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PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT (PLGP) IN ALBANIA

YEAR SIX WORK PLAN
(OCTOBER 2016 – JULY 2017)

SEPTEMBER 2016

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAM	Association of Albanian Municipalities
AIS	Albanian Institute of Science
AITR	Agency for the Implementation of the Territorial Reform
ALA	Association of Local Authorities
ALAA	Association for Local Autonomy in Albania
BAWIS	Billing and Accounting Water Information System
BCCD	Balkan Center for Cooperation and Development
CAP	Citizens Advisory Panel
CBS	Community-Based Scorecards
CEP	Centre for European Perspective
CoE	Council of Europe
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
dldp	Decentralization and Local Development Programme
DO	Development Objective
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAIS	Finance Administration Information System
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoA	Government of Albania
GLTP	General Local Territorial Plan
GNTF	General National Territorial Plan
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP3	Institute for Public and Private Policies

IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IPRO	Immovable Property Registration Office
IPT	Immovable Property Tax
IT	Information Technology
LGFL	Local Government Finance Law
LGU	Local Government Unit
LGPA	Local Governance Program in Albania
MIT	Ministry of Transportation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoSLI	Minister of State for Local Issues
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MUD	Ministry of Urban Development
NAIS	National Agency for Information Society
NALAS	Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe
NCSDLG	National Crosscutting Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRC	National Registration Centre
NTC	National Territorial Council
NTPA	National Territorial Planning Agency
OCSE	Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe
OSR	Own-Source Revenues
OSS	One-Stop Shop
PCVs	Peace Corps Volunteers
PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
PFM	Public Finance Management
PLGP	Planning and Local Governance Project
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RDF	Regional Development Fund
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment

SLA	Service-Level Agreement
STAR	Support to Territorial Administrative Reform
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
TAIS	Local Tax Administration Information System
TAR	Territorial Administrative Reform
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WB	World Bank

1.0 OVERVIEW

On January 3, 2012, Tetra Tech ARD was awarded the five-year United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Planning and Local Governance Project (PLGP) in Albania. The PLGP contract was subsequently modified, and the period of performance extended by six months, through July 2, 2017. On October 1, 2016, PLGP will initiate its sixth and final year of implementation. Year Six will be an abbreviated year of nine months, beginning October 1, 2016, and ending with the project closure on July 2, 2017.

The goal of PLGP is to provide technical assistance and training to the Government of Albania (GoA) and Albanian local government institutions to help the GoA and local governments successfully implement decentralization legislation, policies, and reforms. To achieve this goal, the Project is providing assistance in the following four areas:

- *Component I:* Support the GoA's work to implement effective government decentralization policies and legislation.
- *Component II:* Improve the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of local government operations.
- *Component III:* Improve local government management and oversight of selected public utilities to provide services in accordance with European Union (EU) standards.
- *Component IV:* Strengthen the capabilities of the GoA and local governments to plan and manage urban and regional growth.

PLGP is designed to contribute to USAID/Albania's Development Objective #1 (DO#1), *Strengthened rule of law and improved governance*, as elaborated in the Albania Country Development Cooperation Strategy: 2011–2015. DO#1 supports the strengthening of democratic institutions in the country by improving the judiciary and governance of health care, deepening the decentralization process, and rooting out corruption, with the goal of advancing democracy in the country while meeting key criteria for Albania's accession to the EU.

During Year 1, PLGP selected and signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with 15 partner local government units (LGUs): the municipalities of Tirana, Kamza, Vora, Berat, Kuçova, Fier, Lushnja, Patos, Durres, Vlora, Saranda, Elbasan, and Korça; and the communes of Paskuqan and Kashar. The Project has also provided assistance to water/wastewater utilities serving the above-mentioned communities. The Project is cooperating with and assisting the National Territorial Planning Agency (NTPA), with which an MoU was signed during Year 1 of the Project. Since Year 3, at the request of the GoA to USAID, PLGP also provided significant support and technical assistance to the Ministry of Urban Development (MUD) and to the Minister of State for Local Issues (MoSLI), both of which were created in 2013 following the election of the Socialist-Party-led coalition.

Since the design and launch of PLGP, the local-governance-enabling environment has changed dramatically. In July 2014, the Parliament approved the Law "On the administrative and territorial division of local government units in the Republic of Albania." With the enactment of Territorial Reform, the number of local governments in Albania is reduced from 373 to 61. The election of the Mayors and Municipal Council of the newly consolidated municipalities in June 2015 represents the greatest change to Albania's system of local government since the democratic transition of 1992. The challenge in 2016,

and through the remaining life of PLGP, has been—and will continue to be—to ensure the success of Territorial Reform. Addressing this challenge requires the further advancement of decentralization reforms and the continuation of efforts to build the capacity of public officials and institutions at both the national and local levels.

