

Support for the Government of Albania for the Evaluation of the ‘Road Map for the Government Policy towards a More Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2019-2023’ Albania and Preparation of the new “Roadmap covering 2024 – 2027’

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The EU TACSO 3 team has been requested by the Government of Albania to assist with the evaluation of the current “Road Map for the Government Policy towards a More Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development 2019-2023” and to support the preparation for a new Road Map covering the period 2024-2027.

The EU TACSO 3 team has the support of the EU Delegation in Albania and DG NEAR (EU TACSO 3 contracting authority) to provide the requested assistance.

This document sets out the terms of reference for a non-key expert to provide the requested support and the expected profile of the expert.

This draft is for discussion and approval by all stakeholders involved: Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, EU Delegation Albania and DG NEAR unit D5.

2. Background

The creation of an enabling environment for Civil Society organizations is one of the preconditions and measures for stable democracy in a modern nation-state. This environment created by the State has to guarantee favourable fiscal and legal conditions for Civil Society and needs to create space for freedom of media, independent institutions, freedom of speech as well as other fundamental human and citizen’s rights.

The Government of Albania approved the original Road Map for an enabling government policy towards civil society in May 2015. The current revised Road Map 2019 – 2023 is presented through three strategic directions, mainly covering the original nine priority areas of the 2015 Road Map. The three strategic directions with its nine priority areas took into account the principles and objectives set out in the Guidelines for EU support to civil society 2014-2021.

The current Road Map 2019 – 2023 is coming to an end and an end-term evaluation of the achievements and results of the Road Map implementation in 2023 should take place before embarking into the process of preparing a new Road Map 2024 – 2027.

The result of the evaluation should be reflected in the successive strategic document. The new Road Map should clearly set out the aim and methods of Government CSO support and cooperation in the years 2023 - 2027. The structure of the Road Map document should be based on the DG NEAR Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in the Enlargement region 2021 – 2027, which have been conceived as a framework for the EU enlargement region as a whole. They provide the basis for a tailor-made approach at the national level in

accordance with the country context but also allow for the measurement of progress at the country level, as well across the enlargement region.

3. Evaluation of the Current Road Map

Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation of the current road map are to:

1. Assess the relevance of the objectives in the current road map; relevance should be established in relation to the state of the enabling environment for civil society in Albania and in reference to the DG NEAR Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society.
2. Assess the extent to which the objectives of the current road map have been achieved, and in doing so, to establish the current state of the enabling environment for civil society in Albania;
3. Assess the effectiveness of the institutional arrangements (including mandates, responsibilities, resources available, etc) established for implementation of the Road Map; identify lessons learned from these institutional arrangements.
4. Identify lessons learned from the process of development of the Road Map, including reference to the level of involvement of civil society and the methods of consultation.
5. Assess the effectiveness and lessons learned from the efforts to monitor implementation of the Road Map.

Recommendations

One of the main reasons for undertaking the evaluation is to provide clear, feasible and actionable recommendations for the development of the next Road Map.

The evaluation should provide well reasoned and evidence-based rationale for its recommendations. The recommendations should include reference to, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Recommended methods, good practices and lessons learned for developing the next Road Map;
2. Recommended priorities for objectives of the next Road Map;
3. Recommended strategies/measures for achieving the objectives of the next Road Map;
4. Recommended mechanisms and institutional arrangements for effective implementation of the next Road Map;
5. Recommended mechanisms and institutional arrangements for effective monitoring and reporting against progress of implementation of the next Road Map.

Approach

The evaluation will be led by an independent international expert with significant experience working with civil society and in evaluation.

The expert will be supported directly by the EU TACS 3 Country Coordinator for Albania, with additional support from, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the National Council for Civil Society and the National Agency to Support Civil Society.

The evaluation approach will include document reviews, in-depth interviews with government and civil society representatives, focus group discussions, a survey instrument and potentially other methods as determined by the expert.

The evaluation will have the following activities/steps and estimated NKE input

Activity	No. days
Preparation, introduction meetings and initial desk review	2
Kick off consultation with civil society representatives (online)	1
Development of methodology and evaluation action plan	1
Desk research	4
Survey design, launch and analysis of results	3
Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders (online or live)	3
Draft report	4
Validation of key findings and recommendations (online consultation)	1
Finalise report	2
Presentation of final report.	1
TOTAL	22

4. Development of the new Road Map

The approach to developing the new Road Map will be in line with the Government of Albania guidance on strategy development. It will also be guided by the findings and recommendations from the evaluation of the current Road Map.

The aim of the Road Map development process is to ensure that the Road Map produced is ambitious but realistic, sufficiently focused and specific, clearly articulated, relevant to current needs and priorities, and has commitment and support from a range of stakeholders, including both government and civil society. The Road Map should serve as a guiding tool primarily for the Government of Albania, so should have realistic and effective mechanisms for implementation as well as for monitoring progress.

Indicatively, the approach for the development of the new Road Map will consist of the following steps:

Activity	No. days
Drafting a proposed approach and consultation with key stakeholders to agree approach;	2
Consultation and information gathering	5
Facilitation of Road Map design	5
Drafting Road Map	3
Consultation on initial Road Map design, including objectives, measures/strategies and other content;	3
Finalisation of draft Road Map.	3
TOTAL	21

Further details of the design process for the new Road Map will be elaborated following the preparation of the evaluation.

5. Expert profile

The evaluation and Road Map development will be supported by a Non Key Expert (NKE) engaged by the EU TACSO 3 project.

