

Increase accountability of local councils (Sakrebulo) in pre-selected pilot municipalities through supporting the practical application of one of the forms of citizen participation – hearing reports on the work performed by municipal council members and receiving feedback from citizens

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ Good Governance for Local Development Programme (GGLD) invites organizations to submit the proposals for consultancy services.

1. Brief description of the Programme

Programme Name: Good Governance for Local Development in South Caucasus (GGLD)

Programme Objective: Citizen-oriented services of public institutions improve the living conditions of the population at the local level in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner, in accordance with principles of democracy, rule of law and transparency.

Basic fields of action:

- a) Improving the legal and institutional framework for providing citizen-oriented public services;
- b) Strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to deliver citizen-oriented services and to finance them;
- c) Introducing public participation mechanisms for the engagement of citizens in service delivery;
- d) Strengthening procedures, institutions and instruments of regional and local economic development;
- e) Promoting exchange of experience and cross-border learning.

Programme duration: 01/04/2020 – 31/03/2023

2. Background information

Legislative framework on citizen participation at the local level has been improved over the course of the last years. Organic law of Georgia “Local Self-government Code” foresees different forms and guarantees for the citizen participation. Issues related to citizen participation at the local level are envisaged under various international and national strategic documents. The third strategic goal of the Decentralization Strategy of

Georgia for 2020-2025 envisages the development of reliable, accountable, transparent and result-oriented local self-governments. Facilitation of an effective participation in decision-making and implementation processes at a local level is foreseen as one of the objectives to achieve the aforementioned goal (objective 3.3.). In addition to this, in 2019, the Parliament of Georgia ratified the Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government (so called Utrecht Protocol) defining the rights of citizens to participate in the affairs of a local authority. However, despite the fact that the issue is regulated through the legislative framework and strategic documents, practical implementation of citizen participation at the local level is relatively low.

Strengthening the participatory mechanisms in local service delivery is one of the priorities envisaged under the cooperation agreement between GIZ Good Governance for Local Development Programme (GGLD) and the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia (MRDI). Under the commission of GGLD, a baseline study on current situation in the field of citizen participation was conducted. Additionally, the study identified the mechanisms of participation that should be introduced in the pilot municipalities with the support of the programme. One of the citizen participation forms identified as a result of the study is hearing reports on the work performed by municipal council members and receiving feedback from citizens.

The Local Self-Government Code defines the obligation of a member of local council (Sakrebulo) to arrange public meetings with voters registered in the municipality, to present a report on his/her activities and to respond to questions of voters during the discussion. This provision within the Code is a pre-condition for developing a report / feedback mechanism for Sakrebulo members and its sustainability.

Despite the fact, that most of the municipalities have defined the procedures on presenting the report of a Sakrebulo member and furthermore, the templates of the reports are adopted, there is not a uniform practice on hearing reports of local council members and receiving citizens' feedback.

- Practice/procedure of presenting the report for public hearing by a local council member, as well as the templates of reports and their content require further development;
- Practice/procedure of receiving feedback from citizens and reflect the results into annual work plans of local council members is lacking;
- The legal acts of a municipality do not define procedures on presenting a report of a Sakrebulo member electronically, in a live regime, as well as the possibility for voters to ask questions;
- Before presenting the report, citizens do not have an opportunity to submit the ideas on the issues of their interest they are willing to be discussed at the public

meeting. Abovementioned opportunity would lead to enhanced interest towards the reports and citizen participation;

- Simultaneously, citizens are not aware of the obligation of Sakrebulo members to present the report, as well as in various cases, their interest in the activities of Sakrebulo is low. The aforementioned is derived due to the insufficient communication of Sakrebulo with citizens.

Therefore, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the mechanism of hearing reports of local council (Sakrebulo) members and receiving citizens' feedbacks as one of the forms of participation, it is crucial to refine the full working cycle of Sakrebulo members; such as development and implementation of annual work plans, communication with voters, identification and proper responding to identified needs (including the needs in the area of gender equality, that was surveyed by Gender Equality Council) through submitting/supporting relevant initiatives in the working process of Sakrebulo, as well as through cooperation with the relevant units of Mayor's office.

