



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË
KËSHILLI I MINISTRAVE
MINISTRI PËR ÇËSHTJET VENDORE

Implementation Progress Report

December 2013 –April 2014

Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform (STAR)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Cooperation Office Albania
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Acronyms

ACP	Advisory Committee on Procurement (UNDP)
CAP	Contract, Assets and Procurement Committee (UNDP)
EU	European Union
LGU	Local Government Unit
MLI	Minister of Local Issues
RC	Regional Coordinator
RLA	Reimbursable Loan Agreement
SDCO	Swiss Development Cooperation Office
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
STAR	Support Territorial Administrative Reform
TAR	Territorial and Administrative Reform
TS	Technical Secretariat
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme

1. Background

This report represents the first progress update on the implementation of the Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform – STAR project. STAR project is an agreed upon arrangement of donor financial support through a pooled trust fund to cover necessary ATR implementation costs. The project is funded to-date by the Government of Sweden channelled through SIDA, the Government of Switzerland through Swiss Development Cooperation Office in Albania, USAID and UNDP. 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 of the reform and follows the sequence of activities/the roadmap for achieving the desired results.

The present report covers the period from the commencement of STAR project in December 2013 until mid-April 2014 and summarizes progress in the following major directions: (i) technical and institutional capacity developed at the MLI to manage and complete the reform process, (ii) facilitation of public consultations and consensus building, (iii) provision of timely logistical inputs in all stages of the process, and (iv) provision of additional technical services in support to the reform.

STAR project activities and inputs complement in a large part the Government own efforts, resources and activities to leverage cross-partisan and legislative support as well as enable the environment for an all-inclusive, participative and contributing process for central and local public institutions, civil society and private sector community and the citizens at large.

The TAR expectations are high, multi-folded and anticipate positive changes in the overall functioning of the sub-national level administration, including the following considerations:

- Larger units of local government will have more capacity to exercise a greater range of functions, so territorial consolidation would allow for more delegation of services.
- A larger territory, provided that its formation is based on social, economic and historical commonalities and adequate internal access, facilitates development of economies of scale and therefore enables larger units of local government to provide services more efficiently and with lower costs.
- A territorial re-organization with larger units creates less income inequality among local government units, and therefore less pressure for equalization, curbing so political sensitivities.
- Larger units dispose of a larger pool of human resources and therefore more capable of ensuring technical efficiency, establish dedicated service delivery units and mobilize local expertise to succeed in international cooperation and attract external finances.

The STAR implementation started in December 2013 and is built around the following main milestones:

1. Engagement of teams / appointment of representatives in the ad-hoc consultative structures
2. Review and analyze all socioeconomic aspects of the situation
3. Develop consolidation criteria and guidelines, as well as approaches/models to reform
4. Invite the stakeholders' community to discuss options and find/propose consensual solutions
5. Finalize options and elaborate legal framework for consolidating
6. Reform package adopted by Parliament

Local Elections 2015

7. Next phase of consolidation of the new LGU system through capacity and institutional building

It is worth to note that in early 2014, the MLI opted for endorsement of the reform criteria by the ad-hoc Parliamentary Commission, therefore creating an earlier opportunity for political dialogue and consensus at the legislative level. It was believed that this cross-partisan Commission would be involved and follow the process along its development until the submission of the reform package to the Parliament. This approach has not worked to date.

2. Current implementation progress

In line with the identified needs of the reform process, STAR has been instrumental to achieve/satisfy the following to-date:

(i) Technical and institutional capacity developed at the MLI to manage and complete the reform process

A dedicated group of international (2) and national (11) experts has been mobilized on a part-time basis since February 2014. The international experts have been hired through an institutional contract with SKL International, with the means of a direct procurement. This choice was deemed effective in involving the same SIDA mobilized expertise for the recent 2012 study on the administrative and territorial reform in Albania, with the aim to ensure an expertise already familiar with the Albanian context and the reform challenges. National experts were selected through an open call for applications, which established a roster of expertise in different areas relevant to the reform requirements such as legal issues, local governance, decentralization, fiscal decentralization, local economic development, etc. The MLI, in accordance with its needs and the process advancement, makes requests to mobilize specific expertise from this roster.

An ad-hoc Technical Secretariat at the MLI has been established since 10 December 2013, through the recruitment of three national professionals (team leader for regional coordination, local reform advisor, local project specialist) and one driver. The TS has been subsequently supplied for mobility (2 vehicles) and office equipment and its operational costs (travel, communication, etc.) are constantly covered by STAR project.

In each Albanian region a regional coordinator has been identified and hired since February 2014 (in total 13 coordinators, Vlora region having two) through an open call for applications. Regional Coordinators have received an induction training/instruction at the outset of their assignment and since, regular updates from the MLI and the group of experts. Recently (April 2014), two regional coordinators have been appointed to other public functions and therefore their STAR contracts have been terminated. The MLI is requesting the initiation of recruitment procedures for two new ones.

For the proper management of STAR project, UNDP has also hired one dedicated Project Manager and one administrative/finance assistant, the first through an open competition and the second drawn from UNDP's pool of assistants.

In parallel with STAR inputs, through the Prime Minister's decision no. 36 of 5 February 2014, a National Working Group on the TAR has been established, with a membership from relevant central institutions and line ministries, LGU associations, think tanks and international organizations. Twelve Regional Working Groups on TAR are also established, as per the same government order, led by respective prefects and comprising representatives of LGUs and regional branches of central government institutions. STAR regional coordinators work closely with and support the activities of the respective regional working groups.

Also, the Parliament on January 26, 2014 established the composition and functions of an ad-hoc Parliamentary Commission on TAR, with an equal political membership of eight MPS from the position and opposition groups and with a right to veto for the opposition.

In terms of technical outputs, expert analysis work on the current situation, the different aspects and options of amalgamation efficiency gains and the identification of the criteria to be adopted for the reform have started in late 2013. The core set of criteria for territorial consolidation were identified, drafted and presented to different forums since early January 2014.

As noted earlier, the MLI opted for the validation of reform criteria by the ad-hoc Parliamentary Commission prior to apply them in the real life context and develop and consult possible resulting options. However, this approach has not worked since convening the Commission has been to-date mission impossible. The establishment of the Commission has encountered difficulties and resistance from the opposition for a dubious consensus and consequently the Commission has never been constituted in full and was not convened for a lack of quorum. This situation continues to be the major institutional bottleneck of the process. In this situation, the MLI would have to propose a different approach to move ahead and away from this deadlock.

During this period, expert work has focussed on covering different aspects of local government functioning, development of background technical assessments and analysis and the elaboration of scenarios/proposals for territorial consolidation in the form of a single report to be submitted to the legislative bodies for review and approval. The report preparation is nearing its completion.

(ii) Facilitation of public consultations and consensus building

Public awareness about TAR has in practice started with the public launch of the reform during the National Conference on 17 October 2013. Since, TAR discussions have been constantly featured in the media, talk shows, technical and political debates. Public consultation and consensus building are also cornerstones and core activities supported by STAR project.

