REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË

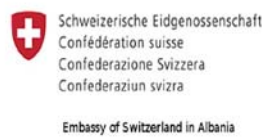**KËSHILLI I MINISTRAVE**

MINISTRI PËR ÇËSHTJET VENDORE

Implementation Progress Report

July – October 2016

Consolidation of Territorial and Administrative Reform (STAR 2)

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1. Executive Summary

This report summarizes the initial preparatory activities and progress made during the period July-September 2016, following the signature of the Consolidation of Territorial and Administrative Reform – STAR 2 project document on 14 July 2016, which marked the official start date of the project.

The progress to date relates on one hand mostly to efforts for project personnel mobilization, initial logistics arrangements and the embarkment on the first planned activity for undertaking a local governance mapping, and on the other side on local awareness and preparing the terrain for local support by local authorities in close collaboration with the Agency for the Implementation of the Reform – AITR as well as additional parallel activities coordinated by the MSLI.

As a short recall of STAR2 content and purpose, it is worth to note that the present STAR2 project development hugely benefitted in practice from joint contributions and abundant inputs received from all development partners and other stakeholders, coordinated and structured by UNDP under the leadership of the MSLI, over the first half of 2016.

STAR2 represents, in many aspects, a business continuity of the results of its predecessor STAR and will operate in complementarity to the assistance of various partners for strengthening the institutional and administrative capacities at local level.

In full account of these considerations, STAR2 project will have a national coverage and benefit all 61 LGUs, with an assistance designed to unfold along three main components:

(1) Strengthening institutional and administrative capacities of LGUs;
(2) Improving service delivery at LGUs level; and
(3) Increasing good governance through citizen oriented and meaningful participatory decision-making

As part of its implementation principles, STAR2 will make due efforts to satisfy the following:

– The project will rely, whenever relevant and within its focus, on good practices / models developed by other initiatives/ development partners and upscale them to all LGUs. This would require an improved and structured coordination among development stakeholders from consultations to decision mechanisms as well as an improved flow of information and knowledge sharing.

– The project will also strive to complement different national or international partners' initiatives through working on adjacent assistance topics that need to be addressed for ensuring a comprehensive body of capacity building or through inclusion of a larger number of beneficiaries benefiting from the available assistance in order to contribute to creating a critical mass of skills within local administrations and all local government units.

- The project will pay particular attention to promote producing and usage of data disaggregated by gender and sub-population groups as well as their systematic dissemination and use of evidence at local and national levels so as to ensure that services are addressing disparities experienced by vulnerable groups.

- The project will be instrumental in promoting new technologies, e-government and e-services, that have the potential of making local governments more efficient, transparent and accessible by the public. This endeavor will be accompanied with the establishment of a comprehensive performance management system regarding particularly the aspect of measuring the quality of municipal service delivery.

- The project will make efforts to achieve gender equality results and mitigate vulnerabilities through local governance practices of deepened democracy, effectiveness, efficiency and partnerships with civil society in service delivery design as well as in watchdog functions.

- Across its three blocks, the project will promote accountability mechanism to ensure that policies, services, rules and procedures are responsive to rights, entitlements, needs and demands of men and women and that the former are designed, at the extent possible and in accordance with the existing frameworks, in full compliance with a meaningful participation process.

Similar to its predecessor STAR project, the present project constitutes the due process and fund management support to the Minister of State provided by the international community in Albania.

While UNDP plays the fund manager role and disburses the funds in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations and the project scope, the project is implemented by the Government of Albania through the direct leadership of the Minister of State for Local Issues and in accordance with UNDP's National Implementation Modality, whereby the Government sets the pace of the process, assumes the responsibility for the technical content and sets and follows a comprehensive sequence of activities for achieving the desired results.

2. Implementation progress to date

In line with the project planning framework, the first activities to be undertaken relate to the mobilization of project personnel and the launching of the Local Governance Mapping exercise, all of which would help to ensure provision of relevant inputs to the inception period and development of a realistic and measurable project monitoring and evaluation framework.

2.1 Mobilization of project personnel

This activity was an immediate follow up of the project signature. The project, similar to STAR1, has two interlinked structures: a Project Coordination Unit (PCU) established at UNDP and a Project Management Team (PMT) attached to and supporting MSLI.

The PCU is a dedicated administrative, logistic and financial management nucleus for the implementation, in addition to the provision by UNDP of common services for human resource mobilization, procurement and logistics. The composition of the PCU includes:

1. Project Coordinator x 1
2. Monitoring and Reporting Specialist x 1
3. Senior Finance/Admin Assistant x 1
4. Finance Clerk x 1
5. Admin Clerk x 1

The PMT will be responsible for the day to day implementation of project activities. The role of the PMT will be, among others, to: coordinate and monitor the implementation of various components of the project and the performance of the various TA contracts, coordinate inputs and necessary support of all concerned institutions for the most efficient and prompt results, coordinate and guide the work of the PFPs at municipal level, coordinate with the AITR and seek support for implementation issues, provide organizational and expert support to the MSLI, ensure PR and awareness on the activities and their progress reaches the appropriate audiences and builds support and cooperation, and assume the role of technical secretariat for the PSC. The composition of the PMT includes:

1. Project Manager
2. Senior Team Leader Capacity Development
3. Senior Team Leader Public Service Delivery
4. Senior Team Leader Local Democracy & Good Governance
5. Local Government Policy Expert
6. Knowledge Management and Coordination Specialist
7. Field Presence Coordinator
8. Local Government Data Analyst
9. Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist

10. Environment Specialist
11. Public Relations & Communication x 1
12. IT Expert x 1
13. Project assistants x 2
14. Drivers x 2

During the reporting period,Terms of References (ToR) were prepared for key project positions within the PCU and PMT, and recruitment processes are ongoing. The following is the situation to date with regard to project personnel mobilization:

No	Position	Status	Comment
	Project Coordination Unit		
1	Project Coordinator	On board	Anila shehu
2	Monitoring and Reporting Specialist	Not opened yet	
3	Senior Finance/Admin Assistant	On board	Fabjola Zeqiri
4	Finance Clerk	Not opened yet	
5	Admin Clerk	On board	Juliana Babaliaj
	Project Management Unit		
	Project Manager	On board	Edlira Muhedini
	Senior Team Leader Capacity Development	On board	Albina Shehu
	Senior Team Leader Public Service Delivery	In process	
	Senior Team Leader Local Democracy & Good Governance	In process	
	Local Government Policy Expert	On board	Enea Hoti
	Knowledge Management and Coordination Specialist	On board	Oerd Imami
	Field Presence Coordinator	On board	Artur Kurti
	Local Government Data Analyst	In process	
	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	In process	
	Environment Specialist	In process	Emirjeta Adhami
	Public Relations & Communication	On board	Klea Cenkollari
	IT Expert	Not opened yet	
	Project assistants	Not opened yet	
	Drivers	On board	Donetin Selimja Artan Rozani

2.2 Local Governance Mapping

This exercise is proposed to be conducted at the outset and at the end of project implementation. The first mapping will aim to understand the current state of governance and its gaps in each municipality so that findings would potentially help fine tune subsequent and specific STAR2 interventions. The second assessment, will aim to measure likely local governance changes that have taken place, attempting to also identify those attributable to STAR2. In other words, the purpose of the mapping exercise is to better understand the state of governance from both the supply and demand side perspectives, that is from the institutional and people's perspectives. The exercise will aim to identify opportunities and challenges that exist in the area of sub-national governance, in order to contribute to policy discussions on local governance in an informed manner.

Progress regarding this activity is summarized as follows:

Work started with reviewing existing models on governance assessment, with a focus on UNDP experience on local governance mapping. Taking into consideration a full coverage of all 61 municipalities, time limitations and feasibility, in consultations with the MSLI, it was agreed to conduct the mapping assessment simultaneously in three lots averaging 20 municipalities each, so as to shorten the time required for obtaining results. The work will be carried out by national organizations with limited international expertise support. For that purpose, separate Terms of Reference for national and international expertise were developed and respective calls were launched on August 16, till September 7, 2016.

As of now, the evaluation processes are being finalized and the anticipated implementers will be Gender Alliance for Development Centre - Cluster1 (North), Urban Research Institute – Cluster2 (Center), and IDRA – Cluster3 (South). Regarding the International Expert, the evaluation recommends a candidate from India, who has very relevant experience in coordinating the implementation of a similar Local Governance Mapping in Myanmar The evaluation processes for both the national and international expertise will be concluded within the week of 24 October.