In response to this rapidly changing enabling environment, on January 26, 2015, a PLGP Contract Modification was executed that increased the funding and extended the period of performance of PLGP. PLGP, as a result of the Contract Modification, has expanded and intensified the assistance required by both central and local governments to effectively implement Territorial Reform. At the national level, PLGP has provided, and will continue to provide, assistance required to prepare and implement decentralization reforms. A new Organic Law on Local Self Governance was approved in December 2015, and revisions to the key formula for inter-governmental transfers were enacted. With PLGP serving as the lead provider of technical assistance, a first-ever comprehensive Local Government Finance Law (LGFL) has been drafted. At the local level, additional assistance has been extended to six newly designated “model municipalities.” PLGP has supported five partner local governments in preparing General Local Territorial Plans (GLTPs). The project envisions that the GoA will approve the GLTPs in the early months of Year Six of PLGP. This Year Six Work Plan fulfills PLGP’s initial contract obligations and reflects the extension of PLGP and the expansion and intensification of activities allowed as a result of the contract modification.

PLGP has worked closely and cooperatively with the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism (now called the Ministry of Urban Development because of a recent restructuring) and the MoSLI since their creation in 2013. During Year Six, PLGP will continue to assist the MUD, the MoSLI, and the NTPA. The long-stalled legally mandated General National Territorial Plan (GNTP) was approved in 2016. PLGP has strived to build the capacity of newly consolidated municipalities to prepare and adopt GLTPs. In addition to the GLTPs of five model municipalities, it is expected that 26 GLTPs prepared with GoA assistance will soon be approved. The daunting challenges of fiscal decentralization remain. Activities in the Year Six Work Plan are designed to provide more financial resources to under-funded local governments. Activities will include the training of national and local officials in the use of financial instruments for land development.

Year Six Work Plan activities will continue to assist model municipalities in testing, demonstrating, and implementing activities designed to improve municipal management and strengthen citizen participation. Best Practices and Success Stories will emerge for replication in other municipalities. While activities in Tirana and Durres have not been expanded, targeted assistance to these municipalities will continue. In Tirana, efforts will continue to support the creation of a property taxation system for residential properties. The municipal finance and tax administration practices of Durres will inform the efforts of other municipalities in strengthening public financial management. The robust array of activities outlined for Component II will target the model municipalities of Berat, Elbasan, Fier, Korça, Kuçova, and Lushnja. PLGP’s remaining partners (Kamza, Patos, Saranda, Vora, and Vlora) will continue to receive tailored support and technical assistance. In addition, these partners and the model municipalities will regularly exchange best practices and participate in policy dialogue with GoA officials. PLGP will offer targeted technical assistance to partner local governments interested in developing best practices and municipal innovations. Where possible, and upon request, non-partner municipalities (Roskovec, Mallakstra, Divjaka, Shkodra, and Gjirokastra) have been—and will continue to be—invited to participate in capacity-building activities.

Per USAID’s directive, Component III activities as initially designed, and focusing on improving the performance of water/wastewater utilities, were not expanded under the contract modification. However, efforts to improve the delivery of water and wastewater services, and planning for related infrastructure improvements, will continue.

In Year Five, the “planning toolkit” prepared by PLGP in collaboration with the NTPA provided a practical resource and guided officials from all 61 municipalities through the process and methodology of preparing a GLTP. In Year Six, PLGP will continue to share the lessons learned and best practices of territorial planning with all municipalities. The formal assistance to five model municipalities in preparing GLTPs will culminate with the GoA’s approval of those plans during the first quarter of Year Six.

Because this is the last year of PLGP and the project will close by July 2, 2017, closeout activities will occur during Year Six. On or before March 1, 2017, PLGP will submit a Demobilization Plan to USAID for COR approval. On or before June 1, 2017, PLGP will submit a detailed Draft Completion Report to USAID for COR approval.