Upon MLI request, a dedicated PR/media expert was hired in since February 2014, to help develop a communication strategy to enable a structured organization of public awareness activities and actions. A dedicated webpage on TAR www.reformaterritoriale.al includes a functional Facebook account link <https://www.facebook.com/reformaterritoriale> to provide and share information on the reform process in real time. Also, 4000 reform leaflets are being produced for distribution to the local level.

A consultation tour was initiated by the Minister of State for Local Issues to present the reform principles and criteria and listen to people's opinion in all the regions of Albania. The first round of this tour includes 11 extended consultations organized in Shkoder, Kukes, Lezhe, Durres, Elbasan, Pogradec, Korce, Permet, Gjirokaster, Berat, and Fier. In total, 1075 people (out of which 245 women) participated in these consultation meetings, representing local and regional government and institutions, civil society organizations and ordinary citizens. During the tour, it was made possible to follow the discussions live through the dedicated website, while now excerpts of these discussions can be still watched and played in the webpage under News & Information tab - <http://reformaterritoriale.al/news-information/videos>.

Consultations to date have been focused around the rationale, principles and criteria for the reform. As the process is approaching the development of draft territorial consolidation options, the consultations are expected to become more concrete, lively and focused. In this view, with the aim of increasing the outreach as well as broadening the participation and consequently the basis for feedback/inputs, the MLI has opted for a more direct engagement of civil society in the public consultation process as well as in the realization of a nationwide survey to gather citizens' direct views on the proposed territorial consolidation of their surrounding neighborhoods. For this purpose, STAR project is engaged in a process of identification of such services through competitive bidding, which would result in awarding within April 2014 four civil society organizations (inclusive of one business organization) for facilitating public consultations across the country as well as a qualified company for carrying out a nationwide survey of about 16,000 interviews on the territorial reform and the proposed new division.

With the aim of benefiting from real best practices on TAR as well as building political, a study tour to Ireland is being planned to take place in June. This organization will include 15 key MPs and representatives from central and local government institutions. MLI has opted for this country as Ireland is currently in a similar process of administrative and territorial reform. Based on indications from the MLI, UNDP has established contacts with the Irish Association of the Counties' and Cities' Councils and is developing the purpose and objectives of the tour.

(iii) Provision of timely logistical inputs at all stages of the process

The STAR project is implemented by the Minister of State for Local Issues under UNDP's National Implementation Modality. UNDP provides its management and operational support upon formal request from the MLI/his delegate, in accordance with UNDP's rules and procedures and based on a Standard Letter of Agreement with the MLI (signed on 8 November 2013) for the provision of project support services. Such services include, inter-alia:

- Human resources management – that is all project personnel contracts
- Procurement of goods/services related to STAR project
- Financial management

In this context, UNDP makes direct payments to contractors and suppliers at the request of the implementing partner. UNDP meets the costs of normal administrative support to the project from the budget of the country office and only recovers the cost of providing support services where such support involves clearly identifiable and additional costs to the normal administrative support provided by the office, which in the present case represent the need or engaging a dedicated UNDP Project Manager and an Administrative/Finance Assistant.

In accordance with the implementation modality, the agreement on project support services and UNDP's rules and procedures, the key inputs provided to the STAR project are governed by the below summarized responsibilities:

	Responsibilities for Recruitment	
Role or area of responsibility	Government Responsibility	UNDP as responsible party under national implementation by government
Applied Procedures	-	As agreed UNDP procedures apply
Contract Categories	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Service Contracts (SC) ▪ Individual Contracts (IC) ▪ Temporary Appointments (TA) ▪ Fixed-term appointments (FT)
Roles in preparation; review of job descriptions or terms of reference; advertising vacancies and receiving applications.	Government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiates request ▪ Provides inputs/requirements to the ToRs 	UNDP prepares terms of reference in consultation with implementing partner.
Participants in short-listing panel.	-	UNDP undertakes short-listing.
Participants in selection panel.	Government may participate for Individual Contracts/Consultants (IC) in ex-officio capacity only.	UNDP is responsible for selection process in accordance with UNDP procedures.

Responsibilities for Recruitment		
Role or area of responsibility	Government Responsibility	UNDP as responsible party under national implementation by government
		UNDP evaluates candidates and makes decision. Above the established threshold, CAP, RACP or ACP Committees must review the evaluation panel recommendation.
Selection decision	-	UNDP
Contract formats used	-	Appropriate UNDP contract.
Salary scale applied	-	UNDP
Contract signing authority	-	Authorized UNDP officer
Project personnel reporting authority.	For consultants (IC) only: Government certifies the quality of deliverables and presents the project manager with a delivery report.	UNDP with reporting line as per the TOR, taking into account that the individual serves in his/her individual capacity and not as a representative of a Government institution, corporative body or other authority external to UNDP. Consultant reports to UNDP. UNDP is responsible for the final acceptance of the deliverables in consultation with implementing partner
Responsible for payments made to project personnel.	-	UNDP as per contract terms and conditions, in accordance with UNDP procedures.
In the event of contract extension, responsible party for performance review	-	UNDP
Responsible for resolving disputes between Government and project personnel.	UNDP in consultation with the Government.	UNDP in consultation with the Government.
Accountable for audit of personnel payments.	-	UNDP is fully accountable. Audit will be undertaken following UNDP audit rules.

Responsibilities for procurement of goods and services (and civil works)		
Role or area of responsibility	Government responsibility	UNDP as responsible party under national implementation by government
Preparation and review of specifications	Government presents a formal request to UNDP for procurements needed and consults with UNDP regarding preparation of specifications.	UNDP in consultation with implementing partner.
Short-listing of suppliers	-	UNDP undertakes short-listing in accordance with UNDP

Responsibilities for procurement of goods and services (and civil works)		
		procedures.
Bid opening	-	UNDP opens bids in accordance with UNDP procedures.
Bid evaluation	-	UNDP evaluates bids in accordance with UNDP procedures. UNDP chairs the bid evaluation meeting and should be in the majority in the committee.
Review of evaluation of bids and recommendation of award	-	UNDP CAP, RACP or ACP committees are fully responsible in accordance with internal UNDP procedures. There is no Government participation.
Approval of award and signatory of the contract	-	Head of Office, Authorized UNDP official.
Making payments to suppliers or contractors	-	UNDP pays suppliers or contractors directly in accordance with UNDP procedures.
Receipt of goods	-	UNDP receives goods in accordance with UNDP procedures.
Ownership and disposition of assets	-	UNDP owns assets until the transfer of title is made to the Government. It is advisable that transfer of title takes place upon acceptance of goods in consultation with Government. However, asset transfer or other disposition is possible at any other time with appropriate justification.
Asset management	Government is responsible for asset management on receipt of goods in accordance with UNDP procedures.	Government is responsible for asset management, but UNDP procedures apply.
Resolution of legal disputes	-	UNDP in accordance with UNDP procedures.
Accountability for audit of procurement transactions	-	UNDP is fully accountable. Audit will be undertaken following UNDP audit rules.
Preparation of any terms of reference	Assist UNDP in preparing Terms of reference	UNDP prepares terms of reference in consultation with implementing partner.