2.3 Training of Fire Rescue Service

Fire rescue service is one of the most important services of the new municipalities recently decentralized. Considering that STAR2 project supports consolidation of the new municipalities' services, and also considering the potential for follow up, STAR2 is supporting the participation of 8 people in a training course organized by the Czech Fire Rescue Service.

The training is enabled through a recently signed Memorandum of Cooperation between the Albanian Ministry of Interior and the Czech Fire Rescue Service. Based on this document, the Czech Fire Rescue Service is committed to provide training courses for Albanian Fire Rescue Services. The first training course is planned to be organized from 31 October to 04 November in the Czech Republic for a total number of 15 participants from Albania.

The proposed participants are part of the intervention sector (service heads). Out of 15 participants, 8 are selected from Tirana Municipality considering its size in terms of territory, population and problematic and the other 7 from the municipalities with biggest problematic and interventions in fire rescue: Vlora, Berat, Lezha, Gjirokaster and Durres.

STAR2 is covering transport costs for 8 participants to and from Czech Republic, while municipalities are covering themselves the transport costs for 7 participants. All other expenditures, including full package of accommodation and meals and training package, are covered from the organizers, in this case the Czech Fire Service.

Follow up training courses will be offered in the future for different levels of fire rescue employees, including the operational level, on tactic interventions using rescue equipments as well as on different accidents and incidents. The higher level fire rescue managers will receive trainings on inspection, prevention and fire investigation, as well as on chemical damage protection.

2.4 Presentation of STAR 2 project to LGUs

Considering the municipalities needs for technical assistance and the unavoidalble gap created between STAR1 and STAR2 projects, the immediate start of the STAR2 project through its introduction to municipalities became one of the main priorities seen from the perspective of the Minister of State for Local Issues (MSLI), the Agency for the Implementation of Territorial Reform (AITR) and STAR2 project.

To ensure that, during the reporting period, a representative team of MSLI/AITR and STAR2 project undertook an introduction tour throughout municipalities of Albania. The AITR Director, STAR2 National Project Manager and Field Presence Coordinator visited a considerable number of municipalities, targeting mayors anad aiming at reaching as many municipalities as possible within a very short period of time.

The main purpose of the tour was to introduce the STAR2 project objectives and to ensure municipalities' commitment towards the achievement of those objectives. The focus of discussions during the introduction tour was on the explanation of the new phase and the need for consolidation of the new municipalities after the finalization of the amalgamation process. The exercise includes explanation of the main STAR2 technical assistance components inclusive of reengineering of service delivery management processes, provision of unified standards and systems, yet tailored to municipalities' needs, assistance to increase the transparency, public participation and accountability on municipality services, plans on provision of capacity building assistance through formal and on the job trainings, complemented by hardware equipment financed from state budget.

The introduction tour also served the purpose of introducing the STAR2 new management staff, reconfirming the complementary roles of STAR2 and AITR, re-establishing communication at political, technical and administrative levels with municipalities as well as ensuring their commitment.

As part of the tour, a Memorandum of Cooperation is signed by the three main partners in the process: AITR, STAR2 and each municipality, confirming each party's commitment towards the achievement of the STAR2 project objectives.

The AITR Director, in the name of MSLI, reassured mayors about MSLI and AITR continuous support, reinforced by STAR2 project, as well as explained the purpose of usage of hardware equipment currently under distribution all over the country. Two PCs, one scanner and one photocopy machine will be made available for each administrative unit and the centre municipality for eaqch of the 61 municipalities. This equipment will be fully dedicated to the One Stop Shop services and the digitalization of archives. The hardware distribution process, accompanied with training on their usage (training delivered by a non-STAR2 selected company) is ongoing and this process is expected to be concluded within mid-November.

Out of 61 new municipalities the project intends to provide a full assistance package along STAR2 three components to 35-40 municipalities. The assistance on the improvement of local democracy and good governance, strengthening of capacity development and digitalisation of archives will cover the 61 new municipalities.

To conclude, as of October 20, 2016, the situation is the following:

- 35 out of 37 municipalities signed the memorandum of cooperation between AITR, STAR2 project and the municipality
- 30 municipalities have already received IT hardware/equipment
- 37 out of 61 municipalities, representing 255 out of 323 administrative units, are selected to receive the fully fledged assistance including the One Stop Shops; among those:
  - 10 out of 15 municipalities belong to the right wing (DP) (66% of DP led municipalities)
  - 23 out of 35 municipalities belong to the left wing (SP) (66% of SP led municipalities)
  - 3 out of 10 SMI led municipalities (30%)
  - 1 out of 1 PDIU (100% of PDIU led municipalities)

Feedback from municipalities contacted

There is enthusiasm from all mayors met during the introduction tour of STAR2 and AITR; all of them welcomed the start of the STAR2 project, which they have been expecting for to start considering the work done during STAR1 and the need for continuity.

All of them were thankful and appreciated very much, particularly the equipment provided through GoA budget, as a complementary element of the STAR2 technical assistance project.

Almost in all cases, the need for capacity building through training and on the job assistance, particularly on the digitalization and modernization of services and archives, was very clearly articulated.

In several cases, the need to start the process of services modernization is considered an immediate action and required by mayors as a matter of priority.

The digitalization of archives is also welcomed as interlocutors were very concerned about the situation with documentation and archives in the administrative units, and particularly on the need for capacity building for their staff.

3. Agreements with the project donors

STAR2 project, similar to its predecessor, counts on the contribution of development partners that are committed to support the Government of Albania in its efforts to consolidate Local Governance in the country.

During the implementation of STAR 1, the project partners played an important role, not only in terms of financial support and the provision of necessary means to ensure a timely and quality project implementation, but also through their considerable technical assistance, know-how and best practices transferred to the project and created during the implementation of individual programs in pilot municipalities. The same is expected to extend throughout STAR2.

STAR2 has officially started its implementation in July 2016 and supported by five development partner, including the European Union as a newcomer to the pooled fund. The situation to date with the conclusion of specific cost-sharing agreements is the following:

− Sweden. Agreement is signed on 15 July 2016 for an amount of SEK 10 million in September 2016 Sida proposed to make an amendment to the agreement to put additional funds; the amended Agreement, amounting now to SEK 15 million, is not yet finalized and signed
− USAID. Agreement is signed on 12 October 2016 for an amount of US$100,000
− Italy. Agreement is signed ceremonially on 18 October 2016 for an amount of 1.2 MEUR
− EUD. Agreement with EU Delegation was pending the signature of the Financing Agreement between EU and Albania. The signature of the FA was concluded recently and currently EUD and UNDP are working towards finalizing the specific STAR2 agreement which very likely will be concluded by early November 2016 at the most.
− Switzerland. Agreement is not signed, SDC will indicate when it would be concluded

4. Implementation concerns/issues

During end September 2016, MSLI addressed to UNDP the issue of office (physical space) for STAR2 staff (PMT). The initial plan to accommodate part of the PMT in the MSLI premises and the other part at AITR offices seems not to be realistic anymore. This situation has changed due to the limited space at MSLI and AITR to organise and accommodate extra staff as MSLI is faced with additional commitment outside STAR2 to provide space for additional staff.

Considering the number of STAR2 PMT staff, the highly complex and challenging STAR2 project and the need for coordination and collaboration across the three project components, it is becoming increasingly necessary to look for a common appropriate working environment. Therefore the proposal is to ensure an office to accommodate the full PMT in a location relatively close to the MSLI, which meets the criterias for a normal professional project environment.