3. Objective of the Assignment

- The objective of the assignment is to support the practical application of one of the forms of citizen participation – hearing reports on the work performed by municipal council (Sakrebulo) members and receiving feedback from citizens in ten Georgian municipalities; Consequently, the assignment aims at increasing the citizen participation in the activities of Sakrebulo, as well as the accountability of Sakrebulo;
- Raise awareness of Sakrebulo members within the municipalities, Sakrebulo staff and citizens, strengthen communication and cooperation among them. Subsequently, promoting citizen participation in decision-making process on the significant issues within Sakrebulo, as well as in setting local priorities in accordance with the citizens' needs;
- Support Sakrebulo members in elaboration of annual work plans and their implementation, that are linked to the needs identified by citizens and the activities to respond the identified needs (including, through submitting/supporting the initiatives, cooperating with relevant units of Mayor's office and in other relevant forms);

4. Scope of the Assignment

In order to achieve the objectives envisaged under the assignment, a service provider shall ensure the performance of tasks defined below within the following pilot

municipalities (within the frames of the assignment the list of municipalities can be amended, based on the written agreement between the commissioner and the service provider):

1. Sagarejo Municipality;
2. Rustavi Municipality;
3. Keda Municipality;
4. Oni Municipality;
5. Senaki Municipality;
6. Kharagauli Municipality;
7. Lagodekhi Municipality;
8. Bolnisi Municipality;
9. Khashuri Municipality;
10. Kazbegi Municipality.

By the end of September 2021, the service provider shall ensure the implementation of the following activities:

4.1. Study the practice and develop recommendations/amendments with the purpose of revising/improving the regulatory framework:

- To study and analyse the practice of arranging public hearings and presenting the reports of the activities with voters by a Sakrebulo member:
 - Whether meetings with population/voters are being conducted;
 - Who ensures arrangement/facilitation of the meetings;
 - How the reports are presented by Sakrebulo members; whether they have adopted reporting templates; whether the reports are published electronically;
 - Whether there is a practice of proactive publication of the report and the agenda of the public meeting;
 - Whether there is a practice of presenting the report in an online live regime;
 - Whether there is a practice for the voters to ask questions and provide their feedback;
 - Whether there is a practice of considering feedback within the working process of a Sakrebulo member, if exists in which forms.
 - Whether there is a practice of drafting annual work plans by the local council members and participation of citizens in this process.
 - What are the root causes of insufficient practice and what necessary steps have to be taken in order to improve the process.
- With the purpose of improving the existing practice, revise/analyse the relevant legislative acts of the municipality. Consequently, based on the necessity develop

draft amendments where the framework of actions, rules and functions will be clearly defined that is linked to:

- Procedures for presenting the report of activities of a Sakrebulo member;
 - Template of the report of activities of a Sakrebulo member (structure, content, ways to present (including the electronic form));
 - Publication of the report of activities of a Sakrebulo member in advance;
 - Receiving feedback from population (including electronically);
 - Mechanisms of identifying citizens' needs and reflecting them in an annual work plan of a Sakrebulo member.
- While defining the rules and procedures following quality criteria shall be considered:
 - *inclusive (LNOB, Leave no one behind)*
 - *gender-sensitive*
 - *online availability (in remote areas)*
 - *access to online media guaranteed or alternative participation offered*
 - *data protection / privacy guaranteed*
 - *procedures promote accountability*

Initiation of relevant amendments within the Sakrebulo Decree should be ensured from December 2021.

The phase of supporting the practical application of the mechanism of hearing reports on the work performed by municipal council (Sakrebulo) members and receiving feedbacks from citizens.

4.2. Strengthen the capacities of Sakrebulo members/staff

- Strengthen the capacities of all members of local councils (Sakrebulo) as well as other staff (through the trainings and consultations) in the following areas:
 - Functions and competences of council members, forms of carrying out their functions;
 - Methods of elaborating the report, presenting (presentation/communication) the report at the public hearing and receiving feedback;
 - Methods to reflect results/findings of the feedback in an annual work plan;
 - Methods of reflecting the results of the feedback in the priorities of the municipality for the upcoming year.

- Drafting the templates for the annual work plans of Sakrebulo members that should include:
 - Communication with population, identification of their needs and consideration during decision-making processes;
 - Initiate the issues in line with the identified needs, within the work of Sakrebulo;
 - Ensure close coordination/communication with relevant units of the Mayor's office in order to reflect the identified needs within the municipal planning documents (document of priorities, municipal budget, social-economic/sector development documents, etc.).
- Develop the criteria for the selection of Sakrebulo members (up to five members per municipality) in order to ensure piloting of the project. Based on the developed criteria select the Sakrebulo members (considering the gender criteria);
- Organise gradual meetings with preselected council members in order to discuss the process and challenges, as well as to provide expert advice.

4.3. **Support the practical application of the mechanism of hearing reports on the work performed by municipal council (Sakrebulo) members and receiving feedback from citizens**

- Organize the public hearing of reports on the activities of selected Sakrebulo members with the support/facilitation of non-government sector in 10 pilot municipalities:
 - Public hearing of the report on the activities of Sakrebulo members shall be conducted both verbally during the public meetings, as well as in an electronic form;
 - To this end, it is important to invite interested voters and conduct lively discussion on significant issues of the report; public hearings should be conducted in line with the principle of leave no one behind (LNOB);
 - Identify needs of all groups of population throughout the discussions and reflect the feedback received from citizens in further activities of a Sakrebulo member (within the work plan of future actions).