(iv) Provision of additional technical services in support to the reform

Despite the intensity and the commitment to developing an administrative and territorial reform and the parallel review of the fiscal and decentralization system, those efforts will remain only paperwork if not translated into concrete preparations for the transition from the current to the future status for LGUs. The STAR project has identified this step as a transition phase, which must also be developed in detail prior to the local elections of 2015 so that the newly

amalgamated/formed LGUs could immediately engage in the implementation of the TAR according to a clear and assessable roadmap and thus minimizing possible confusion.

These measures are very closely linked with the LGU territory (therefore drawing from the TAR outcomes) and the actual roles, responsibilities and capacities of the new LGUs (drawing from the fiscal and decentralization review). As these two parallel reforms are set to deliver by fall 2014, this is the ideal start time for the transition preparations, as most of the required inputs would be available. Therefore the need to prepare this stage are immediate.

The transition phase would basically require a detailed assessment and knowledge of the current LGUs' situation in terms of human, physical and institutional assets, liabilities, relationships with third parties, etc. and the development of a phased action plan for transferring those responsibilities to the new LGUs, with due considerations on the human (loss of public jobs, redundancy, re-orientation), financial (costs of relocation, physical adaptation, etc.) and legal (contracts, liabilities, management of local public enterprises, etc) aspects. This action plan will also have to address the necessary minimal structures and functions of the new LGUs extending now their jurisdiction more often to a combined urban-rural space and thus requiring a stronger set of specializations and management.

As per the original STAR project, only one of the activities foreseen in this heading, the GIS mapping of administrative boundaries, has been budgeted. This activity has already been tendered, upon MLI's request to complement technical and expert work with GIS support for not only providing the current administrative division maps, but also elaborate on GIS support different consolidation options, make available a GIS working software and provide necessary training to the MLI staff and produce the new maps in electronic/online and hard copies

Apart the above, the transition phase remains largely unfunded in the STAR budget and its cost is still not accurately estimated. This is an additional reason to begin thinking about its scope and ambition and follow up with a detailed formulation.

3. Activities carried out during the reporting period

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
Output 1	MLI's technical and institutional capacity developed to implement and monitor consolidation reforms.	▼	Completed
Activities			

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
1.1.	Recruitment of 2 International Experts for the Experts Group	▼ ¹	<p>Completed</p> <p>A Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA)² was signed between UNDP and SKL International on 7 February 2014, for a total of 60 working days, starting 10 February until 30 May 2014. SKL International offered its technical expertise through the following experts' i.e. David Young and Lars Ericsson.</p> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formalized advice/training to the staff of the Albanian Minister for Local Issues and other related structures on different aspects and stages of the design and implementation of the administrative territorial reform. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Status:</u> Completed ▪ Finalization of the Process Methodology and the criteria for the administrative-territorial reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ Presentation of the Swedish case studies of the territorial reform in different workshops and/or in the ad-hoc parliamentary commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ Other presentations at meetings/seminars/conferences on administrative and territorial reform in Albania <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ Elaboration of papers and/or analysis on various aspects of the reform upon MLI request or needs arisen from ongoing work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing

¹ ▼ completed

(▼) ongoing

² The Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA) is an instrument used to engage individuals that are employed with another legal entity, at the time of their engagement with UNDP. Under an RLA, the signatory company/institution shall make the services of the selected Individual Contractor available to UNDP for a specified period. The company/institution therefore remains responsible for the direct payment of actual cost of salaries, taxes, insurances and other entitlements/emoluments due to the selected Individual Contractor, and UNDP reimburses the company/institution.

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
	Recruitment of national experts for the Experts Group.	▼	<p>Completed</p> <p>An expert roster was created during January 2014 through competitive bidding. The roster included 21 National Experts out of which 11 were hired during February –March 2014 to compile the draft reports on LGUs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sabina Ymeri: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (55 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on economic and fiscal data for LGUs ▪ Elira Jorgoni: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (46 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on public services at municipal level - social services, primary education ▪ Etleva Cico: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (50 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on the public services at municipal level- local infrastructure ▪ Albana Dhimitri: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (55 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on criteria and methodology of territorial reform ▪ Anila Bejko Gjika: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (55 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on economic and fiscal data and analysis for each LGUs ▪ Zana Vokopola: 10 February – 5 March 2014 (55 wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on public services at municipal level – water supply and waste management ▪ Ansi Shundi: 14 February – 10 March 2014 (55wd) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on the need for administrative and territorial reorganization in compliance with the legal obligation submitted; report on the advantages and benefits of the reorganization of each LGUs ▪ Mirela Bogdani: 12 February – 12 March 2014 (10 wd). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Deliverable</u>: Review of available information and data; analysis of the collected info in view of the requirements provided by the Electoral Code; identification of legal and institutional implications, potential political risks and consequences of the reform ▪ Zhani Shapo: 28 March – 31 May 2014 (40 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on legal changes related to territorial reform, local administration and transitional legal measures ▪ Manuela Mece: 28 March – 31 May 2014 (30 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on economic and fiscal data and analyses of each new LGU ▪ Ledina Gjikhuri: 28 March – 31 May 2014 (40 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus</u> on advising the regional committees on how to apply the technical criteria <p>The aforementioned deliverables are to be integrated into one final report describing socio-economic aspects of the situation and criteria, methodology and new proposed LGU. The report will accompany the reform proposal to the parliament prepared by the MLI.</p>

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
1.2.	Recruitment of 3 full-time staff for the Technical Secretariat	▼	<p>Completed</p> <p>Three competitive recruitment processes were conducted during 21 November – 9 December 2013. Following are the TS staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Artur Kurti - Team Leader, Regional Coordination, contracted 10 December 2013 for the time period 11 December 2013 - 10 June 2014 ▪ Vasilika Tuni - Local Reform Advisor, contracted 10 December 2013 for the time period 11 December 2013 - 10 June 2014 ▪ Lorena Lici - Local Project Specialist, contracted 10 December 2013 for the time period 11 December 2013 - 10 June 2014 ▪ Artan Rozhani – Local Driver at TS, contracted on 10 December 2013 for the time period 11 December 2013 - 10 June 2014 <p>Two additional full time staff were recruited by UNDP to support STAR implementation from UNDP's side:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anila Shehu – STAR Project Manager. A recruitment process was conducted on 21 November – 18 December 2013. Project Manager hired for the time period 3 January to 30 December 2014. ▪ Erma Barhani – STAR Project Finance and Administrative Assistant, selected from the UNDP pool of assistants and under contract until December 2014.
1.3.	Recruitment of 12+4 regional coordinators	▼	<p>Completed</p> <p>A competitive recruitment process was conducted during January 2014. Thirteen (13) regional coordinators were contracted for the time period 3 February – 31 July 2014.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ymer Hoxha –RC Berat 2. Asim Sula – RC Elbasan 3. Ilirjan Nastas – RC Durres 4. Denis Lushi – RC Diber 5. Osman Elezi – RC Kukes 6. Adriatik Brace – RC Korce 7. Agim Shimaj – RC Shkoder 8. Myzaljen Hoxha – RC Fier 9. Spiro Marku-RC Vlore 10. Albert Kasi – RC Gjirokaster (recently accepted a long term position as Director of Cultural Monuments Department, thus a new recruitment would be necessary) 11. Etjona Hoxha – RC Vlore (recently appointed as Vlora Prefect, thus a new recruitment would be necessary) 12. Elton Qosja – RC Tirane 13. Gjoke Jaku - RC Lezhe