5. Plans for the immediate future

For the next quarter, STAR2 plans to advance in the following directions:

- – Finalize the recruitment of the required project personnel
- – Start and conclude the inception period, producing an inception report as a detailed, practical revision and operationalization of the project document and its budget
- – Develop a detailed action plan per component
- – Develop detailed Terms of Reference for the OSSh and the digitalization of the archives with the aim to conclude the tendering process for these two activities by early 2016
- – Launch, monitor and conclude the Local Governance Mapping exercise

6. Project expenditures

Activity	Costs	All Years	Total Expenditures for the time period 14 July-31 Dec 2016			
		Total Cost (in USD)	Realized Expenditures as of 21 Oct 2016 (in USD)	Committed Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Planned Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Budget Balance as of 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)
Activity 1:Project Management and Evaluation	**1.1 PMT at MSLI**					
	Project Manager	104,000	-	5,200	-	98,800
	Senior Team Leader Capacity Development	89,680	-	7,080		82,600
	Senior Team Leader Public Service Delivery	89,680	-	-	4,720	84,960
	Senior Team Leader Local Democracy & Good Governance	89,680	-	-	4,720	84,960
	Local Government Policy Expert	70,000	-	6,125	-	63,875
	Knowledge Management and Coordination Specialist	42,600	-	3,550	-	39,050
	Field Presence Coordinator	48,600	-	4,860	-	43,740
	Local Government Data Analyst	55,080	-	-	3,240	51,840
	Public Relations & Communication	53,960	-	3,550	-	50,410
	IT Specialist	67,320	-	-	1,870	65,450
	PFP staff (6 locations x 2 people x 24 months)	230,400	-	-	-	230,400
	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	63,000	-	-	3,500	59,500
	Environmental Specialist	63,000	-	3,500	-	59,500
	ST Consultants	43,750	-	-	8,750	35,000
	Project Assistant x2	91,200	-	-	2,400	88,800
	Driver 1	38,000	-	2,375	-	35,625
	Driver 2	34,200	-	2,375	-	31,825
	1.2 UNDP PCU					-
	CO Policy Advisory and Implementation Support Services (direct costs)	41,255	-	-	-	41,255
	Project Coordinator	96,760	4,832	7,248	-	84,680
	Project Specialist	76,320	-	-	2,120	74,200
	Senior Finance/Admin Assistant	66,420	3,352	5,028	-	58,040
	Finance Clerk	36,000	-	-	1,000	35,000
	Admin Assistant	44,100	2,542	3,810	-	37,748

Activity	Costs	All Years	Total Expenditures for the time period 14 July-31 Dec 2016			
		Total Cost (in USD)	Realized Expenditures as of 21 Oct 2016 (in USD)	Committed Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Planned Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Budget Balance as of 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)
	1.3 Travel and logistic arrangements					-
	Purchase of vehicles	60,000	-	-	60,000	-
	Local missions	51,200	-	-	192	51,008
	Vehicle Maintenance	40,000	-	162	3,000	36,838
	Vehicle fuel	72,000	-	1,200	1,200	69,600
	Purchase of IT equipments	11,000	-	-	-	11,000
	Office rent	49,200	641	-	963	47,596
	Other services (tel/fax, electricity/heating, maintenance)	8,000	303	299	-	7,398
	Consumables - office supplies	8,000	-	119	400	7,481
	Miscalleneous (med check)	4,000	635	-	231	3,134
	1.4 Publications, visibility and other services					-
	Publications	35,000	-	2,931	-	32,069
	Expenditure verification/Audit	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
	Evaluation costs	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
	Translation, interpreters	20,000	-	1,750	-	18,250
	Financial services (bank guarantee costs etc.)	61,500	-	-	4,500	57,000
	Costs of conferences/seminars	35,000	-	103	1,500	33,397
	Visibility actions	200,000	-	-	-	200,000
	Study tour	45,000	-	-	-	45,000
	1. SUBTOTAL Activity 1	**2,384,905**	**12,305**	**61,265**	**104,306**	**2,207,029**
Activity 2: Implementation of the new CSL, and the Labor Code	National experts	102,600				102,600
	International experts	27,000	-	-	-	27,000
	International experts/flight	1,200	-	-	-	1,200
	Per diem local	3,648	-	-	-	3,648
	Local transport	7,400	-	-	-	7,400
	Training cost	34,200	-	-	-	34,200
	2. SUBTOTAL Activity 2	**176,048**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**176,048**
Activity 3: Administrative capacities and the	National experts	317,880	-		-	317,880
	International experts	148,500	-		-	148,500
	International experts/flight	3,600	-	-	-	3,600

Activity	Costs	All Years Total Cost (in USD)	Realized Expenditures as of 21 Oct 2016 (in USD)	Committed Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Planned Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)	Budget Balance as of 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)
STAR2 Project Budget		All Years	Total Expenditures for the time period 14 July-31 Dec 2016			
integrity of local administrations	Perdiem Local	10,976	-		-	10,976
	Local transport	24,304	-	-	-	24,304
	Training cost	96,000	-	-	-	96,000
	3. SUBTOTAL Activity 3	**601,260**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**601,260**
Activity 4: Local Public Financial Management	National experts	289,440	-	-	-	289,440
	International consultants	99,000	-	-	-	99,000
	International experts/flight	1,800	-	-	-	1,800
	Perdiem Local	3,072	-	-	-	3,072
	Local transport	5,288	-	-	-	5,288
	Training cost	19,800	-	-	-	19,800
	4. SUBTOTAL Activity 4	**418,400**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**418,400**
Activity 5: Service management and reorganization of selected public services	National experts	326,700	-	-	-	326,700
	International consultants	326,700	-	-	-	326,700
	International experts/flight	6,000	-	-	-	6,000
	Perdiem Local	7,872	-	-	-	7,872
	Local transport	16,584	-	-	-	16,584
	Training cost	45,600	-	4,117	-	41,483
	5. SUBTOTAL Activity 5	**729,456**	**-**	**4,117**	**-**	**725,339**
Activity 6: National benchmarking system for services	National experts	211,500	-	-	-	211,500
	International consultants	90,000	-	-	-	90,000
	International experts/flight	1,800	-	-	-	1,800
	Perdiem Local	384	-	-	-	384
	Local transport	1,344	-	-	-	1,344
	Training cost	75,000	-	-	-	75,000
	Equipment	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
	6. SUBTOTAL Activity 6	**390,028**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**390,028**
Activity 7: Scale up a One Stop Shop model nation wide	Contracted company/Analysis and Design of 50 new services in OSS-MIS (OSS)	864,000	-	-	-	864,000
	Contracted company/Testing, deployment and training for 50 new services in 50 municipalities (OSS)	1,080,000	-	-	-	1,080,000
	7. SUBTOTAL Activity 7	**1,944,000**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**1,944,000**

STAR2 Project Budget		All Years	Total Expenditures for the time period 14 July-31 Dec 2016			
Activity	**Costs**	**Total Cost (in USD)**	**Realized Expenditures as of 21 Oct 2016 (in USD)**	**Committed Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)**	**Planned Expenditures up to 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)**	**Budget Balance as of 31 Dec 2016 (in USD)**
Activity 8: Digitalization of archives	Archiving Specialists	75,000	-	-	3,000	72,000
	Perdiem Local	38,400	-	-	-	38,400
	Equipment	146,496	-	-	-	146,496
	8. SUBTOTAL Activity 8	**259,896**	**-**	**-**	**3,000**	**256,896**
Activity 9: Local governance mapping	Contracted company	369,460	-	-	146,324	223,136
	International consultants	40,500	-	17,230	-	23,270
	International experts/flight	1,200	-	-	-	1,200
	9. SUBTOTAL Activity 9	**411,160**	**-**	**17,230**	**146,324**	**247,606**
Activity 10: Local democracy and citizen participation in local decision making	National experts	216,180	-	-	-	216,180
	Perdiem Local	1,920	-	-	-	1,920
	Local transport	6,056	-	-	-	6,056
	Training cost	20,400	-	-	-	20,400
	Equipment	40,000	-	-	-	40,000
	10. SUBTOTAL 10	**284,556**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**284,556**
	11. Subtotal Programme Costs (1-10)	**7,599,709**	**12,305**	**82,612**	**253,630**	**7,251,162**
	12. UNDP Management Fee	**568,977**	**984**	**6,609**	**20,290**	541,093
	13. Total Programme Cost (11+12)	**8,168,686**	**13,289**	**89,220**	**273,920**	**7,792,255**

Annexes

Annex 1.

Terms of Reference

Local Governance Mapping **in a selected cluster of municipalities in Albania**

I. **Local governance and project context**

The local government system in Albania is going through series of structural and institutional reforms. These changes began at end of 2013 with the launch of the administrative and territorial reform and led to the reduction/consolidation of the local governments from 373 to 61. Several policy developments of key relevance to strengthening the local government institution and local governance in general have followed suit in the last couple of years. Among those, of direct relevance are the Decentralization and Local Governance Strategy, the Law on Local Government as well as the Public Administration Reform Strategy.

The new Crosscutting Strategy on Decentralization and Local Governance 2015-2020 fits the new context of local government organization and has the ambition to create an efficient system of local self-government where the latter is empowered and able to provide quality services and manage the territorial development sustainably. The Strategy reiterates the aim for the consolidation of local human resources and their skills: "empowering the local administration [through] the establishment of a non-bureaucratized, professional and transparent public administration … able to respond to the expectation of the business and the community for public services [and the development of] a special "performance monitoring system" for the LGUs … to guarantee the accountability of the public administration and ensure efficient delivery of services at the local level".

In a further articulation of the above strategic objectives, the new Law on the Organization and Functioning of Local Government introduces several novelties regarding the definition of local government functions, decentralization of new competencies to the local level, the roles and competencies of the elected and executive levels in the new municipal structures, including the administrative units, new requirements on service provision and the necessity to apply service standards, a new concept of determining the level of local finances and obligations for enhancing local democracy and good governance through improved transparency, accountability and participation.