4.4. **Recommendations**

- Assessment of piloted reporting/feedback mechanism of a Sakrebulo member:
 - Identification of existing gaps and challenges within the process and providing relevant recommendations in order to respond to existing gaps and challenges. In case of need, draft amendments to respective local legislative acts;

- Based on the results of the assessment improvement of relevant framework regulating the reporting/feedback mechanism of a Sakrebulo member, as well as consideration of the abovementioned information within the documents elaborated for the municipality;
- Development of respective recommendations for relevant stakeholders (with the indication of roles and functions of the stakeholders whose contributions are needed) in order to disseminate the aforementioned experience (good practice) in other municipalities.

5. Reporting

- 5.1. Service provider shall submit mid-term and final reports.
- 5.2. Reports and annexed documentation shall be submitted in Georgian; hereby, executive summary shall be submitted in English as well.
- 5.3. Documents should be precise and clear, in order to avoid any misunderstanding and inaccurate interpretations.
- 5.4. In case of need deliver presentations on project and its results with different interested stakeholders (MRDI, GIZ, municipalities, etc.).

6. Other terms

- 6.1. Service provider shall regularly provide information on results and perform all the assignments listed in the ToR in a close coordination and agreement with GIZ and in case of need, with MRDI.
- 6.2. During the performance of the assignment, service provider shall meet the personal data protection standards envisaged by the legislation.

Submission and Selection of Proposal

Partner for the consultancy service will be selected based on a competition.

Entrepreneurial (LLC) and non-entrepreneurial legal entities (NLE, NPO), NGOs/CSOs are eligible to participate in the competition.

GIZ reserves the right to check the information indicated in the application. Application will be cancelled in case of inaccurate information.

Selection criteria

1. The technical proposal shall provide evidence of the organization's capabilities and assignment-related experience in executing similar projects in the area of local self - government and citizen participation (in particular, working experience with the local councils);
2. The technical proposal shall explain in detail how the company will plan the work and perform the objectives listed in the Terms of Reference (ToR) document considering such aspects as compliance with the ToR, implementation methodology, timelines of actions included in the technical proposal;
3. A work plan, including implementation schedule of number of workdays per tasks to be performed by the contractor for completion of this assignment;
4. Experts assigned to executing of the tasks outlined in the ToR shall have at least five years of working experience in the field of local self-government and citizen participation (including proven working experience with local councils). Reference to similar work/projects completed shall be included in his/her CV to be attached to the offer.
5. Budget cost efficiency.

More detailed information on assessment criteria is provided under the annexed assessment grid.

Project Duration and payments

Tentative contract period for the service will be **15.06.2021 – 15.11.2022**.

Within the frames of the contract the payments will be made gradually.

Submission of Application

Application should be submitted in English.

Technical proposal shall contain the following information (*recommended structure of the proposal*):

1. *Title page*

Name and registration number of organization; legal address, telephone number, e-mail address, director of organization - signature and stamp of a director.

2. Project name and implementation period (month/year-month/year)

2. 1 Project Description

2.2. project goals and objectives and implementation methodology (shall be in compliance with the terms of reference under this tender announcement);

2.3 Activities defined by the project and implementation schedule

#	Activity	June	July	August	September	Comment
1	X							<i>[If Relevant]</i>
2	Y							
3	Z							
...	...							

2.4 Persons involved in the project and their functions

Please, indicate the list and functions of persons, who will be involved in the implementation of the project and will be respectively indicated in the budget.

2.5 Annex

Respective Resumes (CV) of the staff involved in the implementation of the project should be attached to the application.

Applicant may attach any additional relevant information to the application.

Financial offer shall contain the following information:

Budget in GEL (excl. VAT)

#	Category	Unit	Number of unit	Unit price (GEL)	Total value (GEL)	Comment
1	Salary/expert fee**					
1.1		[man-day]				
1.2						

1.3						
	...					
	sum					
2	Other costs					
2.1	Business trip costs					
2.2	Hotel costs (meetings), catering					
2.3	...					
2.4	...					
2.5	...					
	Sum					
	Total sum					

*** indicated fees shall include income tax and pension fund costs.*

Budget should not contain the costs that are not relevant for the activities envisaged under the project. Neither ongoing costs of the organization nor any kind of debt will be covered from the budget.

Fee rate of experts shall include all personnel costs, including ancillary personnel costs; backstopping, communication and reporting costs; and all overheads, profit, interest, risks, etc. (As indicated in the article 10.2 of the General Terms of Contract /Annex 4).