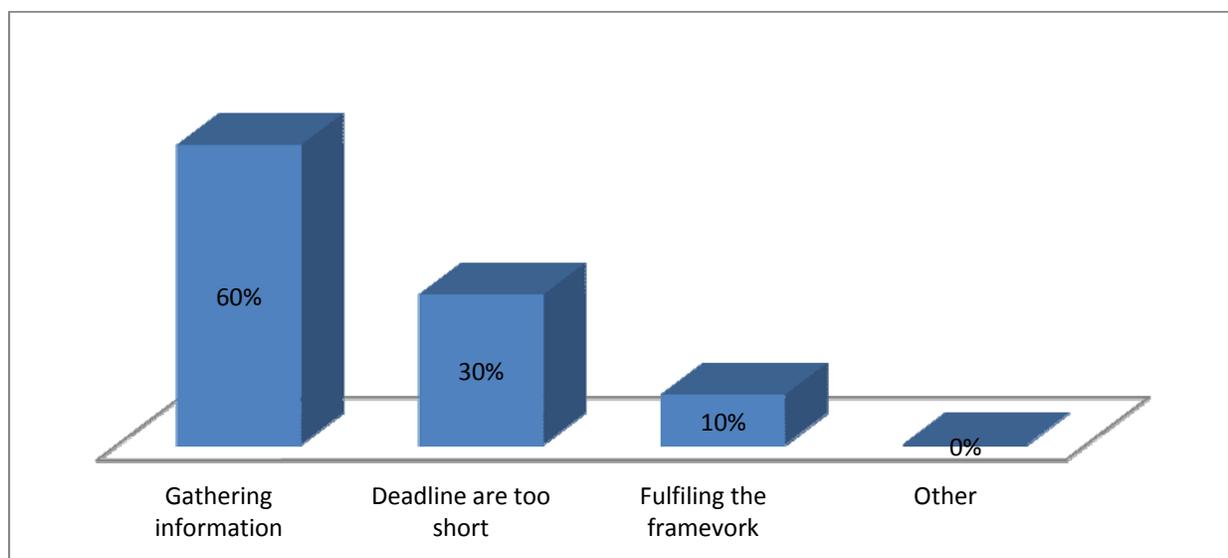
<b>Indicative Date</b>	<b>Task to be Accomplished</b>
around 20 <sup>th</sup> December	a) sending out instructions on preparing submissions to the ministries; b) holding a brief discussion between the ministries and the GCS on the use of instructions;
around 10 <sup>th</sup> January	c) receiving submissions from the ministries; d) performing initial screening and asking for additional information from ministries, if necessary;
until 15 <sup>th</sup> January	e) preparing the first draft of the Annual Report; f) sending the first draft for screening by the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MEF and the MEI;
until 25 <sup>th</sup> January	g) reviewing feedback from the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MF and the MEI and improving the draft Annual Report; h) sending the draft Annual Report for the review to the line ministries;
until 1 <sup>st</sup> February	i) receiving comments on the draft Annual Report from the ministries;
until 10 <sup>th</sup> February	j) improving and finalizing the draft Annual Report and sending the draft to the political advisors of the Prime Minister;
until 1 <sup>st</sup> March	k) finalizing the draft Annual Report and submitting it for the adoption in the Government meeting.

The calendar provided is only an indicative one and should be adapted to the real dates on an annual basis to take into account public holidays and other events that may influence the Annual Report preparation process.

## 7.2 Structure of the Submissions for the Annual Report

The structure for the submissions for the Annual Report differs from the one used either for the preparation of the AWP or the quarterly reports. It is also prepared in Ms Word and not Ms Excel in order to have more space and text formatting functions, as well as for inserting of photos or graphics.

**Figure 7.1: Problems during reporting for implementation of annual work plan**



The letter of the GCS of OPM asking for submissions for the Annual Report should include following points and instructions to which the line ministries should comply:

### 7.2.1 Overall reminders to the line ministries:

During preparation of the submissions should be a joint work of the whole working group established for the preparation of the AWP and Annual Report, and not a collection of individual submissions of sector departments.

Once completed and before sending the submission to the GCS, please, give it for review to the communications officer of your ministry or institution in order to avoid any grammar and style mistakes in the text, as well as ensure that the material is in plain language.