Likewise, the Public Administration Reform states as part of its aims the "development of public administration, which provides high-quality services for citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective, and efficient way…". The recently approved National Strategy for Integration and Development (2015-2020) commits to developing a public administration able "to provide high quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient way, through the use of modern technologies and innovative services … through impartial and professional civil employees as part of efficient structures". Also, the NSDI commits to substantially advance the administrative and fiscal decentralization agendas for empowering local governments to foster sustainable local development with a high institutional integrity that enjoy public trust, [and] guarantee quality services.

This is the context within which the present STAR2 project is developed as a collaborative effort of international partners, under national leadership, to support the implementation of the reforms at the local level and thus assist in the further consolidation of the local governance system.

The predecessor of STAR2, was the STAR project (Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform), consisting in a pooled donor funding (Italy/Italian Cooperation, Sweden/Sida, Switzerland/SDC, UNDP, and US/USAID), co-funded by the Government of Albania, to support the development and implementation of the administrative and territorial reform. The project was implemented by UNDP in accordance with UNDP's project management framework, under the leadership of the Minister of State

for Local Issues (MSLI), during the period November 2013 – July 2016. Through STAR, UNDP offered project management and implementation and helped manage donor contributions for the reform. From the beginning, the project was devised as an instrument for providing, through the MSLI, technical, operational and logistical support to the reform process along the implementation.

Similar to its predecessor, the present STAR2 project constitutes the due process and fund management support to the MSLI provided by the international community in Albania (European Union, Italy/Italian Cooperation, Sweden/Sida, Switzerland/SDC, UNDP, and US/USAID), with additional co-financing from the government of Albania. The MSLI is the leading national institution with a direct oversight on policies for local governance reforms.

STAR2 project will provide assistance at two levels:

– at the local level for systematic and inclusive capacity building for all local government administrations, and for organization of public service delivery systems for a more integrated, innovative, transparent, and accountable ways to the benefit of men, women and marginalized, and
– operational and organizational support to the Minister of State institution to enable leadership and coordination of this assistance.

The present STAR2 project is developed in continuity of the results of its predecessor STAR as well as in complementarity with the assistance of various partners for strengthening the institutional and administrative capacities at local level. In full account of these considerations, STAR2 project will have a national coverage and benefit all 61 LGUs, with its assistance designed to unfold along three main components:

1. Strengthening institutional and administrative capacities of LGUs
   (Including support for the implementation at the local level of the legislation related to the Civil Service, Labor Code, and adoption of the Code of Administrative Procedures, local finances, LGU strategic management, integrity, and transparency)
2. Improving service delivery at LGU level
   (Including reorganization of service provision at the local level, establishment of service delivery monitoring parameters and targets, provision of services through one-stop-shops, digitalization of administrative records, civic engagement in the design and implementation of services, etc.)
3. Increasing good governance through citizen oriented and meaningful participatory decision-making.
   (Including support for the implementation of the legislation on public consultations, promotion of participative decision-making practices, development of transparency and accountability systems such as definition and regular publication of municipal information in the municipal websites, support for the development and adoption of public review or scrutiny mechanisms, support for the establishment and functioning of community structure, etc.)

As part of assessment and monitoring instruments designed within the STAR2 project, a local governance mapping is a particular exercise to be undertaken at the beginning and at the end of the project implementation. The initial mapping should ideally precede and inform subsequent project activities, wile the final mapping will serve to provide a measurement of change in the local governance environment as well as idetify any attributable STAR2 project effects on local governance.

II. Rationale for the local governance mapping

(Local) Governance is a combination of capacity, accountability and responsiveness. One of UNDP's definitions of governance describes it as "the processes by which public policy decisions are made and implemented … the result of interactions, relationships and networks between the different sectors (government, public sector, private sector and civil society) and involves decisions, negotiation, and different power relations between stakeholders to determine who gets what, when and how … Governance is therefore much more than government or 'good government' and shapes the way a

service or set of services are planned, managed and regulated within a set of political social and economic systems".[1]

That is to say that local government response cannot be sufficiently comprehensive and responsive if it resorts only to symptomatic and top-down solutions and measures like increased organizational capacities, internal control, etc., without addressing additional core matters of inter-relationship between state and the citizens and taking into account local knowledge, expectations and perspectives. But on the other hand, if local government is not accountable to its citizens or not responsive to their needs, people will lose trust in the processes that regulate interaction and in their local government.

Assessments of local governance are undertaken for multiple purposes and reasons:

- Governance becomes measurable and thus discussible at local and national level
- Potential gaps and constraints in local policy making and implementation are identified
- Capacity building needs amongst all stakeholders can be detected and if addressed properly can strengthen local governance
- The ability to prioritize, plan and budget and monitor for related capacity building activities will be strengthened
- It will be possible to provide evidence based policy advice to local and central government.
- It will enable improvements in engaging civil society and private sector in local governance
- It will help formulate change plans and solicit resources or peer assistance for improving specific aspects of local governance
- It could provide an objective account of achievements of local elected leaders (especially at times of re-elections), and thus building accountability.

UNDP's research on the possible areas of focus for a local governance assessment identifies four broad ones: decentralization processes, local governance, local democracy and local government performance.

1. Decentralization processes: different kinds of decentralisation processes and the varying degrees of devolution, de-concentration and delegation that are related to those processes (indicators for measuring fiscal and administrative decentralization, political decentralization and those focused on the enabling environment for decentralisation (institutions, actors, laws and policies)).

2. Local governance: aiming to capture the principal dimensions and determinants of governance at the local level, such as the local political system (elections, human rights, rule of law, civil society, freedom of information), institutional issues (corruption, public administration, financial management, public procurement, etc.); social and cross-cutting issues (the policy process, the budget process, revenue mobilization, service delivery, gender, environmental sustainability etc.) and the business/trade environment.

3. Local democracy: regarding the institutions of local government, such as mayors, councils, committees, and administrative services; and the organizations and activities of civil society,

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[1] UNDP, A Users' Guide to Measuring Local Governance, UNDP 2009
http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/democratic-governance/local_governance/a-users-guide-to-measuring-local-governance-.html

therefore the representative and participatory democracy; with attention on the formal mechanisms that are in place for enabling transparent, representative and accountable government, and the experiences and perceptions of citizens on these issues.

4. Local government performance: usually referring to outputs or results achieved by local governments in service delivery, income and expenditure; how well a municipality performs when delivering goods and services to the public.

III. Scope of Services

Within the wider framework of the STAR2 project, which main objective is "to ensure functionality of the newly established local governments, so that local administrative and service delivery outcomes are effective, qualitative, participatory, and inclusive, and correspond to evolving decentralized competencies and responsibilities", the scope of the services to be provided by the Consultant is to implement a Local Governance Mapping exercise in an indicated cluster of newly established LGUs as per a proposed standardized methodology, which remains sufficiently flexible to reflect local specificities and local experience with civic engagement and social mobilization

The focus of the local governance assessment will be on the combination of two areas: local governance and local democracy (see above), responding to the project purpose and its implementation requirements.

Also, for the sake of expediency of obtaining working results, the 61 municipalities are divided in three quasi equal lots, where the assessment will be carried out simultaneously (refer to Annex 1).

The assessment methodology will be mainly based on two of the several applicable local governance assessment approaches, Local Governance Barometer (LGB) and Citizen Report Cards (CRC), which are described in UNDP's Guide for Measuring Local Governance (respectively pages 60-65 and 101-106; also refer to Annex 2) and share the following common features of convenience to the STAR2 project objectives:

- Not expensive,
- Implementable within a relatively short time
- Providing both a diagnostic for policy making and a civic engagement capacity building
- Based on objective and subjective sources
- Data can be gender and socially disaggregated

IV. Specific activities to be carried out by the Consultant

1. Review and harmonize, in collaboration with the STAR2 Project Management Team and UNDP Project Coordination Unit, the survey instruments, i.e. the questionnaires and the various community score cards that will be used during the surveys and the field work. (Please, note that draft questionnaires/survey instruments will be part of the proposal and a basis for the evaluation of the potential candidates)

2. Identify and train the full team that will carry out the assessment and develop a detailed work programme. The detailed work plan should include the 'communication of results' phase. (Please, note that an advanced work programme will be part of the proposal and a basis for the evaluation of the potential candidates)

3. Promote and facilitate coordination of different local stakeholders to be involved in the process. The Consultant should seek the broadest possible local support of the assessment. During this phase, every effort should be made to widely publicize the forthcoming assessment in order to avoid any future misunderstanding with regard to its purpose.