1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE WORK PLAN

Per the Tetra Tech ARD Contract with USAID, the Year Six Work Plan will cover the period from October 1, 2016, to July 2, 2017, to coincide with the beginning of the United States Government (USG) fiscal year and end on the completion date of this contract. Year Six activities will continue to focus on advancing decentralization reforms at both the national and local levels and supporting the implementation of Territorial Administrative Reform (TAR). The project will provide training and technical assistance to partner municipalities and to the MoSLI, MUD/NTPA, and the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

This Work Plan is structured as follows. First, we present a narrative overview in Section 1.0, which describes PLGP challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned to date; the use of Albanian subcontractors and organizations in Year Six; and planned collaboration with other projects and donors in Year Six. Section 2.0 includes a narrative of the PLGP Work Plan by project component, including the technical approach that will be used in Year Six for each. Section 3.0 describes the activities that will be conducted under each component toward the stated PLGP tasks and deliverables. Both the expected results of the component to be accomplished over the lifetime of the project and the relevant indicators are listed under each component in Section 3.0. Including the expected results in the Work Plan ensures that all activities undertaken by PLGP are specifically aimed at achieving program goals and meeting (or exceeding) contract requirements. New and/or expanded activities made possible as a result of PLGP’s January 2015 contract modification are included.

We then present an Implementation Timeline in Section 4.0 that provides a detailed timeline of activities that will be undertaken from October 1, 2016–July 2, 2017, for each of the four project components as well as for Monitoring and Evaluation. Target dates refer to fiscal year quarters. Thus, this Work Plan for Year Six covers the period starting in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 and ending on the contract completion date, Quarters 1–3. When activities will be implemented throughout the duration of the Work Plan, the target date is listed as “ongoing.”

1.2 CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

As regularly noted, the last two years have been pivotal years for local governments in Albania, with unprecedented opportunities—and challenges—to advance decentralization and strengthen local governance. Over the past few years, USAID and PLGP have contributed to efforts to advance the decentralization process and strengthen local governance. Much progress has been made in achieving USAID’s overarching goal for PLGP: “to help the GoA and local governments successfully implement decentralization legislation, policies, and reforms.” Since the PLGP was launched in January 2012, key “building blocks” have been constructed that enhance the enabling environment for decentralized and democratic local governance. The adoption of the Law on Territorial Administrative Reform in July 2014 reduced the number of local governments from 374 to 61, providing an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen local governance. The local elections of June 2015 consolidated the political leadership of

these 61 new municipalities with the selection of Mayors and Municipal Councils. The adoption of the new National Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance in July 2015 (the first since 1999), prepared with PLGP support, will guide and prioritize actions to strengthen local governance through 2020. In December 2015, the Parliament enacted a new Law on Local Self-Governance (Organic Law). This Law confirms the authority of the 61 newly created LGUs in Albania and entrusts the municipalities—in theory—with both the responsibility and the resources to serve their citizens better. PLGP was the lead provider of technical assistance in drafting this law. For the GoA’s 2017 Budget, PLGP assisted the MoF in revising the Unconditional Grant Formula in an effort to ensure the fairer and more equitable distribution of revenues to the newly created municipalities. Unfortunately, the Unconditional Grant was not funded at the level recommended by PLGP and USAID.

Throughout the life of the project, PLGP has endeavored to support efforts and build the capacity of local governments to better serve their citizens. This support has helped partner municipalities to improve their performance, accountability, transparency, and ability to involve citizens in decision making. Specific outcome efforts include improved tax administration and collection, better planning and growth management, more engaged citizens, stronger Information and Communications Technology (ICT), improved service delivery and better performance by water utilities. In Year Six, PLGP will build on the successes of the first five years to support good governance and effective municipal management. Year Six activities will firm up and share the best practices of the “model” municipalities: Berat, Elbasan, Fier, Korça, Kuçova, and Lushnja. PLGP’s partner municipalities (Kamza, Patos, Saranda, Vora, and Vlora) will continue to receive tailored support and technical assistance. While PLGP does not intend to launch new activities for the larger original partners of Tirana and Durrës, the Project will strive to respond to discreet and manageable requests for training and technical assistance. In Tirana, PLGP will continue to support the municipality in creating a property tax system for residential properties.

More than ever, we understand that for territorial reform to be effective, it must be accompanied by other decentralization reforms, particularly within the realm of fiscal decentralization. We will continue to advocate for fiscal decentralization policies and legislation and work with the GoA to see that adequate financial resources flow to underfunded local governments. Most importantly, PLGP will continue to support efforts to draft, through a consultative process, Albania’s first-ever comprehensive LGFL.

PLGP will continue to work closely and cooperatively with the MUD and the MoSLI in fulfilling their mandates. The legally mandated GNTP has been approved, and significant progress has been made in drafting the local GLTPs. PLGP will continue its support of five model municipalities and the NTPA in shepherding the GLTP’s through the GoA-prescribed approval process. The Year Six training being offered to national and local officials in applying financial instruments for land development will help generate the financial resources necessary to implement these plans. Assistance to MoSLI will focus on supporting the launch of the Central/Local Government Consultative Council. PLGP remains committed to supporting the staffing of the council and to assisting in developing the policy papers and analysis that will be necessary to support and inform the work and deliberations of the Council.