### 7.2.2 Specific instructions for preparation of the submissions:

Ministries are allowed to include less than seven achievements. Out of those seven achievements, at least one should describe progress made in succeeding in implementing a policy objective in Part A of the AWP (Government priority part). This does not apply to those line ministries and institutions that do not have any policy objective under the Part A of the AWP.

For description of EACH achievement use separately the template provided above. You are not allowed to change the template and follow carefully all of the instructions provided within the template on how each cell should be filled in.

### 7.2.3 Template that should be used for submissions:

The proposed template to be used by the GCS for collecting submissions for the Annual Report is described below. It should be sent to line ministries and institutions together with the overall and specific instructions mentioned above. Having this kind of template allows better structuring of the submissions and avoiding having too much information provided by the ministries for each of their achievements. Separate template should be filled in for each of the seven achievements indicated in the ministry submission!

**Table 7.2: Template to be filled in for each of the seven achievements for ministry submission**

<b>Name of the Part</b>	<b>Instructions for Filling in the Template</b>
Priority of the Achievement:	Put in the number from 1 to 7 (where 1 is the most important and the 7 is the least important) to identify how important you consider the achievement to be out of the total number of achievements identified.
Policy objective:	Write in the policy objective exactly as it is formulated in the AWP and give its reference number. Please, note that this is being used for the purposes of identifying all actions involved in producing the achievement that you are describing.
Description of the	In a maximum of 500 words, explain what change has been

<p>activities performed and achievements reached:</p>	<p>achieved under the particular policy objective and what steps were taken in order to achieve that. The description of the final achievement has to take the biggest portion of the text, in order to be understandable for any reader.</p> <p>Do not use over-bureaucratic language or professional slang while describing the achievement, and skip any technical details that describe the process of reaching the achievement. Rather focus on how you describe the achievement so that any reader would understand how important it is for Kosovo in general and for all citizens (or a specific group of them) in particular.</p> <p>Please, include any statistical or numerical information that would prove the achievement, e.g. progress made in comparison to last three years. Also put references to the sources of the statistical information!</p>
<p>Supplementary information:</p>	<p>If You have a photo or a graphic that might better explain the achievement please put it in this cell. It is highly advisable that You send the GCS the respective picture or graphic also as a separate file (either ending with .xls or .jpg) so that it could be used for formatting purposes.</p> <p>Make sure that you use different file names for different achievements clearly stating which file refers to which achievement.</p>
<p>Concluding remarks:</p>	<p>No more than 50 words if there is anything that ministry would like to add or draw the attention to in respect to the particular achievement.</p>
<p>Contact person:</p>	<p>Please indicate the name and contact details (including mobile number) of the responsible official that could be contacted in case there are some additional questions related to the particular achievement.</p>

### 7.3 Suggested Contents of the Annual Report

Once the line ministries and institutions have sent their submissions to the GCS and the GCS has made the initial screening of the submissions to check whether they comply with the instructions, the work on the first draft of the Annual Report could start.

The Annual Report has several main parts aimed at explaining the past year's performance from the viewpoint of the Government and individual ministries, so that the readers of the report would clearly see and associate the information presented with knowledge coming from their own experience:

- **Foreword of the Prime Minister** in which he/she makes the overall assessment of the past year and identifies the main achievements, discusses their impact on the overall development of the state and also sets out future plans and challenges that still have to be overcome.
- **Report on the Strategic Priorities Part of the AWP** focuses on presenting achievements broken down by the priority areas and explaining how the implementation of the particular actions has positively influenced the overall progress of the state. The wording of the text and formulations should be very straightforward and focus on presenting as many tangible results as possible. It is advisable to illustrate this part with visual materials (graphics and photos) in order to give it more impact.
- **Reports of the Individual Ministries** should focus on three to four of their most important tasks accomplished during the year. It is especially important that these actions are different from those described in the part of Strategic Priorities and clearly show direct benefits that the citizens of Kosovo can enjoy now.

The first draft of the Annual Report should be prepared during a joint session of all responsible GCS desk officers, once they have prepared their individual parts. The proof reading and final editing and formatting should be performed by one desk officer in order to ensure that it represents a coherent and unified document.