4. Finalize the assessment instruments and focus areas (including selection of indicators and the tools to be used to collect the governance information. This exercise should be carried out in a

highly participatory manner, involve a broad range of stakeholders in the assessment as well as create the 'team spirit' needed to break down any resistance from different stakeholders so as to help carry forward the initiative.

5. Fieldwork - data collection. It is essential the data collection teams are fully briefed about and committed to the underlying normative assumptions of the local governance assessment. They should also be preferentially selected on the basis of their knowledge of the local area and ability to communicate with different communities.

6. Analytical phase: analysing the data. Data analysis is the process of summarizing data and interpreting the findings leading to conclusions and recommendations. The analytical phase also includes discussions of the findings/conclusions.

7. Dissemination of results: Right from the start of the initiative, there is need to develop a clear strategy for communicating the results, rather than leaving the design of such a strategy until after the results are available. This strategy should be innovative, identifying and prioritising the 'multiple points of entry' by which the results can impact on opinion shapers and policy-makers – the plurality of local political organisations, social groups and civil society organizations etc.

8. A consolidated feedback to STAR2 project for action. The Consultant will contribute to the consolidation of the findings across all clusters and municipalities, identifying capacity gaps for being addressed by STAR2 as well as by other stakeholders, including local governments themselves.

In terms of indicative figures, it has to be taken into consideration that each of the three municipal clusters contains in average 20 municipalities and/or about 124 administrative units. On this basis, the assumption and requirement is that the Consultant commits to conduct an average of at least 200 interviews per municipality, one interview with the administrator of each administrative unit and 4-5 interviews with frontline service providers in each administrative unit. In addition, the Consultant is required to organize at least 30 community dialogue / focus group sessions for the municipal cluster, which represents a quarter of the administrative units. These requirements total at least 4750 interviews and 30 community dialogues/meetings for the municipal cluster. To this adds the requirement to organize a communication of results workshop for each municipality or group of municipalities at the conclusion of the exercise.

V. Expected deliverables

1. A single standard report for each municipality within the considered cluster, which combines the results of CRCs, frontline service provider surveys, community dialogues and focus group discussions, including illustrations (maps, photographs, etc.) describing quantitatively and qualitatively the status of local governance, its gaps, potentials and issues requiring addressing in the short and medium term. Any local level decision in support to this exercise as well as any deriving action plan adopted or reviewed by the local government authorities shall be part of this report.

2. A consolidated report on the cluster of municipalities, which identifies common patterns of local governance levels and areas for intervention, supported by evidence and an analytical review of the findings of the exercise.

3. A report describing the approach, process, stakeholders, local level meetings and forums, difficulties, level of accuracy of data and information obtained, lessons learned, and other elements to be taken into consideration with regard to the municipal survey content and findings. This report will also include the final versions of the questionnaires, score cards and other instruments used during the exercise as well as a clean dataset of responses received and used for the analytical assessment.

Deliverable 1 should be submitted to UNDP in Albanian with a summary of 2-4 pages in English. Deliverables 2 and 3 should be submitted in both Albanian and English languages. Submission should be provided in an editable electronic format in Microsoft Word, while datasets will be provided in Microsoft Excel. For any deviation from these requirements the Consultant should consult with UNDP sufficiently in advance of the delivery timeline.

VI. Institutional arrangements

The Consultant will work under the close supervision and coordination of the Project Management Team (PMT) and UNDP's Project Coordination Unit (PCU). The Consultant will receive instructions and comply with requirements issued by both the PMT and the PCU, with the PMT being the first level of acceptance of the deliverables and the PCU the final reviewer and acceptance entity. For process and content related matters the Consultant will collaborate with both the PMT and the PCU, for contract matters the Consultant will revert to the PCU/UNDP.

In terms of support, the PMT is expected to facilitate when and where possible the Consultant's field work and its relations with various local government authorities. The PCU will provide support whenever possible in matters related to approach and content, with a possibility of engaging also a short international expertise to help smoothing the process, interpreting, integrating and consolidating results and conclusions as well as in defining the further steps in making a better use of the findings.

VII. Duration of the assignment

The assignment is to be carried out within a period of maximum three calendar months, at the end of which the Consultant having submitted the required written deliverables. A final exercise of consolidation of the three clusters' results will follow, requiring the Consultant's engagement and the overall consolidated findings will be presented by STAR2 project in a final Local Governance Forum, organized by STAR2 and MSLI.

The indicative time-frame of the sequence is shown below:

Activity	Time[2]
Review and harmonize, in collaboration with the STAR2 PMT and UNDP PCU, the survey instruments	Days 1 - 10
Identify and train the full team that will carry out the assessment and develop a detailed work programme	Days 1 - 15
Promote and facilitate coordination of different local stakeholders to be involved in the process	Days 10 - 30
Finalize the assessment instruments and focus areas (including selection of indicators and the tools to be used to collect the governance information)	Days 20 - 30
Fieldwork - data collection/surveys	Days 30 – 70
Data analysis, summarizing and interpreting the findings leading to conclusions and recommendations (including finalization of most reports (90%))	Days 50 – 80

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[2] NOTE: These are working days numbered from the beginning of the assignment, not sequential time intervals, therefore some of the activities are assumed to overlap

Dissemination of results (including finalization of all reports)	Days 80 - 100
Contribution to STAR2 project for compiling consolidated results of the assessments across LGUs	Days 90 – 100

VIII.   Qualifications of the successful Consultant

The Consultant should have proven experience in conducting similar type of research in different regions of Albania. The Consultant should also have sufficient management and organizational capacity to handle the complexity of this exercise and be able to mobilize the right calibre of personnel to implement the assessment successfully and within the given time frame. The Consultant is expected to engage basically two distinct teams, one for the development of the detailed exercise, in terms of approach, instruments, interpretation of the results and the analysis of the data collected, and one for the field work/data collection/surveys.

With a major attention on the first team, the exercise calls for a Consultant's team which combines several different skills and disciplines. The "Resource plan" section of the offer should fully explain the resources that the Consultant is planning to use in terms of both personnel (professional profile and duration of the assignment) and other resources (kind of resources and indicative quantity) necessary for the performance of the requirements. The Consultant is required to include in its proposal the CVs of the proposed key experts deemed necessary for the proper implementation of the required activities. The Consultant shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. The Consultant shall take all reasonable measures necessary to ensure that the personnel deployed under this TOR shall respect local customs and conform to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct.

The Consultancy shall ensure appropriate backstopping support. Backstopping costs are considered to be included in the fee rates.

The Consultant should also demonstrate:

- A proven multiyear track record in provision of technical assistance in the area of local governance
- Broad understanding of the assessment methodologies and tools for local governance
- Experience with scorecards assessments as well as focus group discussion facilitation
- Proven track record in partnership building, social mobilization, training and advocacy
- Proven track record in quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis
- Previous experience in managing large scale research programs aiming at practice based policy advice and programming inputs
- Experience in capacity development and facilitating positive transformational change
- Prior experience in drafting/ editing publications in the form of reports or strategies for an international audience in English
- Experience in working with UNDP or another international agency (preferable)

IX. Price and schedule of payments

Please note that each bidder MUST bid for only one cluster/lot. Based on the technical and financial evaluation criteria specified below in this RfP, UNDP will select a single Consultant to carry out the work for each lot.

UNDP shall effect payments to the Consultant after acceptance by UNDP of the deliverables (with a prior clerance from the PMT endorsed by STAR2 National Project Director), submission of the corresponding invoices submitted by the Consultant, and in acordance with the folowing schedule of payments corresponding to the achievement of the indicated milestones and deliverables

Schedule of Payments

Activities/ Deliverables	Percentage of total contract amount

Preparatory activities
   ▪ Finalization and approval of a detailed field plan
   ▪ Preparation of all assessment instruments and materials
   ▪ Completion of training of field teams
	20%

Field work and field related deliverables
   ▪ Completion of field work – documented data collection/ surveys/ focus group discussions
   ▪ Submission of municipal and cluster specific reports
   ▪ Submission of clean datasets of field work inputs
	60%

Dissemination of results and consolidation of findings
   ▪ Documented dissemination of results
   ▪ Contribution to compiling consolidated results of the assessments for STAR2 project
	20%

X. Recommended presentation of the Proposal

The applying Consultant is invited to submit a technical and financial proposal including the following key elements:

1. Profile of service provider (institution/organization)
2. Relevant experience (description of similar projects undertaken - either completed or ongoing)
3. Technical proposal including:
   a. Proposed implementation approach, including a discussion on potential challenges or risks foreseen in the implementation of the project, and how these would be addressed/ mitigated
   b. Proposed staffing plan, including proposed team composition (generic profiles rather than specific people) at central and local level
   c. Proposed work plan indicating activities, milestones or outputs (highlighting particularly how the staffing plan proposed above will lead to completion of activities within the three-month period)
   d. Summary CVs of key staff/consultants to be engaged in the project

4. Financial proposal including:
a. Broad (summarized) costs for key activities and outputs of the exercise - surveys, community consultations, data entry and analysis, report preparation, etc.
b. Detailed breakdown of costs including professional fee, travel costs, consultation/meeting costs, reporting costs, etc.