While proud of the progress and accomplishments noted above, PLGP recognizes that there are many challenges to address before the full potential of decentralized and democratic local governance is unleashed. Below is a summation of the key challenges and lessons learned:

- In Albania, the **Fiscal Decentralization** dimension of decentralization remains particularly weak. Territorial Reform will fail, and municipalities will be unable to effectively deliver services to their citizens, unless this dimension is strengthened. The historical underfunding of local governments in Albania must end.
- The **Local Government Finance Law** currently being drafted must be approved in 2016. The Law will provide a long-overdue transparent system that enables local governments to adequately finance

their functions through a combination of own revenues, shared taxes, central government transfers, and well-defined principles of sound financial management.

- **Own Source Revenues** must be increased, with a particular focus on Property Taxes. Greater authority must be granted to municipalities to set tax rates. However, expectations concerning short-term increases in revenues from property taxes must be tempered. The implementation of a robust value-based property tax system will require years.
- Local governments simply, and indisputably, need more revenue if they are to effectively respond to citizens' demands, and rightful expectations, for better services. **Unconditional Grants**, the key mechanism for intergovernmental transfers, must be increased and “anchored” to become more adequate and predictable.
- The **Regional Development Fund (RDF)**, or conditional grants, have increased sharply, while unconditional intergovernmental transfers have declined or stagnated. The allocation of these funds is neither predictable nor transparent. The RDF must be reformed to better align with the principles of decentralization and the needs of local governments.
- The LGFL provides an opportunity to diversify and increase local government revenues by clarifying the nature and increasing the catalogue of **Shared Taxes**. The sharing of taxes (personal income and value added taxes, for example) will also incentivize local economic development and improve tax collection and compliance.
- Municipalities must be given the ability to borrow. **Local Borrowing** is essential to fund needed infrastructure and capital improvements. Debt space must be reserved for local governments.
- Local governments must improve their performance, accountability, transparency, and ability to involve citizens in decision making. An ongoing commitment to **Municipal Capacity Building** is required. Particular attention must be given to support municipalities in their effective utilization of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Local governments have been clearly entrusted with the responsibility of delivering the most basic and essential public services—**Water and Wastewater Services**. Municipalities must be supported as they face the challenge of overseeing utilities and delivering these essential services.
- Progress has been made in **Territorial Planning** with the adoption of a General National Territorial Plan and the preparation of General Local Territorial Plans. Ongoing support will be required by local and national officials to implement these plans.
- Citizen Advisory Panels (CAPs) have proven to be an effective mechanism to enhance **Civic Engagement**. Efforts must continue to strengthen and replicate CAPs.
- Opportunities must be created to build a non-partisan consensus on issues of importance to local governance. The GoA commitment to establish a Central/Local Government **Consultative Council** must be realized.

PLGP is fully committed to meet (or exceed) the requirements of the initial contract and January 2015 contract modification between USAID and Tetra Tech ARD. PLGP acknowledges that certain activities envisioned in the Year Five Work Plan have been delayed as a result of decisions and actions (or inactions) of the Government of Albania, and as a result of other circumstances affecting specific planned activities. In part, these delays can be attributed to the transitions following the June 2015 local elections. Other activities have been delayed and deferred to Year Six because of overly ambitious assumptions concerning the advancement of national-level decentralization reforms. For example, the adoption of a new Organic Law on the “Organization and Functioning of Local Governments” was envisioned in Year

Four, but only occurred in December 2015. Furthermore, the Government has deferred the preparation of a Local Government Finance Law until 2016. That Law has yet to be adopted as the Year Six Work Plan is submitted. The Government has yet to create the Central/Local Government Consultative Council. Assistance to partner municipalities in implementing Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) has been impeded by the inability of PLGP to identify viable PPP opportunities. The practical assessment of municipal Public Financial Systems has been delayed as we plan to undertake a more rigorous Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment in collaboration with the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The municipalities of Berat and Kuçova have delayed the completion of a Water/Wastewater Transition Plan, while the future of the Regional Utility is being considered.

While these decisions and delays are both understandable and manageable, they do affect the work planning of PLGP and the scheduling of certain activities. Under any circumstances, contractual requirements will be met and exceeded. Work remains to fulfill the objectives of the Contract Modification related to Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). Frankly, so far, few opportunities for viable PPPs in model municipalities have been identified. The Year Six Work Plan reaffirms PLGP's commitment to assist municipalities in examining the feasibility of and in implementing PPPs.

