Objectives of the study tour

• Participants gain insight and knowledge of Kosovo experience in organizing and engineering of LGUs in their own territory
• Participants receive information about service provision of LGUs to citizens (both in the center and remote areas);
• Participants get to know about the experience of Kosovo LGUs of One-Stop –Shops, as a way of providing efficient services to citizens;
• Members of the group are informed of the mechanisms used by LGUs in Kosovo to ensure representation and participation of citizens in the decision making process.

Briefing about the study visit

STAR project is supporting the Government of Albania to undertake the major administrative and territorial reform process which is restructuring the local governments system in order to establish a new and more efficient local governance and territorial development. Support provided to date through the project was in establishing and making use of additional capacities for managing the reform process, facilitating public consultations and consensus building, and developing the outline of the subsequent reform phases, including the transition phase (the post-map implementation approach), among others. During 2014, the Government has implemented an intensive and comprehensive process of expert analysis of the local government situation, development of various administrative amalgamation merging options in line with pre-defined criteria which concluded with the decision of re-organizing the local government system in Albania into 61 new Local Government Units instead of the current 373. This decision has been supported by Law and will be implemented to the forthcoming local elections scheduled for June 2015.

The study visit took place from 16-17 April, through very close cooperation with UNDP Kosovo, who provided outstanding support in a very short notice to target the institutions for meetings, organizing all the meetings, assigning staff member to accompany the delegation in all the meetings.
Tasks achieved:
As per the agenda the participants in the study tour had the opportunity to meet with the following:

- Meeting with UNDP Kosovo CO discussing about the delegation meeting agenda
- Meeting was held with Visar Rushiti & Bekim Salihu – Representatives of GAP Institute (Gap Institute is Think Tank advocating for good governance, monitoring the work of public institutions and providing concrete recommendations on public policy)
- At the Ministry of Local Governance Administration, meeting with Mr. Besnik Osmani, General Secretary, Ministry of Local Governance Administration, Mr. Agron Maxhuni - Director of Legal Affairs and Municipal Monitoring, Mr. Avni Sahiti - Director for Municipal Performance and Transparency.
- Visit to the MLGA center for monitoring municipal performance.
- Meeting at Pristina Municipality with Ms. Fitore Pacolli, Chief of Cabinet and visit to the One-stop-shop.
- Meeting with Mr. Faik Ispahiu, Executive Director of Internews Kosova and representatives from Kallxo.com (the online platform www.kallxo.com is a joint project of the organizations Inter-news Kosova, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, NGO "LENS" and Anti-Corruption Agency. The project is financially supported by UNDP and the platform offers opportunities for all Kosovo citizens to report on corruption, fraud, conflict of interest as well as on other cases such as abuse of official position, negligence, endanger of human rights of Kosovo citizens or endanger of general interest.)
- Meeting was held with Mr. Nazmi Gagica, Director of Administration of Gjilan Municipality; visit to one-stop-shop and the civil servants to learn about the municipal service provision.
- Meeting with Gjilan Mayor Mr. Lutfi Haziri was held
- Meetings at Novobrdo Municipality with Mr. Svetislav Ivanovic, and Mr. Dobrivoje Mladenovic, Director of Administration
- Meeting civil servants in the municipality - functions and service provision

Lessons learned and partnerships establishment

There are several aspects targeted at the meeting with GAP Institute. The main objective was to learn about the work that the institute is undertaking in increasing transparency of municipal service provision and the methodologies used. The Institute is implementing several programs that were of importance to participants: Municipal ID, Budget watch, GAP monitor. The
program is covering research studies in the area of good governance, transparency, division of powers, performance of the executive branch, legislative and local governance. The publications that the Institute is preparing include reports regarding function of the Kosovo municipalities and local government in general. The project also support parliament committees and Assemblies in amending and supplementing draft laws, monitoring of applicable laws and participation in public hearings. Through the GAP monitor platform, the Institute monitors and reports the work of the Government of Kosovo.

Meeting with the Ministry of Local Governance Administration covered the information about the decentralization process in Kosovo, performance management system that is implemented to support ministry in monitoring and evaluating the work of the municipalities, the monitoring of the assembly sessions throughout Kosovo, discussion about the functions of the municipalities in Kosovo, the budget, and other related matters. It was interesting for delegation to see the office established specifically to monitor the on-line municipal assembly sessions as well as the methodology of reporting against the performance indicators. Detailed materials about the performance management and indicators, as well as the relevant laws, are to be shared with the participants.