XI. Recommended presentation of the Proposal

The best offer will be selected on the basis of the combined scoring method, wherein a combination of technical and financial scores assigned to each bidder is used to determine the final score. The detailed technical proposal evaluation form is included within the Data Sheet in the RFP document. The following method will be adopted for calculating the scores:

Rating the Technical Proposal (TP):
TP Rating = (Total Score Obtained by the Offer / Max. Obtainable Score for TP) x 100

Rating the Financial Proposal (FP):
FP Rating = (Lowest Priced Offer / Price of the Offer Being Reviewed) x 100

Total Combined Score:
(TP Rating) x (Weight of TP, i.e. 70%) + (FP Rating) x (Weight of FP, i.e., 30%)
= Total Combined and Final Rating of the Proposal

ANNEX 1 – Cluster of municipalities within the scope of this RfP

Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
1. Shkoder	1. Fier	1. Tirane
2. Vau I Dejes	2. Lushnje	2. Elbasan
3. Puke	3. Divjake	3. Gramsh
4. Malesi e Madhe	4. Patos	4. Belsh
5. Fushe Arrez	5. Rrogozhine	5. Cerrik
6. Kukes	6. Roskovec	6. Peqin
7. Tropoje	7. Mallakaster	7. Prrenjas
8. Has	8. Berat	8. Librazhd
9. Lezhe	9. Skrapar	9. Maliq
10. Mirdite	10. Polican	10. Pogradec
11. Kurbin	11. Ura Vajgurore	11. Korce
12. Kruje	12. Kucove	12. Permet
13. Diber	13. Tepelene	13. Gjirokaster
14. Bulqize	14. Memaliaj	14. Libohove
15. Mat	15. Finiq	15. Dropull
16. Klos	16. Vlore	16. Devoll
17. Vore	17. Selenice	17. Kolonje
18. Durres	18. Himare	18. Kelcyre
19. Shijak	19. Delvine	19. Pustec
20. Kamez	20. Sarande	
21. Kavaje	21. Konispol	

ANNEX 2 – The mapping methodology

The mapping approach will be the application of a combination of two tested methodologies: the Local Governance Barometer (LGB) and a combination of Citizen Report Cards (CRC) and Community Score Cards (CSC).

The LGB is suitable in countries characterized by a limited availability of reliable administrative and statistical data available about the service delivery process and quality of governance. The LGB should include a set of localized governance indicators that are used by various stakeholder groups to "score" performance on governance measures at the local level. The exercise emphasizes awareness raising and constructive dialogue around governance and presents an overview of governance strength and weaknesses.

The CRC and CSC will seek to provide citizen feedback on the quality of service providers, and strengthening the capacity of service users to engage in a constructive dialogue with service providers and administrators about the quality of service delivery.

For a quick reference on these tools, one can consult the following, not exhaustive links:

http://pacindia.org/2016/06/20/citizen-report-card-toolkit/

http://www.citizenreportcard.com/

http://www.gaportal.org/resources/detail/measuring-and-strengthening-local-governance-capacity-the-local-governance-barometer

In line with the emphasis on driving participation in local governance, the mapping exercise will focus more on the "interactive" dimensions of governance, i.e., on those indicators that describe and analyze the interaction between stakeholders, related to accountability, transparency and participation, and less on indicators that describe and analyze the internal functioning of government (such as financial management, administrative checks and balances, for instance).

Therefore, the methodology should address both the supply and demand side of governance and service delivery; supply side: government's ability and willingness to adhere to principles of democratic governance, and demand side: citizens' and civil society's ability to hold government to account and to play a constructive role in the governance process

Within each of the tools to be developed for mapping governance, questions should be constructed in a way to capture local governance dynamics, rather than a subjective interpretation of the issue. For example, community respondents should not be asked to give direct opinions on governance issues (i.e. "Do you think your township administration is transparent?"), but respond to several questions about whether and in what way they are informed by the municipal administration about new projects, new regulations, decisions, etc.

Within the proposed initiative, the focus will be given to the following four dimensions: (i) Efficiency, responsiveness and quality of service delivery; (ii) Openness and transparency in decision-making and adherence to the principles of rule of law; (iii) Accountability of various stakeholders; and (iv) Active participation in planning and decision-making processes.

In all cases, equity in access to resources, opportunities and decision-making processes for all citizens, regardless of their age, sex, social category, or other affiliation is an important consideration. Gender as well as vulnerable social groups perspectives are critical for the quality of the exercise. Sex and socially disaggregated data and conclusions as well as consultations with relevant special gender and vulnerable category groups and organizations are a MUST for the exercise to guarantee its inclusiveness and meaningfulness.

The exercise will present a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and surveys, mixed with focus group discussions and individual interviews. Citizens' feedback, community scorecards and self-assessment of governance performance will be the composing parts of the exercise.

The methodology will involve both government and non-government actors at all three levels - the village/town (households), the Administrative Unit and municipal level - for data collection and analysis. At each level, the researchers will interview individuals/stakeholder groups as well as bring them together in dialogue sessions to discuss the situation and challenges. Working in this way will ensure that everyone involved feels free to express their ideas and concerns, but at the same time it stresses the importance and creates the awareness that problems can only be resolved when everyone is willing and able to work together.

A representative sample of citizens, averaging 200 per municipality divided within the latter Administrative Units, will be interviewed for the Citizens' Report Card. The sample should be representative of both urban and rural parts of the Municipality. Also, the exercise will have to extrapolate trends at municipal level, therefore, the sampling should take into account and search for differences that may exist not only between urban and rural areas, but also between remote and accessible ones, relatively rich and poor areas as well as exercise a balance to reflect the population size, demographics and density.

The questionnaires should focus on the perception/ satisfaction of citizens on the basic services provided by the local government (such as water, health and education) and on core elements of good local governance like participation, equity, accountability, etc. In addition to the citizens/service users, Frontline Service Providers (FSP) and the administrative unit staff and Administrators will be also interviewed, focusing on the service delivery process and their interaction with service users. These interviews are not intended to replace more technical sector assessments, which lie beyond the capacity or scope of the mapping exercise. Instead, they provide a means of addressing issues of public service delivery and local governance in a way that is tangible for respondents, and address the quality of service delivery through good governance lenses.

Semi- structured interviews will be organized with key local government staff and CSO representatives and available secondary information/statistics on local government, policy documents and municipality profiles will be analyzed. A workshop will be organized at each municipality level to present the findings at the end of the exercise.

The dialogue platforms at municipality level that are introduced as part of the mapping exercise could later on be used to monitor progress of the respective capacity development plans and could in the long run even be institutionalized as a mechanism for dialogue between government and non-government actors for resolving development bottlenecks at the municipality level collectively.

Some considerations during the application of local governance mapping

- Map key stakeholders and identify their needs, preferences and interests in local governance assessment.
- Ensure focus, while facilitating incorporation of a holistic concept of governance (i.e. not only formal structures and services, but also on processes and relationships).
- Ensure that there is a focus on the needs of the poor, women, children and other disadvantaged groups. Use all opportunities (and create new ones) for integrating pro-poor and gender sensitive measures – without which the assessment will not serve as a basis for equitable local development
- Make your methodology as transparent as possible.
- Identify data requirements in advance and address data problems before they take place by investing in capacity development or by adjusting indicators.