Below, by PLGP component, is a more specific discussion of the challenges, opportunities, and the lessons learned:

1.2.1 Component I

The adoption of the Law on Territorial Administrative Reform (TAR), reducing the number of local governments from 374 to 61, provides an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen local governance. Implementing TAR and the related decentralization reforms critical to its success will continuously be an extraordinary challenge for the GoA and PLGP in the coming years. A new National Decentralization Strategy was approved in 2015. The challenge for the GoA, with the support of USAID/PLGP and other donors/project implementers, is to implement that strategy.

The GoA capacity to advance decentralization reforms has been strengthened with the creation of the donor-financed Support to Territorial Administrative Reform (STAR) Project and with the establishment of the Agency for the Implementation of the Territorial Reform (AITR) in January 2015. The recent decision to fund STAR 2 provides continued support to the GoA to implement TAR. USAID/PLGP and other donors and project implementers continue to face the challenge of harmonizing their activities and approaches to implementing TAR with STAR and AITR.

During Years Four and Five, PLGP assisted MoSLI in creating a new legal framework for local governance through drafting a new Law on Local Self-Governance (Organic Law). The law was adopted by Parliament in December 2015. During Year Five and into Year Six, a number of activities will support the GoA and local governments in implementing the Law.

Albania has never had a comprehensive LGFL. A Law was drafted with World Bank (WB) support in 2007 but never adopted. The MoF and MoSLI have requested PLGP support to draft an LGFL. This law will clearly stipulate financial decentralization issues with the aim of increasing Own-Source Revenues (OSRs); diversifying the sources of local revenue; and ensuring the predictability, transparency, and equitable distribution of intergovernmental transfers. The project expects that in Year Six, final consultations on the LGFL will occur and the Law will be finalized.

The Organic Law calls for the creation a Central/Local Government Consultative Council. In the absence of a well-functioning and unified Local Government Association, the Council provides a very important forum for a long-overdue dialogue between central government and local government. This dialogue is critical, given the envisioned reforms affecting local government finance. The promotion of a consensus-building, non-partisan dialogue on issues of importance to local governance will continue to challenge

Albania. PLGP's Year Six Work Plan recognizes this challenge and includes a number of activities to promote this dialogue—without accepting the responsibility of “fixing” dysfunctional local government associations. PLGP will support joint consultative processes when they are organized under the auspices of both associations.

The PLGP Year Six Work Plan will solidify the accomplishments of the past five years in constructing a strong foundation of decentralization reforms.

1.2.2 Component II

The consolidation of LGUs in Albania in 2015 (from 373 to 61) as a result of TAR holds the promise that the delivery of basic services will improve. Yet in 2016, these newly consolidated municipalities remain hard-pressed to meet the expanded citizenry's demands for public services. In Year Six, PLGP will continue efforts to improve service delivery by building the capacity of—and increasing the resources available to—municipalities.

As previously predicted, efforts to generate additional OSR, particularly through property taxes, remain hampered by the central government's unwillingness to share data with local governments. It is unfathomable that the Immovable Property Registration Office (IPRO), despite the legal mandate to do so, refuses to systematically share property registration data with local governments. Efforts must continue in Year Six to ensure the systematic exchange of information between central and local governments. The implementation of agreements with GoA officials, the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS) (as Coordinating Regulatory Authority of State Databases), and the interaction of local government's Tax Administration Information Systems (TAIS) with the databases of the following GoA institutions [the General Directorate of Civil Status, the Central Office of Immovable Property Registration (IPRO), and the National Registration System (NRC)], must occur. Particular attention must be given to removing the impediments to IPRO's provision of data to local governments as requested by LGUs and required by law. The completion of the transfer of municipal assets to local governments has been an ongoing challenge. In Year Six, the next steps must be taken to advance the consolidation, transfer, and registration of municipal assets. The implementation of TAR in partner municipalities will remain the fundamental challenge of PLGP throughout the remaining life of the project.

Significant progress has been made in installing ICT infrastructure in PLGP partner municipalities. PLGP conducted an internal ICT Assessment in July and August 2016 ‘to support efforts to improve the efficiency and management of local government operations by assessing the effectiveness of ICT activities and ensuring that PLGP's subcontractor had satisfactorily complied with the requirements of the ICT subcontract and modifications. The ICT assessment confirmed that the subcontractor has met or exceeded all contractual deliverables and was universally praised by all municipal counterparts. The ICT assessment has provided a number of recommendations and next steps to ensure the ICT tools are used effectively and PLGP has reflected these recommendations in Year Six activities.