Once the first draft of the Annual Report is produced, it should be sent for review to the political advisors of the Prime Minister, the SPO, the MF and the MEI in order to check whether any substantial achievements had been left out. Further process is described in sub-chapter 4.1.

## **CHAPTER 8- FINAL DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMANDATIONS**

This capstone project deals with overall issues connected with the Annual Work Plan of the Government – its relation to other main planning documents, its internal structure and the role that the GCS of the OPM should play during various stages of the process associated with AWP and all of the different aspects connected to preparation of the AWP. The timeframe for the process, instructions and templates for the ministries are described and explained.

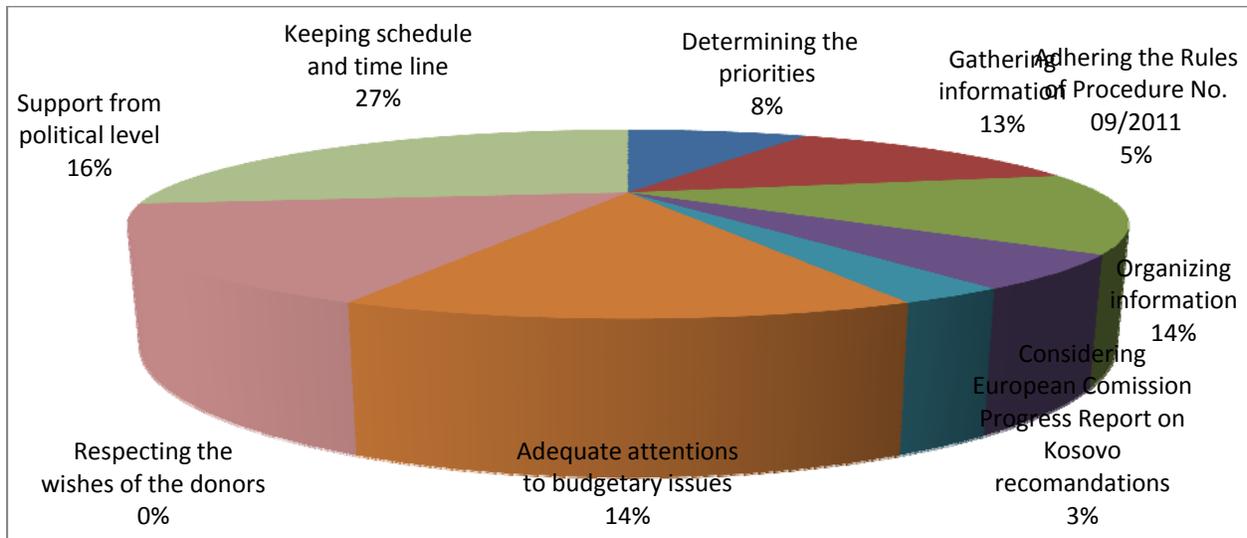
The capstone project focuses on monitoring and reporting side of the AWP, looking into the way how the GCS desk officers should deal with quarterly reports of the ministries and how in the end the quarterly report for the Prime Minister and his/her advisors should be prepared and what type of information should be included there. Process for preparation of the Annual Report of the Government is described and explained how it should be seen as an implementation report of the AWP. Users of this project in the future are provided with the timeframe and key instructions on how to manage the whole process and how to come up with a qualitative product in the end of each year.

### **8.1 Results from the investigations**

Based on the result of the investigations there are four main important issues that we should consider. These issues are consider as a problems during my investigation to understand what are the main problems that both central government structures and structures in ministries are facing during preparation of the Government Annual Work plan.

These problems as we can see in the **Figure 1.4.1** below are: keeping schedule and time line (27%) followed by support from the political level (16%), lack of adequate attentions to budgetary issues and organizing information (14%) and gathering information (13%).

**Figure 8.1: The main problems in dealing with the government's Annual Work Plan**



*Keeping schedule and time line* is the main problem in planning the Government activities during one year because all the ministries plan their activities (the most of them) during all year or during fourth quarter. It means that they give an opportunity to themselves to win time if the activity is planned in a certain period of time and they are not accomplished in time.