- There will never be enough time, money and people so be cost-efficient and adjust ambitions to the capacities available.
- Weight pros and cons of different approaches to assessment regarding implementation arrangements (external, peer review, self-assessment) and decide which one is best suited.
- Never underestimate the need for customization and localization. When dealing with local governance, one need to be aware that there is not one reality. We are dealing with different stakeholders with different perspectives and therefore different expectations. These expectations are often not explicit and sometimes not realistic. This is why an assessment process is usually a capacity building process at the same time and a start of a dialogue process. This is why it is extremely important to make the assessment as inclusive as possible.
- Secure common understanding and sound consensus on the purpose of the assessment. Make the assessment purpose – oriented.
- Identify 'champions' who create enthusiasm and commitment for the assessment. The champion is the engine behind the whole exercise and s/he has to be able to work with all different actors and keep them committed to the original purpose of the assessment.
- Pay sufficient attention to targeting political leaders to ensure the political will and support for the success of an assessment.
- Be as inclusive as possible by including all relevant organizations and individuals – even those that might not be the usual partners in governance assessments (e.g. youth organizations, the media).
- Ensure that incentives to stakeholders are positive, transparent and strong enough to mobilize engagement.
- It should be clear that governance assessment is not the same as performance measurement although it is related. Making it part of a local government performance management system could undermine the purpose of the whole exercise to detect deviances and gaps in governance

In translating assessment results into recommendations for improvements in local governance, one has to take into account the following:

- Identify the most urgent priorities for making improvements in local governance and craft recommendations that can help address these most urgent issues from an immediate, medium-term and long-term perspective.
- Isolate those aspects of local governance which municipal authorities and administrators can address on their own and those that require the involvement of other stakeholders (such as national level).
- Build on the strengths that are identified in the assessment and do not focus only on the shortcomings that the evaluation has brought to the surface or highlighted.
- Separate out problems that require major institutional change, those that involve personalities or individuals, and those than can be addressed through policy change.
- Develop an approach to making recommendations that links systemic problems with an integrated effort to improve them over time. That is, rather than developing a simple list of things that could be done to improve local level governance, participants are asked to think through a strategy that first addresses why the problems have occurred and then comes up with a series of steps involving political leaders, civic actors and citizens.
- Sketch out a way in which these steps can unfold over a defined period of time and identify methods for monitoring progress on improving democracy.

Annex 2

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Terms of Reference

Local Governance Mapping of municipalities in Albania

International Expert

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1. Local governance and project context

The local government system in Albania is going through series of structural and institutional reforms. These changes began at end of 2013 with the launch of the administrative and territorial reform and led to the reduction/consolidation of the local governments from 373 to 61. Several policy developments of key relevance to strengthening the local government institution and local governance in general have followed suit in the last couple of years. Among those, of direct relevance are the Decentralization and Local Governance Strategy, the Law on Local Government as well as the Public Administration Reform Strategy.

The new Crosscutting Strategy on Decentralization and Local Governance 2015-2020 fits the new context of local government organization and has the ambition to create an efficient system of local self-government where the latter is empowered and able to provide quality services and manage the territorial development sustainably. The Strategy reiterates the aim for the consolidation of local human resources and their skills: "empowering the local administration [through] the establishment of a non-bureaucratized, professional and transparent public administration … able to respond to the expectation of the business and the community for public services [and the development of] a special "performance monitoring system" for the LGUs … to guarantee the accountability of the public administration and ensure efficient delivery of services at the local level".

In a further articulation of the above strategic objectives, the new Law on the Organization and Functioning of Local Government introduces several novelties regarding the definition of local government functions, decentralization of new competencies to the local level, the roles and competencies of the elected and executive levels in the new municipal structures, including the administrative units, new requirements on service provision and the necessity to apply service standards, a new concept of determining the level of local finances and obligations for enhancing local democracy and good governance through improved transparency, accountability and participation.

Likewise, the Public Administration Reform states as part of its aims the "development of public administration, which provides high-quality services for citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective, and efficient way…". The recently approved National Strategy for Integration and Development (2015-2020) commits to developing a public administration able "to provide high quality services to citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective and efficient way, through the use of modern technologies and innovative services … through impartial and professional civil employees as part of efficient structures". Also, the NSDI commits to substantially advance the administrative and fiscal decentralization agendas for empowering local governments to foster sustainable local development with a high institutional integrity that enjoy public trust, [and] guarantee quality services.

These reforms are seen as positive steps, which have led to increasing engagement with the international community to support their implementation. Against this changing background, UNDP Albania has formulated its new Country Development Programme 2017-2021, which is structured along four pillars and submitted for approval in fall 2016. The CPD envisages contributions towards (1) strengthening democratic governance and rule of law, including support for strengthening institutions of local governance, (2) promote social inclusion and the rights of vulnerable communities, (3) provide policy advce and knowledge transfer to enhance peoples' opportunities and skills, and (4)protect environment and strengthen resilience against climate change and disasters.

UNDP has a niche in governance derived from co-designing with the Government the roadmap for the administrative and territorial reform and managing pooled resources in support of governance reforms. UNDP commits to assist in the coming programming period in the implementation of local governance reform priorities identified and agreed with the Government and the development partners. These include, inter-alia, support for developing performance monitoring systems for service delivery and one-stop shops at municipal levels; gender mainstreaming of municipal service delivery plans; and further improvements of administrative and public finance management capacities of local authorities.

The above assistance is structured within a newly starting programme, STAR2 – Consolidation of the Territorial and Administrative Reform (2016-2019), developed as a collaborative effort of international partners, under national leadership, to support the consolidation of the new municipalities created after the territorial reform.

The predecessor of STAR2, was the STAR project (Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform), consisting in a pooled donor funding, co-funded by the Government of Albania, to support the development and implementation of the administrative and territorial reform itself. The project was implemented by UNDP during the period 2013 – 2016. Through STAR, UNDP offered project management and implementation and helped manage donor contributions for the reform.

Similar to its predecessor, the present STAR2 project constitutes the due process and fund management support to the Government provided by the international community in Albania, whereas the Government is the leading institution with a direct oversight on policies for local governance reforms.

STAR2 project will provide assistance at two levels:

- at the local level for systematic and inclusive capacity building for all local government administrations, and for organization of public service delivery systems for a more integrated, innovative, transparent, and accountable ways to the benefit of men, women and marginalized, and
- operational and organizational support to the Minister of State institution to enable leadership and coordination of this assistance.

In full account of these considerations, STAR2 project will have a national coverage and benefit all 61 LGUs, with its assistance designed to unfold along three main components:

4. Strengthening institutional and administrative capacities of LGUs
   (Including support for the implementation at the local level of the legislation related to the Civil Service, Labor Code, and adoption of the Code of Administrative Procedures, local finances, LGU strategic management, integrity, and transparency)
5. Improving service delivery at LGU level
   (Including reorganization of service provision at the local level, establishment of service delivery monitoring parameters and targets, provision of services through one-stop-shops, digitalization of administrative records, civic engagement in the design and implementation of services, etc.)
6. Increasing good governance through citizen oriented and meaningful participatory decision-making.
   (Including support for the implementation of the legislation on public consultations, promotion of participative decision-making practices, development of transparency and accountability systems such as definition and regular publication of municipal information in the municipal websites, support for the development and adoption of public review or scrutiny mechanisms, support for the establishment and functioning of community structure, etc.)

As part of assessment and monitoring instruments designed within the STAR2 project, a local governance mapping is a particular exercise to be undertaken at the beginning and at the end of the project implementation. The initial mapping should ideally precede and inform subsequent project activities, wile the final mapping will serve to provide a measurement of change in the local governance environment as well as idetify any attributable STAR2 project effects on local governance.

The purpose of the mapping exercise is to better understand the state of governance in Albania, from both the supply and demand side perspective, that is from the institutional and people's perspectives.

The mapping exercise will aim to identify opportunities and challenges that exist in the area of sub-national governance, in order to contribute to policy discussions on local governance in an informed manner. It is expected that the mapping exercise will build on the momentum of reforms, and contribute to a further consolidation of the transition process.

The mapping exercise will cover all 61 Albanian municipalities and will be implemented simultaneously in three lots averaging 20 municipalities each, so as to shorten the time required for obtaining results. The tender for the three lots has already been issued nationally and the field work is expected to start by mid-September. The findings from the three assessments will be shared through regular workshops, but most importantly in a consolidated fashion to central and local government and STAR2 programme stakeholders.

Given the novelty of many aspects of the exercise in terms of approach and content and the need to consolidate findings into meaningful and realistic recommendations and actions, the Country Office is seeking to engage a qualified and knowledgable expert to help guide the process and its consolidation.

2. Duties and Responsibilities of the Consultant

The key result expected from the Consultant is the successful implementation and conclusion of the mapping exercise. The Consultant will work as part of the larger team of STAR2 as well as closely with UNDP's responsible Programme Cluster for STAR2.

The Consultant will be responsible for providing qualified technical assistance and quality assurance to the mapping exercise carried out by the three selected national organizations. While activities may have initiated in the three municipal clusters by the time the Consultant arrives, the latter will shortly assess the context and approach and provide guidance for fine-tuning, addressing additional aspects, harmonizing the requirements and consolidating the outputs.