Year Six activities will continue the extension and expansion of the ICT infrastructure of PLGP partner municipalities to the newly constituted administrative units. PLGP will follow up with a second round of training and on the job support to newly hired staff following TAR implementation and the subsequent restructuring of the tax and finance departments. The handover of ICT assets to municipalities must occur. The use of e-service platforms by beneficiaries will remain a challenge until LGUs, civil society organizations (CSOs), and citizens become aware of and fluent in the use of the new systems. To address this challenge PLGP will work with CAPs in Year Six to promote these e-service platforms. The proper utilization of TAIS and related ICT tools has the potential to generate significant increases in own-source revenues. Realizing this potential will require both political will and a commitment by the central government to share data with municipalities.

In Year Six, PLGP will continue to pursue strategies for the development of Municipal Tax Registries and the expansion of partner municipalities' property tax bases. Specific Property Tax Action Plans, coupled with Information Technology (IT) support, will continue to be the focus of PLGP assistance for model municipalities. Use of water utilities as an LGU tax agent is an experience that PLGP will continue to share as a best practice with other partner governments. In Year Six, work will continue with five municipalities in using Geographic Information System (GIS) as a tool to support the creation of an integrated and multi-use territorial database for property taxation.

Also in Year Six, PLGP will continue to provide on-the-job training and technical assistance to all of the newly constituted partner municipalities. Assistance will be targeted to technical staff to strengthen their capacity to manage municipal finance operations, including fiscal package preparation, new techniques for OSR forecasting and mobilization, financial planning, annual budget preparation and execution, financial management, and control and internal audit. Public Finance Management (PFM) and/or internal audit assessments will be performed in 11 municipalities.

The Year Six Work Plan includes activities to continue to promote local democracy and to ensuring that all citizens have a voice in decision-making. LGUs have made progress in restructuring CAPs to include the residents of the former communes of the greatly expanded municipalities. Activities are designed to strengthen CAPs further and to enhance the likelihood of their sustainability at the close of the project. Successful efforts will continue in Year Six in using Community Based Scorecards (CBSs) as a mechanism to enhance citizen participation. PLGP will convene a National Conference on Civic Engagement to broadly share best practices.

Year Six activities for Component II are largely a continuation and consolidation of the training and technical assistance initiated in earlier years of the project. PLGP plans to wind-down training and technical assistance activities by April 2017.

1.2.3 Component III

Territorial Reform, the new Organic Law on Local Self-Governance, and the recently enacted guidelines on Water Sector Reform provide unprecedented clarity on the roles and responsibilities for delivering water and wastewater services. The responsibility to provide water and wastewater services lies with the newly consolidated municipalities and their Mayors. Municipalities face huge challenges in responding to the need and demand to provide water/wastewater services to the unserved and underserved districts of their expanded territory. Year Six activities will assist PLGP partner municipalities, particularly the model municipalities, in responding to this challenge.

More specifically, PLGP will:

- Assist select partner municipalities in preparing select “Transition Plans to Deliver Water Supply and Sewerage Services to the Expanded Areas of the New Municipalities” with clear performance improvement programs, staff restructuring strategies, and tariff harmonization policies;
- Provide training designed to improve the governance and oversight of utilities defining clear roles and responsibilities among the Mayor, Municipal Council, Supervisory Councils, and Director of the Utility; and
- In collaboration with the Component IV Team, support five model municipalities in finalizing elements of the GLTP related to infrastructure and capital improvements planning.

1.2.4 Component IV

Territorial planning in Albania is occurring in an ever-changing environment. The Planning Law, with significant PLGP support, was substantially revised in 2014 and major work on bylaws took place during 2015 and early 2016. Marshalling the political will and the resources, both human and financial, required to implement the legislation remains a significant challenge. The restructuring of national planning institutions creates further challenges. Certain decisions (e.g., the creation of a new agency to issue permits and the bifurcation of planning and permitting responsibilities) have occurred without the benefit of PLGP's advice. To date, the national agencies have good cooperation between them. However, by being two separate institutions, the administrative burden on the local development processes has been increased, thus creating unnecessary obstacles to the development and building permitting procedures.

After TAR, the GoA provided financial support to 26 municipalities to engage with local territory planning. GoA administered the procurement process and selection of external expertise (organized in 10 lots) for territory planning as part of the support it was offering to the 26 municipalities. The related terms of references and subsequent contracts established a time limit of 18 weeks for drafting and submitting GLTPs for approval. The decision for such a condensed timeline is unrealistic, considering the technicalities of the process, the administrative burden, and the lack of comprehensive GIS data. However, GoA and the 26 municipalities have made a political rather than technical decision, regardless of the effects this may have on the quality of their plans.