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
1.4.	Recruitment of 2 training consultants to design and deliver training to stakeholders in Tirana and regions, including RCs, RTCs, CSOs, and media.	(▼)	Partially Completed One Communications/Media Consultant contracted on 21 January 2014 for the time period 23 January – 7 February 2014 (7 wd). <u>Deliverable:</u> Creation of a Communication strategy and Action Plan <u>Status:</u> Completed
1.5.	Recruitment of additional required consultants	▼	Completed Hiring based on project needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yllka Parllaku - Public Information Consultant, contracted on 6 February 2014 for the time period 10 February – 10 August 2014. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus on</u> implementation of the Communication Strategy through active social media campaigns ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ Skender Minxhozi – Journalist, contracted for the period 14 February – 14 August 2014 (10 wd per month). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Focus on the</u> organization of at least four TV programmes/debates vis-à-vis territorial reform in main Albanian TV channels; media coverage on main meetings ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ Arbi Shehu - GIS Expert Arbi Shehu contracted for the period 19 March – 20 May 2014 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Deliverable:</u> Prepare technical specifications of GIS Mapping tendering documents; Technical evaluation report of the bids received; Quality control of GIS company deliverables ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing ▪ One cameraman contracted for the period 17 March – 15 April 2014. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Deliverable:</u> Filming of consultation meetings; production of short video spots; preparation of final video documentary, editing of footage ○ <u>Status:</u> Ongoing
Output 2	Public consultations and consensus building facilitated	(▼)	Ongoing
Activities			
Public Consultation Activities			
2.1	Engagement of a national Public Awareness		Note: Only part of the public awareness campaign i.e. TV spots and broadcasting are to be completed by a company. The rest of the campaign

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
	Company		is to be implemented by the Technical Secretariat.
	Develop a media / PR plan and implement it in preparing for and during the public consultations period	(▼)	Ongoing The Media PR Plan design was completed in January – February 2014. Implementation is ongoing.
	Designing, producing and printing leaflets/brochures/FAQs about reform (12,000 copies for distribution in 12 qarks)	(▼)	Ongoing 4,000 leaflets designed, produced and distributed. 2,000 folders, notebooks and pens designed and produced with MLI logo
	Designing and printing handbook for voluntary mergers (500 copies for distribution to current LGU mayors and their councils)		Not started
	Designing and producing posters (12 x 50 = 600 copies on average)		Not started
	Producing at least two TV and two radio Spots Buying media time on national and local TVs and Radios to broadcast spots regularly over two months while public consultations	(▼)	In process A competitive procurement process (preparation of solicitation documents, tendering and evaluation) was conducted during 3 March – 7 April 2014. A media company to be contracted by April 2014 to carry out a public awareness campaign informing the Albanian public on the urgent need to implement TAR and explaining its impact. The TV spot will be aired, on prime time, 200 times in total (100 times on national media such as for example TVSH, Top-channel, Klan, News 24, Ora News, and 100 times at local media in 12 regions of Albania. The radio spot which will be aired 60 times on radio stations such as Top Albania Radio, Radio Tirana and Club FM. TV and Radio spots will be aired during this timeframe April – May 2014.
	Arrange for at least 15 TV shows and radio programs to be organized during the public consultations period.	(▼)	In process A Media Company to be selected through open tender by April 2014 (see above)
2.2	Social media engagement		
	Opening a Facebook and a Twitter account to gather opinions and trigger debates	▼	https://www.facebook.com/reformaterritoriale http://www.reformaterritoriale.al/
	Realization of video	(▼)	Ongoing

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
	footage from events/ public consultations		http://www.reformaterritoriale.al/news-information/videos/74-live https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUr3_4CNVvAavxSiCTEdtEQ%20
	Summary of the main highlights of consultations posted regularly on social media, etc.	(▼)	Ongoing https://www.facebook.com/reformaterritoriale http://www.reformaterritoriale.al/
Consensus building activities			
2.3	National / thematic workshops and meetings 2 workshops / structured meetings per month during the period Nov 2014 – Mar 2015 + other ad-hoc meetings	(▼)	Ongoing 10 meetings and round table consultations with relevant local and central government officials and experts are organized (760 people are engaged and consulted) under the leadership of the National Working Group.
2.4	Regional workshops/town hall meetings 2 meetings /qark / month x 4 months during the period of public consultations around Feb-Jun 2014	(▼)	Ongoing A Consultation Tour in all Albania's regions is initiated and led by the Minister for Local Issues. Eleven extended consultations are organized so far with the participation of local government representatives, regional institutions, and civil society organizations. 1075 people have participated out of which 245 are women. Meetings at municipality and commune level organized and led by RWG are on going.
2.5	Organization of Public Events to ensure the participation of civil society in support of the Territorial and Administrative Reform		Ongoing A competitive procurement process (preparation of solicitation documents, tendering and evaluation) is still ongoing. Three Non for Profit Organizations to be contracted to support the Ministry with the organization of discussions and consultations with civil society with regards to the territorial and administrative reform One business association will be directly contracted to support the Ministry with the organization of discussions and consultations with businesses
2.6	Citizens Voice Territorial Reform survey	(▼)	Ongoing A competitive procurement process (preparation of solicitation documents, tendering and evaluation) was conducted during 26 February – 8 April 2014. A company will be contracted by to design an appropriate methodology for a survey that will measure awareness of reform, acceptance levels of the potential reform outcomes as well as indicate expectations of citizens regarding the reform; conduct the survey at national level; analyze the data collected; report on the findings.