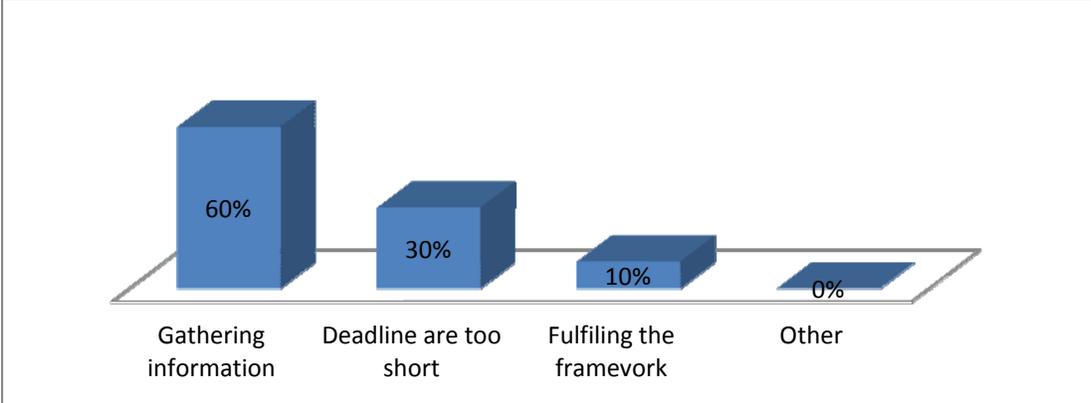
Officials in ministries consider the *political support* very important in drafting ministerial annual work plan. If someone of political staff is involved in drafting this document they fill more confident that the government Annual Work Plan is reaching the objectives that minister and whole government is aiming to realize.

*Lack of adequate attentions to budgetary issues* show us that planning process of activities of the Government is not in full compliance with the *annual budget* of the country, which divides available financial resources along different policy areas to be implemented by the Government.

*Gathering information* during reporting for implementation the Government Annual Work Plan within ministries seems to be very difficult issue for Government Coordination Secretariat and for officials in ministries. In the questions to prioritize the main problems GCS officials declare with 13% ore the fourth problem after *keeping schedule and time line*, *political support* and *lack of adequate attentions to budgetary issues*. But in the question for officials in

ministries *What is the main problem during reporting for implementation of annual work plan*, 60% of them declare that gathering information is the most problem, 30 % of them think that deadline are too short and only 10% think that fulfilling the framework for reporting is a problem.

**Figure 8.2: Problems during reporting for implementation of annual work plan**



*Having online communication* between officials in ministries with officials in Prime Minister Office during all the time that the annual work plan is being drafted is the key element on how the cooperation could be improved.

**Figure 8.3: How cooperation could be improved**



## 8.2 Major recommendations

The further recommendations have to be taken In order to improve the structure and content of the Annual Work Plan and addressing the issues described in the beginning of the Chapter 8. By doing so the content of the Annual Government Work Plan can be more focused and the information requirements can be more narrowly defined there by reducing effort and time.

Government should draft concrete, functional and useful annual work plan by offering: (a) giving clear instructions on how to prepare annual plans, (b) developing process of consultation between ministries, (c) developing monitoring system to ensure implementations of the annual work plan, and (d) increasing capacities through ought the professional training.

**a) Clear Instructions** should clarify the purpose of the annual Work Plan, the procedures that have to accomplish, objectives that have to achieve and actions to be taken. Instruction should give detail information about the priority issues of the government and provide a framework by which the government can report to the Assembly and to the public on its accomplishments during the past year.

**b) Developing communications process** - The consultations process should develop in two directions: between Office of the Prime Minister and ministries and between departments within each ministry. Consultation process between The Office of the Prime Minister should establish a small working group, lead by the Director of the Government Coordination Secretariat, to review and update the draft Annual Work Plan. Membership in the working group should include representatives from the GCS, OLSS, MIE, MoF (Budget Department), as well as one or more political advisors to the PM. The main activity of this working group would be to review the draft of the Annual Work Plan based on submissions received from all ministries.