Meetings at the municipality of Prishtina, Gjilan and Novoberdo included the detailed briefing of the respective Mayors in functions of the municipality, administration, service delivery, etc. It was very important to see the on-line application to some civil registration documents as well as the networking of all the civil registration information throughout Kosovo. The efficiency of the service provision was documented where a citizen of Pristina (member of the delegation), requested certificate at the one-stop-shop office in Novobrdo and it was provided to her within several minutes, documenting the effective system in place for civil registration services. The one-stop-shops were at the prime interest of the participants and the methodology and system of service provision was elaborated by the municipal officials. Municipal development planning process was also elaborated and relevant materials were shared with the participants.

Pre-election debates and corruption at all levels of government, in particular at the local level, is another topic that was discussed with Internews Kosova and BIRN. Detailed information about the operations and the themes that this NGO is organizing at the central and local level were described. It was very important for the delegation to understand the research methods that the organization is implementing to validate the reported fraud cases through the legal office. It was also very interesting to understand the research work that was undertaken in support to pre-election debates for the Mayors of Kosovo municipalities.

**Next steps**

It was decided during the mission in Kosovo that follow up discussions will take place and provide the delegation with the supporting information in many areas: decentralization process, municipal performance management system, municipal planning methodology,
monitoring the performance of the mayors by civil society, functions of the one-stop-shops or citizen service centers in Kosovo municipalities, citizens participation on municipal decision making process, relevant laws, etc. The Ministry of Local Governance Administration provided to the delegation several documents and information that can be found attached to this document. Star project Staff considered these documents as good practice since the timing and the result of the administrative reform in Kosovo. The bridges of communication and collaboration were well built during this study tour.
Annex 1

Study visit of (Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform) STAR project to Kosovo

Agenda

UNDP Albania Delegation, IRH representative and UNDP Kosovo Office representative

16 April 2015 – Day 1

09:00 – 12:00 Meeting at the Ministry of Local Governance  
Mr. Agron Maxhuni - Director of Legal Affairs and Municipal Monitoring,  
Mr. Avni Sahiti - Director for Municipal Performance and Transparency,  
Ms. Rozafa Ukimeraj – Director for EU Integration and Policy  
(Venue: the Ministry of Local Government Administration)

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch

13:30 – 15:00 Meeting at the Prishtina Municipality  
(Venue: Prishtina Municipality)

15:30 – 16:30 Meeting with Director and staff of GAP Institute  
(Gap Institute is Think Tank advocating for good governance, monitoring the work of public institutions and providing concrete recommendations on public policy)  
(Venue: TBD)

16:30 – 17:30 Meeting with Kallxo.com  
(The online platform www.kallxo.com is a joint project of the organizations Inter-news Kosova, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, NGO "LENS" and Anti-Corruption Agency. The project is financially supported by UNDP. The platform offers opportunities for all Kosovo citizens to report on corruption, fraud, conflict of interest as well as on other cases such as abuse of official position, negligence, endanger of human rights of Kosovo citizens or endanger of general interest.)  
(Venue: TBD)
17 April 2015 – Day 2

8:00 – 9:00  Prishtina – Gjilan Municipality

9:00 – 12:30  Meeting at the Gjilan Municipality
               One-Stop-Shop (meeting with the civil servants at the OSS)
               (Venue: Gjilan Municipality)

12:30 – 13:30  Lunch

13:30 – 14:00  Gjilan – Novobrdo Municipality

14:00 – 15:00  Meeting at Novobrdo Municipality
               One-stop-shop
               (Venue: Novobrdo Municipality)

15:00 – 16:30  Meeting with Satellite offices officials – functions and service provision
               (Venue: TBD)

16:30 – 17:30  Novobrdo – Pristina
Annex 2

List of Participants

1. Vladimir Malkaj  UNDP programme officer
2. Altjon Paloka   Amalgamation Team Leader
3. Artan Shkembi  Director of AZRT
4. Artur Kurti     Chief of National Coordinators
5. Lorena Lici     Legal Expert, Technical Secretariat
6. Elton Haxhi    audit and public finance account, AT
7. Marenglen Biba IT expert, AT
8. Oerd Imami     Donor Liaison Coordinator
9. Yllka Parllaku PR and communication
10. Anila Shehu    STAR Project Manager