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
2.7	<p>Training of Regional Coordinators</p> <p>2 one-week training workshops in Tirana</p> <p>1 two-days training for coordinators and RCCs in each qark</p>	(▼)	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>First trainings took place in February 2014 in Tirana</p>
2.8	<p>Training and information of journalists</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Two meetings organized by the MLI with Tirana journalists during Feb-Mar 014</p>
Study tour			
2.9	<p>Study tour for policy makers and experts</p> <p>Around 15 key representatives from the Parliament, the central government and institutions, and local governments to visit a country with successful recent experience in administrative-territorial reform</p>		<p>Preparations have started for a study Tour to Ireland to take place around June. Ireland is selected as the same process of administrative and territorial reform is happening.</p> <p>The aim of the study tour is to gain a better insight and knowledge of Irish experience in dealing with territorial and administrative reform issues at central and local level; established structures; process design, dealing with resistance and ways of mitigation;</p>
Output 3	Timely logistical inputs at all stages of the process secured		
3.1	<p>Securing 2 cars for the operations of the TS and the coordination needs of the MLI</p>	▼	<p>Secured by UNDP free of charge at the outset of the implementation</p>
3.2.	<p>Procurement of necessary office equipment</p> <p>10 desktop workstations 20 laptops 2 printers/ photocopy 13 projectors, 13 cameras Etc.</p>	▼	<p>Completed as per requirements/needs</p> <p>4 desktops 17 laptops 2 printers/photocopy 6 Projectors 12 cameras 1 camcorder 6 UPS 1 server</p>
3.3	<p>Securing a transport fleet for the public consultation period</p>	(▼)	<p>Dropped as an option, arrangements are made to cover actual local transport costs of regional coordinators (see below)</p>
3.4	<p>Support stakeholders' local transport costs</p>	(▼)	<p>Ongoing</p>

Level	Activities		Activities completed in the reporting period
Output 4	Technical Services to Support the Reform Process		
4.1	GIS mapping of administrative boundaries	(▼)	Ongoing A competitive procurement process (preparation of solicitation documents, tendering and evaluation) conducted during 26 February –8 April 2014. A GIS company will be contracted to create GIS spatial data, provide technical assistance to the working group at the Ministry for Local Issues or (Parliamentary Commission for the Administrative Territorial Reform) during the proposal of different versions of the new administrative divisions, create strategic scenarios of territory intervention based on predefined priorities, etc.
4.2	Legal and technical support for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventorying of public properties, ▪ Transferring of existing LGUs’ contracts and liabilities, ▪ Relocation of archives, ▪ Maintaining the level of public services. ▪ Physical and functional re-organizing of LGUs within the new jurisdictions, etc. 	(▼)	To be planned, detailed, financed and implemented starting from the second half of 2014

4. Challenges encountered and mitigated measures taken

The main challenge encountered during the implementation is the difficulty and impasse to date to reach any satisfactory level of political consensus, an effort that goes beyond the scope of the project, however, bearing an influence on the overall pace and the content of the reform.

In this vein, due to the highly political nature of the reform, there were indications that regional coordinators were also perceived to have nuances of a “partisan” role. While since the first introduction to UNDP special attention was paid to informing regional coordinators about standards of conduct, including efficiency, competence and integrity, following this perception, open discussions have taken place among donors and the MLI to re-iterate the solely technical role coordinators play in the process. In addition, the UNDP Country Director contacted all coordinators with a formal message reinforcing the importance of impartiality during the entire implementation process of STAR activities.

During implementation of the project activities some challenges are encountered that required specific attention and undertaking of concrete actions to mitigate aggravation and/or to ensure process orientation towards the intended aim and objectives. Some of the challenges prescribed below were already foreseen during project design phase and some others are encountered on the way.

5. Plans for the immediate future

In the next months, ATR will advance in the following directions:

- A quick solution on the functionality of the Ad-Hoc Parliamentary Commission should be found to unblock the situation.
- Based on the approved technical criteria, the Expert Group should deliver the first proposal of the new administrative territorial organization of the country (first map)
- This proposal should be submitted to consultations across the country, LGUS, civil society stakeholders, the business community and citizens - to be also reached by the nationwide public opinion survey

6. Project expenditures

EXPENSES	BUDGET (USD)	Expenses and Commitments (USD)	BALANCE (USD)	Comments
1. Human Resources				
Experts Group				
International Expert	120,000	87,308	32,692	Contract with SKLI
National Experts	156,000	137,310	18,690	16 Experts contracted
Technical Secretariat				
Team leader- Regional Coordination	26,600	22,800	3,800	12 month contract
Local Reform Advisor	25,500	18,000	7,500	12 month contract
Local Project Specialist	23,800	16,800	7,000	12 month contract
Driver	16,150	12,350	3,800	13 month contract
Regional Coordinators	160,000	78,000	82,000	13 RC contracted
Other Consultants				

EXPENSES	BUDGET (USD)	Expenses and Commitments (USD)	BALANCE (USD)	Comments
Training Consultants to RCs and RCCs	18,720	-	18,720	
Project management staff (UNDP)			-	
Project Coordinator	30,600	21,600	9,000	12 month contract
Admin/Assistant	17,850	5,500	12,350	12 month contract
Subtotal Human Resources costs	595,220	399,668	195,552	
2. Per-diems / Travel				
Expert Group per diem	21,420	-	21,420	
Regional Coordinators	40,800	790	40,010	
Participation in national workshops/events	17,000	3,920	13,080	
Training Consultants to RCs and RCCs	4,080	-	4,080	
Participation to Media Training in Tirana	3,400	-	3,400	
Study tours	60,000	-	60,000	Estimation of study tour to Ireland \$38,000
Subtotal Per-diems / Travel costs	146,700	4,710	141,990	
3 Equipment				
Desktops (10)	15,000	6,504	8,496	5 Desktops purchased
Laptops (20)	34,000	9,639	24,361	17 Laptops purchased
Printers (2)	1,000	3,560	-2,560	1 Multifunctional printer
Projectors (13)	13,000	2,593	10,407	6 Projectors purchased
Cameras	3,600	3,384	216	12 cameras for RC
Camera for TS	1,200	2,004	-804	1 camera +1 camcorder for TS
Server		2,565	-2,565	1 Server
UPS		736	-736	5 UPS for PC +1 UPS for Server
Portable HDD		288	-288	3 Portable HDD
Flash USB		390	-390	20 Flash USB
Digital Voice recorder		238	-238	4 Digital voice recorders
Office furniture	5,000	182	4,818	Office chairs
Subtotal Equipment costs	72,800	32,083	40,717	
4. Transport Cost				
International Travel	9,000	-	9,000	
Vehicle Rent for Public Consultation period	115,200	-	115,200	

EXPENSES	BUDGET (USD)	Expenses and Commitments (USD)	BALANCE (USD)	Comments
Local transport RCs	4,320	1,589	2,731	
Local transport media journalists	300	-	300	
Subtotal Transport Costs	128,820	1,589	127,231	
5. Maintenance and Operational Costs				
Vehicle rented fleet maintenance	12,800	-	12,800	
Vehicle rented fleet fuel	22,400	-	22,400	
TS Vehicle maintenance	6,800	1,140	5,660	
TS Vehicle fuel	11,900	6,000	5,900	
TS- Office supplies	5,100	2,470	2,630	
Project Office (UNDP) - Office supplies	4,250	800	3,450	
TS - Communication costs	12,250	800	11,450	
Project Office (UNDP) - Communication costs	1,700	82	1,618	
Processing costs (advert., bank charges, contracting) (UNDP)	39,100	4,665	34,435	
Subtotal Maintenance and Operational Costs	116,300	15,957	100,343	
6. PR and Public Awareness				
<u>PR Contract</u>				
TV spots production	7,000	7,000	-	RFP Public awareness campaign evaluated \$80,000
TV spot broadcast	50,000	50,000	-	
Radio Spot production	600	600	-	
Radio Spot broadcast	15,000	15,000	-	
Company fee (10%)	20,000	7,400	12,600	
TV shows	75,000		75,000	
Leaflets/brochures	36,000	720	35,280	
Guidelines, manuals	1,500		1,500	
Posters	12,000	1,983	10,017	
Social media	15,000	396	14,604	6 month subscription to 8 local newspapers
Organization of Public Events from 3 NGO		75,000	-75,000	Unforeseen in the initial budget; RFP Estimated value \$75,000 (3 NGO * \$25,000)
Business Association		15,000	-15,000	Unforeseen in the initial budget; RFP Estimated value 1 NGO * \$15,000