Furthermore, this initiative and the GoA schedule raised the expectations of the (newly elected) Mayors of the five model municipalities being assisted by PLGP in drafting their GLTPs. PLGP Mayors exerted pressure on the PLGP team to condense the timeline for the completion of the GLTPs. PLGP accelerated a significant portion of GLTP work that was planned to take place during Year Six and front-loaded that assistance to Year Five. As a result, other activities, such as trainings and capacity building interventions, did not take place in Year Five and were postponed until Year Six. The project envisions that the GoA will approve the GLTPs in the early months of Year Six. PLGP will ultimately exceed contractual obligations for Component IV and meet all expectations for deliverables.

In Year Five, the GoA approved the long-delayed GNTP and two regional plans. This was an achievement for the GoA, as well as a good result of the PLGP support to the GoA. The challenge remains however with the implementation of the national plans, including the coordination of MUD/NTPA work with line ministries.

In spite of these daunting challenges, Albania is on the cusp of advancing reforms and activities that will result in improvements to the planning and management of urban and regional growth and development. As the lead provider of support and assistance in the planning sector, PLGP has played—and will continue to play—a key role in bringing better planning and growth management to Albania. In Year Six, PLGP will:

- Provide training and technical assistance to national institutions and local governments in the implementation of financial instruments for land development to support the implementation of territorial plans;
- Most significantly, PLGP will continue to provide support and assistance to five model municipalities in submitting GLTPs for approval at both levels, the municipal councils and the National Territory Council.

1.3 USE OF ALBANIAN SUBCONTRACTORS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN YEAR SIX

For Year Six, and throughout the life of the project, Co-PLAN Institute for Habitat Development (a major subcontractor) and Valu Add Management Services will continue to assist Tetra Tech ARD in accomplishing the goals of PLGP. As a result of a modification to its subcontract, Co-PLAN was able to intensify assistance in achieving the results and producing the deliverables pertaining to strengthening the capacity of the GoA (MUD and NTPA) and local governments to plan and manage urban and regional growth. Co-PLAN will continue to play a supporting role for Components I and II, providing a Decentralization/Urban Planning Expert and the Municipal Management/Finance Expert. Valu Add will continue as the technical lead for activities related to the Water and Wastewater Sector, providing the Albanian Water/Wastewater Expert, as well as local and international short-term technical assistance (STTA) required to support water and wastewater activities. With the Year Six focus on continuing to support select municipalities in preparing Transition Plans, Component III activities (as described in the initial contract) have been completed. ICT subcontractor Infosoft System and ikubINFO Joint Venture received a subcontract modification that allowed for the extension and expansion of ICT activities. Year Six ICT interventions will be focused on:

1. Improving and handing over TAIS and Finance Administration Information Systems (FAIS) where they have been implemented.
2. Working with 11 partner municipalities to operationalize the LGU eService Portals fully.
3. Extending and expanding ICT solutions and tools in partner municipalities. This will include the extension of ICT activities to the administrative units (formerly communes) of the newly consolidated municipalities.
4. Reengineering the existing tax application in Korça.

In addition to the above-mentioned subcontracts with Co-PLAN, Valu Add, and the ICT Joint Venture, the modified and approved budget includes resources for subcontracts to other local organizations to support PLGP activities in Year Six. In the spirit of USAID Forward, experienced and tested Albanian consulting companies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) will support and assist Tetra Tech ARD to implement PLGP's activities. The Institute for Public and Private Policies (IP3) has been subcontracted to support Component I and II activities related to fiscal decentralization and municipal management; continue to support the full implementation of a One-Stop Shop (OSS) in Korça; and initiate implementation of OSSs in Fier, Berat, and Saranda. The Albanian Institute of Science (AIS) has been subcontracted to implement transparent budgeting and expenditure platforms at the local level. While the contractual obligations of AIS have been fulfilled, efforts will continue to build the capacity of municipalities and citizens to use this tool. In collaboration with UN Women, PLGP has, and will continue to, engage NGOs to complete CBSs for select local governments. Work will continue with Ikub, an Albanian company retained in Year Five, to assist with efforts to enhance GIS utilization in five municipalities, particularly related to the creation of property tax registries. Tetra Tech ARD also plans to retain an Albanian company and/or consultants to assist with efforts to undertake feasibility studies and/or implement PPPs in up to three model municipalities.