Communications process within ministry should force by establishing an internal work group. Because preparation of the submissions for the AWP covers different aspects of the work of the ministry, it is highly recommended that the working group includes at least the following representatives of the ministry:

- Nominated focal point for preparation of the AWP;
- Official in charge of preparation of previous submission of AWP (if available);
- One of the political advisors of the minister;

- European integration officer of the ministry;
- Representative of the Communications unit of the ministry;
- Political spokesperson of the minister;
- Representative of the Legal Department of the ministry;
- Representative of the Budget Department of the ministry.

If the ministry decides to go for a wider group it can take a decision to include a representative from each sectorial policy area the ministry is responsible for. This approach would bring in more knowledge about different policy areas that the ministry is responsible for, but at the same time it will make harder to coordinate and manage. Therefore a careful selection of the members of the working group should be maintained, in order to make sure that the key policy units are represented.

- c) Developing monitoring system:** Once the Annual Work Plan has been approved, the GCS needs to monitor its implementation during the year. The purpose of this monitoring should be to identify delays and recommend appropriate corrective action. It should also provide an opportunity to make adjustments to the Annual Work Plan.

Monitoring should occur once a quarter by requesting each ministry to complete a progress report. The information required in these progress reports should be very focused, and reports should be short and to the point, without long descriptions. Specifically, ministries should be asked for a status update on each action in the Annual Work Plan, indicating whether the action is (1) completed, (2) not completed but on track, or (3) delayed. For each delayed item, the ministry should provide an explanation, and an indication of when the item can be rescheduled. It should explain what actions it is taking to correct the problem, and/or it should identify any corrective action required by the Government.

Based in the information submitted by ministries, the GCS can prepare a consolidated progress report that summarizes what items are completed or on track, any revision required to the schedule, and any decisions required by the Government to correct any delays.

**d) Professional training** should serve for all government officials in order to increase capacities in different aspects related to planning and reporting process. Government Coordination Secretariat should develop e training program including necessary topics for improvement of whole planning, monitoring and reporting process of the Government Annual Work Plan.

### **8.3 Recommendations regarding preparing and Monitoring the Annual Work Plan in Future Years**

In future, the key features of the Annual Work Plan and monitoring process should focus on implementing the priorities of government, identify what actions need to be taken during the year, and what decisions does it need to take to ensure timely implementation.

The Annual Work Plan should be consistent with **the MTEF and the budget**, and not be an alternative route to getting government funding and should be consistent with the EPAP. The Annual Work Plan should be the basis for planning the agenda of the government; actions in the program should be given priority attention in the government meeting. The Annual Work Plan should incorporate the Legislative Agenda, so that the government meeting agenda is managed and planned through a single coordinating mechanism.

Preparation of the Annual Work Plan should be lead by the GCS, but involve other bodies: OLSS, MEI, MoF, and the PM's political advisors, in addition to input from ministries.

Through monitoring the Annual Work Plan, the GCS should be able to identify delays, and recommend corrective action to the Government Meeting. Monitoring should be seen as an 'internal management' tool rather than an external communications tool.

After the end of the year, the Government needs to report to the Assembly and to the public on its accomplishments. The purpose of this annual reporting is different than for the quarterly monitoring described above. It is focused on communications, and is intended primarily to highly accomplishments, rather than to highlight delays. As such, the structure and information requirements will be different, and could include additional information on the ongoing activities of government.

Because the Annual Work Plan should be the basis for planning the government meeting agenda, it should also include all items in the government's Legislative Agenda. In other words, the Legislative Agenda should be a subset of the Annual Work Plan.

The Annual Report of Government should be a key communications tool, with more detailed information on the accomplishments on government over the past year.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Regulation of rules and procedure of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo No. 09/2011
2. Reregulation no.01/2011 on Departments for European Integrations and Policy Coordination in Ministries
3. Analyze of implementation of Government Annual Work Plan for 2009; Ref. No 201/2009
4. Analyze of implementation of Government Annual Work Plan for 2011; Ref. No 199/2011
5. Government Annual Work Plan of 2010
6. Kosovo Government Program 2011-2014,
7. Development Strategic Plan of Office of the Prime Minister 2011-2014,
8. Kosovo Mid-Term Expenditure Framework 2011-2013,
9. Government Annual Work Plan of 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

## **APPENDIXES**