EXPENSES	BUDGET (USD)	Expenses and Commitments (USD)	BALANCE (USD)	Comments
Citizens Voice Territorial Reform Survey		120,000	-120,000	Unforeseen in the initial budget; Estimated value \$120,000
<i>Subtotal PR and Public Awareness costs</i>	232,100	293,099	-60,999	
7. Workshops/Meetings rental costs				
National workshops/events	21,000	6,204	14,796	
Town hall meetings at local level	48,000	21,405	26,595	
RC training in Tirana	7,000	1,865	5,135	
RC/RCC training in qarks	9,600		9,600	
Media training Tirana	1,000	779	221	
Media training in qarks	4,800		4,800	
<i>Subtotal Workshops/Meetings rental costs</i>	91,400	30,253	61,147	
8. Transitional support costs				
GIS mapping of administrative borders	100,000	100,000	-	RFP evaluated at \$100,000
Legal/technical support and measures for new LGUs	-			Unfunded GAP - originally and arbitrarily estimated at around 560,000
<i>Subtotal transitional support costs</i>	100,000	100,000	0	
9. Subtotal direct costs (1-8)	1,483,340	877,360	605,980	
10. Contingency (10%)				
11. Administrative / Management Costs (up to 8%)	96,834	58,146	38,688	
12. Total costs (9+11)	1,580,714	935,506	644,668	

ANNEX I

Report On consultation tour “Administrative and Territorial Reform in Albania”

1. Project Activity Background

The Albanian Government is currently developing and is committed to implement a Territorial - Administrative Reform (TAR) that will empower local government units by enhancing their capability to provide high quality and timely services to citizens and increasing the efficiency of local governments’ resource management. The TAR will lead to fewer and larger local government units in Albania capable of providing efficient services supported by increased revenues and efficient management of assets by these units.

There is a full understanding that a comprehensive reform would be required to not only re-draw the administrative-territorial map, but also to critically review and enhance a functional decentralization, clarify and strengthen local authorities’ competencies and vertical coordination, review and improve the fiscal decentralization system in place as well as local institutional and administrative capacities for increased local revenues, adopt standards of public services and strengthen the developmental role of local administrations.

Why a consultation tour?

The government is trying to build an all-inclusive cooperation platform for all stakeholders. Several mechanisms of information and expertise-sharing are being put in place. These mechanisms are trying to involve in the process the following groups:

1. Members of parliament
2. Central and Local Institutions
3. Media and Civil Society
4. Private sector
5. Communities in urban and rural areas.

However, a crucial element of the reform is the involvement of the public at large. The law on “organization and functioning of local government specifies in the article 67 - Justification and documentation of the reorganization process, states that “the proposal for reorganization of one or more units of local governments for each case shall be submitted to the Parliament accompanied by the following facts and justifications:

- a) The economic, social, cultural, demographic, administrative reasons in favor of the need and advantages of reorganization proposed;
- b) The methods, materials or documents used to inform the public on the reorganization and the issues related to it;

- c) The opinion of the community that lives in the local units that shall be affected by the reorganization as well as the opinion “For” and “Against” expressed directly or indirectly by various interested subjects or groups in this reorganization;
- d) The methods used to collect the opinions of the community such as public hearings, open meetings, surveys and referenda if it is possible;

It is important to emphasize that the Government of Albania, however, does not see this process as just a “formal”, “respecting-the law” process but rather as a way to get the public concretely involved and improve the overall outcome of the reform.

In this context, STAR planned to organize a tour in all the regions of the country as part of the national-wide awareness campaign on the importance of the territorial and administrative reform.

2. Aim and Methodology of the activity

The aim of the tour was to increase awareness of the public about the necessity of the reform and especially its effect on providing more efficient public services, increasing revenues and more efficient management of assets and resources. Presentation of the formulated draft criteria based on which the new division and amalgamation of the territory will take place was one of the objectives. In addition listening to participants’ opinion was important to assess people’s perception about the reform. This report prescribes the main highlights of the tour, especially focusing on the participants’ feedback.

During March 2014, Minister of Local Issues and Technical Secretariat organized 11 consultation meetings in Lezha, Elbasan, Pogradec Korçë, Përmet, Kukës, Shkodër, Durrës, Berat, Fier and Gjirokastër. 1075 representatives (245 women) from local government units, civil society, regional institutions, private sector, and citizens from urban and rural areas participated in these meetings. Representatives from the opposition participated in several meetings such as in Elbasan, Korçë, Përmet, Shkodër and Kukes. They were active, asking questions and providing their own opinion about the reform.

All the meetings in the respective regions and districts followed the below agenda:

- Consultation meetings were welcomed and moderated by the prefects of each region
- Minister Cuçi's speech tackled the following main issues:
 - Major problems resulting from the current administrative territorial reform division
 - Citizens benefits of the reform
 - Challenges related to the restructuring of the Local Government Units
 - Statistical data of LGU efficiency in each region
- Next, Mr. Bashkim Fino emphasized the necessity for the reform,
- Mr. Enea Hoti focused on explanation of the proposed criteria based on which the new administrative-territorial reform will take place.
 - Administrative-territorial division will be based on concept of functional zones
 - Economic, social, cultural and development functioning of the units and performing of services are the basic principles of the new administrative organization.
 - Population number according to INSTAT population density; high density zones with population above 30,000 people; mid density zones with population above 20,000 people; low density zones with population above 10,000 people etc.
- Then it was the participants turn to ask questions, make comments and discuss about their concerning issues related to the reform and its implementation process.

3. Feedback on the reform

Here are provided in a summarized way the most prominent opinions and comments and most frequently asked questions by the participants:

- In general the territorial reform is highly approached by the participants. Surprisingly, they not only had knowledge about the importance of the reform process, but considered the reform process as delayed;
- The participants thought that the technical and political attitude towards the reform should not contradict each other; on the contrary it should be complementary;
- Most of the participants that managed to provide their own opinion during the meetings explicitly articulated that that restructuring of Local Government Units is necessary to provide better services to citizens and have direct impact to improving quality of life;
- The administrative territorial reform must be accompanied with more decentralized functions in order the new administrative units to be able to better plan at local level, collect revenues and better serve the citizens;
- Mainly in Gjirokaster, Pogradec and Korce the participants were interested to know about the minority communities and how the reform will affect them;
- Participants were also interested to know whether there was planned any process for reducing of regions and if the same criteria would apply;
- Participants supported the existence of regions although their role and competences have not been very clear and consequently not enabling them to properly play their strategic planning, economic development and coordination role. A good number of participants expressed themselves in favor of existing only three big regions in the country; Northern, Center and Southern regions. Some of them suggested changing of the way head of regional councils are selected. They propose election by voting in order to increase this institution's responsibility towards the citizens on one side, and to avoid creation of absurd situations like in Fier region;
- Participants agreed in general with the criteria, highlighting that the historical and cultural development functions of LGU are as important as economic ones and should be taken into consideration when amalgamation process will take place;
- The mayor of Tajove Commune in Elbasan expressed himself against the reform. His argument focused on service provision and the fact that due to the reform a big gap will be created between service provision and citizens. The government's aim – he said – should be shortening of this distance and not the other way round.