Within this overall frame, the successful candidate will – among others – be responsible for the following tasks / activities:

9. Review and advise fine tuning, in collaboration with the STAR2 Project Management Team and UNDP Project Coordination Unit, of the survey instruments, i.e. the questionnaires and the various community scorecards that will be used during the surveys and the field work.

10. Assess the proposed work plans and field deployments to ensure they include well the awareness, equitable coverage, proper sampling, optimal duration of assessment techniques as well as the communication of results.

11. Advise on the subtleties to look for within each selected governance area, which play a role in determining the type of indicators and tools to be used to collect the information, as well as methods to distil conclusions from data.

12. Guide implementers/national consultants engaged to the field level to roll out the mapping in the different municipalities following the agreed methodology and approved implementation plans;

13. Review the data collected, preliminary findings and analysis with regards to accuracy, soundness and completeness;

14. Guide and oversee the drafting of various reports and presentations to be produced by the mapping exercise, ensuring the level of quality in presentation, content and relevance;

15. Identify and synthesize best practices and lessons learned related to the Local Governance mapping.

16. Based on the specific cluster reports, in collaboration with the three implementing organizations, guide the development of a consolidated feedback that refers to findings across all clusters and municipalities, identify capacity gaps for being addressed by STAR2 as well as by other stakeholders, including local governments themselves.

17. Propose innovative strategies for dissemination and sharing, as well as for uptake of the findings from LG mapping, both within UNDP and the government

18. Provide technical and strategic advice to UNDP and its Governance and Rule of Law Cluster as required.

3. Expected deliverables

4. The Consultant, based on the mapping exercise experience, should deliver, in the form of a written document, a common and agreed upon assessment methodological outline and its instruments, that can be adopted for similar future assessments.

5. The Consultant should provide a quality check (written feedback) to the three consolidated reports on each cluster of municipalities.

6. The Consultant should produce, in collaboration with the implementing organizations, a consolidated report, summarizing the results of the mapping exercise and providing a detailed analysis of the findings, leading to the identification of local governance areas that can be addressed by STAR2 or other identifiable stakeholders/institutions.

4. Impact of Results

The results will have an impact on the overall success of the STAR2 project. In particular the results have an impact on the operation and programming support to local governance reform, providing evidence-based baselines and tools for performance management for the public and the civil society, and related activities such as strengthening of democratic processes and institutions (particularly in the area of institutionalized participation of citizens, accountability and representation), effective partnership building with sub national and national governments and contribution to policy formation processes.

5. Competencies

Corporate Competencies:
- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling UN values and ethical standards;
- Displays cultural and gender sensitivity and adaptability;
- Shows strong corporate commitment.

Functional Competencies

- Ability to strategically lead teams of experts, facilitate carrying out of analytical work and presentation of consolidated conclusions/recommendations
- Ability to generate creative, practical approaches to overcome challenging situations
- Strong technical and practical leadership and knowledge in issues related to local governance and its multi-level assessment for effectiveness and responsiveness
- Ability to work well in multi-disciplinary teams

- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to write in a clear and concise manner
- Excellent interpersonal skills and objectivity

Required Educational background and experience

Education:
- Master's degree or higher in social sciences, development studies, management or other relevant fields.

Experience:
- A minimum of 7 years progressively responsible and relevant professional working experience at senior level in the area of technical support to local governance
- Proven track record in provision of technical assistance in the area of local governance, as well as hands-on experience in local governance assessments
- Proven multiyear track record in management of local government support programs, preferably within UNDP or another international agency
- Previous experience in managing large scale research programs aiming at practice based policy advice and programming inputs would be an asset
- Prior experience of development work in the region or countries in transition would be an asset

Language Requirements:
- Excellent command of written and spoken English;

6. Institutional arrangements

The Consultant will work under the close supervision and coordination of UNDP's Cluster for Governance and Rule of Law and UNDP's STAR2 Project Coordination Unit, and in close collaboration with STAR2 Project Management Team (PMT). For process and content related matters the Consultant will collaborate with both the PMT and the PCU, for contract matters the Consultant will revert to the PCU/UNDP.

In terms of support, the PMT is expected to facilitate when and where possible the Consultant's field work and its relations with various local government authorities. The PCU will provide support whenever possible in matters related to approach and content.

7. Duration of the assignment

The assignment will consist of 25 working days divided indicatively in two country missions, within the period October 2016 – January 2017, at the end of which the Consultant should have submitted the required deliverables. Depending on the mapping progress in the field, the Consultant may judge necessary to interact with the field work in December 2016, which may require a country visit or home based work, which will shorten the available field work days for January or call for a revised work plan for the assignment period, which should be still limited preferably to a total of 25 working days.

The indicative time-frame is shown below:

Activity	Time
First mission:	October 2016

1. Help review and harmonize the assessment instruments, i.e. the questionnaires and the various community scorecards that will be used during the assessment. 2. Provide advice for fine-tuning the assessment work plan 3. Advice on areas and sub-areas to assess, the type of indicators and tools to be used 4. Help finalize and deliver, in the form of a detailed document, the assessment methodology and its instruments	
Second mission 1. Review the data collected, preliminary findings and analysis with regards to accuracy, soundness and completeness; 2. Guide and exercise quality check to the three consolidated reports on each cluster of municipalities. 3. Guide the development of a consolidated feedback that refers to findings across all clusters and municipalities, 4. Produce, in collaboration with the implementing organizations, a consolidated report, summarizing the results of the mapping exercise, including a synthesis of best practices and lessons learned and strategies for dissemination and sharing as well as for uptake of the findings of LG mapping	January 2017

8. Price and schedule of payments

UNDP shall effect payments to the Consultant after acceptance by UNDP of the deliverables (with a prior clearance from the PMT endorsed by STAR2 National Project Director), submission of the corresponding invoices submitted by the Consultant, and in accordance with the following schedule of payments corresponding to the achievement of the indicated milestones and deliverables

Schedule of Payments

Activities/ Deliverables	Percentage of total contract amount
Written assessment methodological outline and its instruments, that can be adopted for similar future assessments.	20%
Consultant's written feedback to the three consolidated municipal cluster reports reflected in the reports final versions.	40%
A consolidated report, summarizing the results of the overall mapping exercise and providing a detailed analysis of the findings, developed with support from the three national implementers	40%

9. Evaluation Procedure

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that would take into account both the technical qualification of Individual Consultants as well as their financial proposals. The contract will be awarded to the candidate whose offer:

- Is deemed technically responsive / compliant / acceptable (only technically responsive applications / candidates will be considered for the financial evaluation)
- And has obtained the highest combined technical and financial scores.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max points: 70

Criteria A: Relevance of work experience in the area of local governance and especially if exposed to/experienced in local governance assessments in local and/or international environments – max points: 40

Criteria B: Educational background– max points: 10

Criteria C: Adequacy of brief proposed methodology – max points: 20

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max points: 30

10. Application Procedure

Qualified and interested candidates are requested to apply by **September 28, 2016 midnight**.

The application should contain:

- Cover letter explaining why you are the most suitable candidate for the advertised position and a brief methodology on how you will approach and conduct the work (if applicable). Please paste the letter into the "Resume and Motivation" section of the electronic application.
- Completed and signed **UN Personal History Form (P11)** for Service Contracts (SC) and Individual Contracts (IC) – Blank form Download here.
- **Letter to UNDP Confirming Interest and Availability** - please complete the attached form…
- **Financial Proposal** - specifying a total lump sum amount (working days, travel, per diems, and any other possible costs) for the tasks specified in this announcement. *Please note that the financial proposal is all-inclusive and shall take into account various expenses incurred by the consultant/contractor during the contract period (e.g. fee, health insurance, vaccination and any other relevant expenses related to the performance of service, etc.). All envisaged international travel costs should be included in the financial proposal. This includes all travel to join duty station/repatriation travel.*

* Kindly note that Letter to UNDP Confirming Interest and Availability and Financial Proposal are two separate documents and should both be part of your application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

How to Submit the Application:

To submit your application online, please follow the steps below:

- Download and complete the UN Personal History Form (P11) for Service Contracts (SCs) and Individual Contracts (ICs);
- Merge your UN Personal History Form (P11) for Service Contracts (SCs) and Individual Contracts (ICs), Financial Proposal Letter to UNDP Confirming Interest and Availability and cover letter into a single file. The system does not allow for more than one attachment to be uploaded;
- Click on the Job Title (job vacancy announcement);

- Click "Apply Now" button, fill in necessary information on the first page, and then click "Submit Application;"
- Upload your application/single file as indicated above with the merged documents (underlined above);
- You will receive an automatic response to your email confirming receipt of your application by the system.

Due to a large number of applications we receive, we are able to inform only the successful candidates about the outcome or status of the selection process.

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.