The work for the Non Key Expert(s) will be divided into two assignments: i) the evaluation of the Road Map and ii) the development of the new Road Map.

The selected expert will be engaged initially for the evaluation of the Road Map. On successful completion of the assignment, the expert will be invited to undertake the development of the new Road Map.

Evaluation and strategy expert

The evaluation and strategy expert will be a senior expert with experience in civil society and public administration.

The evaluation expert will be responsible for: detailed design of methodology, design of data collection tools (including interview/focus group questionnaires and online survey), data collection and analysis, drafting reports, leading consultations and verification exercises on the findings and recommendations, finalising and presenting the evaluation report. She/he will be responsible for ensuring excellent relationships with key stakeholders, including the Government of Albania, key civil society representatives and the EU TACSO 3 team.

The evaluation expert is expected to have the following **general qualifications and experience**:

- University degree or equivalent (i.c. 8 years of professional experience following secondary education).
- At least 10 years of working experience, out of which at least 5 years of professional experience in international cooperation for development.
- At least 5 experiences of leading evaluation assignments, including evaluation of Government policies and strategies. Evaluation experience should include evaluation design, in-person and desk research methods, report-writing and leading consultations.
- In-depth knowledge of civil society and in particular the enabling environment for civil society.
- Excellent knowledge of English language.

The following specific experience is desirable:

- Experience in evaluation of government strategies for cooperation with civil society, or similar policy measures.
- Experience in supporting the development of government strategies, in close cooperation with public officials and civil society representatives.
- Knowledge of the Western Balkans region and/or the enlargement region.
- Experience of working in Albania.

6. Management and Steering

The expert(s) will be supervised in their day-to-day work by the EU TACSO 3 Team Leader, with the support of the EU TACSO 3 Country Coordinator for Albania. The Country Coordinator will provide research and logistical support.

The expert will maintain a strong and close working relationship with a nominated person in the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs. She/he will regularly inform the Ministry of progress and consult on key issues relating to the implementation of the evaluation and Road Map development.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will establish a reference group of experienced civil society and public officials who will provide guidance and act as a resource for the evaluation. It is suggested that the Reference Group be composed of 3 to 5 members of the National Council for Civil Society.

The reference group may meet regularly (online or in-person) during the course of the evaluation and Road Map development process and be consulted individually on an *ad hoc* basis.

7. Deliverables

Evaluation

The evaluation expert will be responsible for providing the following deliverables:

1. Evaluation methodology;
2. Evaluation research instruments (at least: desk research protocol, interview/focus group questionnaire(s), online survey questions);
3. Draft evaluation report;
4. Final evaluation report.

Road Map development

The Road Map development expert will be responsible for providing the following deliverables:

1. Road map development process design and schedule
2. Key questions for the Road Map
3. Notes from major consultations
4. Draft Road Map document
5. Notes from consultations on the draft Road Map
6. Final draft Road Map for hand-over to the Ministry

8. Timeline

Activity	Timeframe
Evaluation	
Engaging expert	December 2023
Induction and design of evaluation methodology	January 2024
Desk research, surveys and interviews	February 2024
Preparing draft report	March 2024
Consultation on draft report	March 2024
Finalisation of draft report	March 2024
Road Map development	

Activity	Timeframe
Process design and key questions	April 2024
Consultations and design workshops	May 2024
Preparation of draft Road Map	June 2024
Consultation on draft Road Map	June – July 2024
Finalisation of new Road Map	July 2024

9. Indicative expenditure items

Because of time constraints, it is anticipated that meetings and consultations will largely be held online. However, there will be opportunities for short in-person events and consultations. In-person visits are essential to ensure mutual understanding and buy-in to the process. The main additional costs of the process are anticipated to be as follows.

Evaluation

Purpose	Item	Expenses	Covered by
Introduction and kick-off meetings	2-day in person visit to Tirana	Travel and per diems of evaluation expert	EU TACSO 3 project
	Kick off meetings/workshop	Cost of meeting room, refreshments	Government of Albania (assuming use of Government meeting room)
Presentation of final evaluation report	2-day in-person visit to Tirana	Travel and per diems of evaluation expert	EU TACSO 3 project
	1-day workshop	Cost of meeting room, refreshments	Government of Albania (assuming use of Government meeting room)

Road Map development

Purpose	Item	Expenses	Covered by
Launch of new phase	2-day in person visit to Tirana	Travel and per diems of evaluation expert	EU TACSO 3 project
	Kick off meetings/workshop	Cost of meeting room, refreshments	Government of Albania (assuming use of Government meeting room)
Road Map development workshop	2-day in-person visit to Tirana	Travel and per diems of evaluation expert	EU TACSO 3 project

	1-day workshop	Cost of meeting room, refreshments	Government of Albania (assuming use of Government meeting room)
Presentation of final draft Road Map	2-day in-person visit to Tirana	Travel and per diems of evaluation expert	EU TACSO 3 project
	1-day workshop	Cost of meeting room, refreshments	Government of Albania (assuming use of Government meeting room)

Application procedure:

Interested candidates should submit:

- 1) their CV (in EU expert format) with the contact details of three referees, and
- 2) a cover letter describing how their experience meets the terms of reference,

By email to gdsivacancies@gdsi.ie by 10 January 2024 @12.00 CET with the subject: *Application for AL RM*. Successful applicants will be contacted for an interview.