ANNEX II

Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform

Study visit of Albanian Government/ members of ad-hoc parliamentary commission to Ireland

Rationale of the study tour

After democratic changes took place in Albania after 1991, a tendency of territorial fragmentation of the country was observed. At that time this was argued as a natural outcome of the stronger need for democracy and more specifically local democracy.

The current administrative and territorial division of the local government units in Albania is stipulated in Law No. 8653/2000 "On the administrative and territorial division of the local government units in the Republic of Albania." This law, despite the steps taken through the decentralisation reform, retained the fractioned administrative and territorial division of 1992, which was based mainly on the state organisation form inherited from the communist system, which operated in a centralised economy where the administration of territory was mainly in the form of agricultural cooperatives, and failed to reflect the economic, social, demographic and infrastructural development after 1992. The decentralisation reform thrived after the adoption in 1998 of the European Chart for Local Self-government, which became the milestone of the decentralisation reform but which, in terms of the administrative and territorial division, retained a highly fractioned administrative map of 385 local government units.

Furthermore, since the last large reorganisation of the local government units in 1992, the cost/benefit balance has changed due to the massive domestic migration, improvement of technology and the expectations of citizens in terms of provision of services. Meanwhile, many other European countries have undertaken or at least have attempted to make a territorial restructuring of the local government units to address the territorial fractioning.

However, territorial fragmentation of the country is considered as one of the major barriers for the successful decentralization reform and effective functioning of the local government system. The number of local government units is relatively high in proportion with the national territory. The first level of local governance includes 65 municipalities covering the territories of urban areas and 308 communes covering the territories of rural areas, while the second level includes 12 regions. Most of municipalities and communes at the first level of local governance are in small size and unable to provide the assigned services.

The issues of costs and efficiency of public services have risen to the surface and started the debate on necessary required changes. International reports observing the state of play of local governance in Albania, namely the EU Progress Report and recommendations of Council of Europe do admit the need of efficient local government units. The EU Progress Report for 2012 concludes that no progress was made with regard to local governance, reiterating the need for improvements and innovations in the functioning of local government system, increasing its efficiency and effectiveness as well as raising the quality of public services that local governments provide to their citizens.

Currently, the administrative and territorial division of the country has created very small local government units in terms of number of inhabitants and with highly limited resources and assets, which has in most cases resulted in failure to carry out the functions and public services stipulated in the legislative framework, in failure to generate income from the local taxes, misuse of the budget on administrative expenses, and into an almost complete dependency from government transfers and external sources of funding. This overview of the situation in which most of the local government units are in since 10 years, places the debate on the success of the decentralisation reform into another setting, and recalls in the national political discourse the urgent need to review the current administrative and territorial division of the local government units.

The new Government of Albania in its governmental programme sets the Administrative and Territorial Reform as a *key priority* in the area of the decentralisation of local government. Therefore, the Minister of State for Local Issues was appointed as responsible member of Albanian Government for conceptualising, drafting and implementation of the Administrative and Territorial Reform. With this purpose the Minister of State for Local Issues will organise the National Conference on the Administrative and Territorial Reform in Albania, on 17 October 2013, as a starting point of this process and as part of the discussion and cooperation platform with all the national political stakeholders and with the local government representatives, as well as with representatives of all the international organisations, civil society, media and other groups of interest.

The envisaged reform process pays special importance to seeking cross-partisan understanding and building alliances consensus as well as wide public consultations. The process welcomes within a given time period local solutions for voluntary mergers to ease decision making. This approach is based on the understanding that local governments should be involved as early in the process as possible in order to avoid resistance later and at the same time promote practical and realistic solutions.

The establishment of a National Working Group on Territorial Reform – NWGTR - a broad consultative body for the MLI at the central level bringing other institutional perspectives and recommendations in the shaping of the reform and helping ensuring coherence of the process content with other on-going reforms in the country. At regional level, the establishment of regional consultative committees will mirror at a certain extent at regional level the NWGTR and ensure the consultation and local perspectives and views on the reform.

Although the aforementioned structures are already established and function, the fact that the territorial and administrative reform is being implemented for the first time in Albania, require for more information sharing about similar processes happening in other countries, their experiences and learning from implementation of territorial reforms.

UNDP, considering increasing of the capacities of the Albanian partners at national level as a key factor for the successful implementation of the reform, besides other capacity building activities and enrolment of national and international expertise in advisory group, is supporting this study tour to Ireland, as it fits very well with the Albanian Government and STAR project objective that the reform is being perceived and implemented in line with best practices of EU countries.

Why Ireland?

- More advanced compared to Albania with designing and implementation of Territorial and Administrative reform:
- Similarities to Albania in terms of the state of affairs in the past and changes/ progress made with decentralisation process, and territorial and administrative reform;

Objectives of the study tour:

- Participants gain a better insight and knowledge of Irish experience in dealing with territorial and administrative reform issues at central and local level; established structures; process design, dealing with resistance and ways of mitigation;
- Members of the group get to know each other in a different environment and establish good working relations

Issues to focus on:

In relation with the objective of the study tour, the following issues will be in the focus:

- Description of the whole process, step by step from the reform formulation to implementation of the reform ;

- To get information on the structures which are in charge for all the above mentioned steps in the process, their roles and responsibilities;
- How the cooperation between political parties is ensured; between national and local governments and horizontally with other interested institutions and organisation?
- How much the reform affected the decentralisation process? What about election process? If yes what were the measures/steps undertaken?
- What are some of the learning drawn from the reform implementation process? What could be the advice to Albania?
- Get information about the guidelines developed for the transition period.

Whom to visit?

The following are believed to be of interest:

- meeting with representatives of the parliament/commission members from majority and opposition, in case a similar ad-hoc commission established for the reform
- meeting with ministry/ and or structure responsible for the design and implementation of the territorial and administrative reform in Ireland;
- meeting with other representatives from other line ministries in support of the reform/ their role in the process;
- meeting with civil society organisations clarifying their role in advocacy and lobbying for reform issues;
- meeting with media representatives getting information about their played role
- meet any donor agency representative in the country supporting the reform and post reform process
- field visit to a region where there have been a successful implementation of the reform
- field visit to a region where problems were encountered;

Time and duration of the study tour:

The ideal time to organize the study tour would be June 2014. The number of days planned to spend in the country is three days, excluding travelling days, that depending on the schedule and the number of the arranged visits.

Participants (and their obligations)

A good representation of ad-hoc parliamentary commission members is essential for the success and follow up of the study tour.

Upon return in the country, the Albanian delegation will:

- Write a report describing the information and experience obtained abroad, providing recommendations on those practices that can be adopted in Albania and indicating the way they intend to implement them.
- Share the findings with the other members of the parliament and others interested.

Preliminary budget

Budget Study tour to Ireland					
STAR Project					
Budget item	Unit Cost (USD)	Number of units(days)	Number of persons	Total Budget* (USD)	Comments
1.Travel expenses	700	1	15	10.500	
2.Terminals	38	4	15	2.280	
3.Per diem	320	4	15	19.200	
4.Travel insurance	10	1	15	150	
5.Translation exp.	320	4		1280	This expense is based on roughly basis 40 USD/hour , 8 hours/day, 40*8=320 USD/hour
6.Travelling locally				1500	This is a lump sum on rough basis based on a previous similar activity
				34.910	

ANNEX III

Consultation Tour (13 – 27 March 2014)





Expert Group Meetings



Training of Coordinators (14 February 2014)




Round Table on Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform (12 February 2014)



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REFORMA ADMINISTRATIVE TERRITORIALE



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Objective 1: Improving services for citizens at the local level

The Administrative-Territorial Reform will lead to local governments' enhanced administrative, professional, and technical efficiency to deliver better services for citizens and their improved ability to dedicate skilled members of staff to specific services.

OVERVIEW | OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVING SERVICES | OBJECTIVE 2: MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCY | OBJECTIVE 3: EMPOWERING LOCAL | STAKEHOLDERS

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Stakeholders around the country discuss administrative territorial reform

27 March 2014 - More than a thousand stakeholders around the country have actively participated in consultations about the territorial reform, a key initiative of the Albanian Government.

[Read more...](#)


Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform – Challenges of the Process

Tirana, 12 February 2014 – The Minister of State for Local Issues, Mr. Bledi Çuçi organized today a round table discussion on the challenges of the territorial and administrative reform process.

[Read more...](#)

National Conference on the Administrative-Territorial Reform

CONTACT



Technical Secretariat

3:51 PM 4/18/2014

Si mund të kontribuoj unë në reformën administrativo-territoriale?

Si qytetar apo përfaqësues i komunitetit ju mund të kontribuoni:

✓ duke marrë pjesë në takimet në kuadër të konsultimeve publike në lidhje me reformën administrativo-territoriale, që do të zhvillohen edhe afër vendit ku ju banoni;

✓ duke ia shprehur mendimet dhe sugjerimet tuaja Kordinatorit Rajonal për Reformën ose kryetarit të bashkisë/komunës në njësinë ku ju jetoni;

✓ duke ia përcjellë mendimet dhe sugjerimet tuaja Sekretariatit Teknik të Reformës.

✓ duke dhënë drejtpërdrejt sugjerimet tuaja në **facebook**, në faqen **Ministri për Çështjet Vendore**, ose na shkruani në adresën email: **info@reformaterritoriale.al**

Të gjitha opinionet dhe sugjerimet nga individë, komunitete, organizata dhe institucione do të dokumentohen e analizohen dhe do të merren në konsideratë në përgatitjen e kuadrit ligjor dhe zbatimin e reformës administrativo-territoriale.

Për të marrë informacion për Reformën Administrativo - Territoriale dhe për të kontribuar në të mund të kontaktoni Sekretariatit Teknik të Reformës përmes:

faqes në internet
www.reformaterritoriale.al

faqes në Facebook të
Ministrit për Çështje Vendore

Ilogarisë përdoruese në Twitter
#Çështjet Vendore

adresës postare elektronike
info@reformaterritoriale.al
ose
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+042 277561.



REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË

MINISTRI PËR ÇËSHTJET
VENDORE

Më shumë shërbime
dhe investime publike!

Shërbime më të mira
për qytetarët!

**REFORMA
ADMINISTRATIVO
-TERRITORIALE NË
SHQIPËRI**

Çfarë do të sjellë kjo reformë?

Reforma administrativo-territoriale do të çojë në zvogëlimin e numrit të një-sive të qeverisjes vendore (komuna, bashki dhe qarqe) dhe në krijimin e një-sive me shtrirje më të gjerë territo-riale e me popullsi më të madhe.

Qytetarët, komunitetet dhe bizneset lokale janë përfituesit kryesorë të kësaj reforme. Qeveria qendrore do të mund t'u delegojë këtyre një-sive më të mëdha të qeverisjes vendore më shumë kompetenca. Ato do të sigurojnë më shumë të ardhura nga asetet, taksat dhe tarifatat vendore. Për rrjedhojë, do të kenë më shumë fonde, burime njerëzore dhe teknike për t'u ofruar qytetarëve më shumë shërbime, shërbime më efikase me standarde të Bashkimit Europian dhe për të bërë më shumë investime publike (rrugë, shkolla, qendra shërbimesh, etj.).

Ndarja e re administrativo-territoriale e vendit do të garantojë që shërbimet kryesore për qytetarët të ofrohen në qendrat ekzistuese të komunave dhe që komunat egzistuese të përfaqësohen në këshillat bashkiakë të një-sive të reja.

Si rezultat i reformës administrati-vo-territoriale, qeverisja vendore pritet të përfitojë rreth 50 milion dollarë në vit, të cilat mund të shkojnë drejt-përdrejtë për investime në infrastrukturën vendore.

Si do të zhvillohet e miratohet reforma?

Qeveria shqiptare e ka ndërmarrë reformën administrativo-territoriale në bashkërendim dhe bashkëpunim të ngushtë me njësitë e qeverisjes ven-dore dhe ka nxitur e krijuar mundësi të gjera për pjesëmarrjen e opozitës në këtë nismë.

Reforma do të aprovohet nga Kuvendi

i Shqipërisë, i cili pritet të miratojë një ligj të ri "Për ndarjen administrativo-ter-ritoriale të një-sive të qeverisjes ven-dore". Për ta miratuar këtë ligj është e nevojshme një shumicë e cilësuar prej 84 votash të anëtarëve të Parlamentit.

Qeveria po e përgatit reformën me pjesëmarrjen e ekspertëve më të mirë vendas dhe të huaj, si dhe me përkrahjen e plotë të të gjitha institucioneve ndërkombëtare dhe të huaja që përkra-hin forcimin e pushtetit vendor dhe decentralizimin në Shqipëri.

A ka vende të tjera që kanë zbatuar një reformë të ngjashme?

Shumë vende në Europë kanë real-izuar reforma administrativo-territoriale të ngjashme (me reduktim të ndjeshëm të numrit të një-sive të qeverisjes ven-dore) në dhjetë vitet e fundit, si, p.sh., Danimarka, Suedia, Maqedonia, Leto-nia, Polonia, Estonia dhe disa vende të tjera.