PLGP will continue to collaborate with various municipal and professional associations, including the Association of the Albanian Municipalities (AAM), the Association for Local Autonomy in Albania (ALAA), and NALAS, to improve the legal and policy environment for decentralization and to build consensus and a shared vision for local governance in Albania. PLGP will organize consultative roundtables in collaboration with the Local Government Associations. Finally, POLIS University will continue to provide facilities for training and workshops.

1.4 COLLABORATION WITH OTHER PROJECTS AND DONORS IN YEAR SIX

PLGP continues to enjoy excellent relationships and strives to promote collaboration with other project implementers and donors working in the local governance sector. The achievement of the Project's—and the country's—goals and objectives for decentralization requires close collaboration and effective coordination. During Year Six, collaboration will remain essential. It will be particularly important to harmonize PLGP activities, approaches, and methodologies with those of the recently launched STAR 2 Project being implemented by the GoA and funded by international donors.

Collaboration remains particularly important in Component I activities that are designed to “Support the GoA’s Work to Implement Effective Government Decentralization Policies and Legislation.” Throughout Year Six, PLGP will collaborate with the STAR 2 Project, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE), the Swiss-funded Decentralization and Local Development Programme (dldp), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), WB, and European Commission (EC). The fact that PLGP is the lead provider of support and assistance to the GoA in advancing many of the decentralization reforms heightens the importance of collaboration with donors and other project implementers. Year Six activities requiring coordination and collaboration with other project implementers and donors include the implementation of the Decentralization Strategy, fiscal decentralization roundtables, support in implementing the Organic Law and new Unconditional Grant Formula, the drafting of a Local Government Finance Law, the provision of OSSs in additional municipalities, and the replication of TAIS and FAIS implemented by PLGP.

For Component II, the ongoing collaboration with PLGP, the Government of Slovenia, the Centre for European Perspective (CEP), and the Balkan Center for Cooperation and Development (BCCD) continued in Year Five. The joint efforts have strengthened the capacity of Albanian civil servants to plan and manage EU-funded projects. Through this collaboration, training was offered to select municipalities and GoA actors in Year Five to identify projects and develop proposals for the anticipated Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II funding. While additional training is not foreseen in Year Six, the Slovenian consortium has pledged to be available to assist individual municipalities in developing specific proposals and managing projects.

While sometimes challenging, PLGP continues to nurture collaboration and the exchange of information with the Swiss-funded dldp that cuts across Components I and II. Activities of dldp are targeted to Northern Albania and support local governments not served by PLGP. Cooperation with dldp, initiated in Year 2, has been deemed mutually beneficial and will continue throughout the life of the PLGP. Planned areas of collaboration in Year Six include the sharing of best practices in the area of local tax administration, revenue generation, strategic planning and budgeting, e-governance, citizen participation, and waste management. The dldp has made contributions regarding public financial management to the draft LGFL. Joint roundtables with Mayors, experts from LGUs, and the Local Governments Associations are being organized to discuss and reach consensus on the content of the LGFL. The dldp and PLGP have, and will continue to, share their experiences in the implementation of One-Stop Shop/Service Delivery Centers. This will become particularly important given the plans of STAR 2 to replicate OSSs in all municipalities.

In Year Five, PLGP launched a new initiative in collaboration with SECO. Working together, PLGP and SECO will conduct a PEFA assessment in five municipalities, four of which are PLGP partners. This exercise, designed to improve municipal financial management practices and procedures, will be finalized in Year Six.

PLGP’s excellent collaboration with UN Women Albania in compiling CBSs will continue in Year Six with the completion of the second round of scorecards and the launching of another CBS round in advance of the June 2017 national elections.

PLGP activities related to the water and wastewater sector continue to build a successful, transparent, and proactive collaboration with donors and parallel water sector institutional programs. In Year Five, PLGP assisted the Ministry of Transportation (MIT) to prepare a comprehensive guide to understanding the GoA's Water Sector Reforms. In addition, the PLGP water team has had close collaboration with KfW's Municipal Infrastructure III and IV teams to establish joint roadmaps on how to assist the LGUs and Utilities to avoid project overlap. KfW is aware of and in agreement with PLGP preparations of the first integrated Transition and Performance Improvement Action Plans for the utilities of Lushnja, Fier, and Berat– Kuçova, which KfW will use for the planning in the coming years. PLGP will continue to strengthen the relationship with the Water Regulatory Authority and the General Directorate of Water Supply and Sewerage by facilitating meetings to discuss sector financing strategy, policies, and programs, and assess the impact, challenges, and issues that LGUs and new water Utilities will face in the short run to get restructured. In Year Six, this guide will assist PLGP and its partner municipalities in planning and extending water and wastewater services to the under-served and unserved areas of the consolidate municipalities.

For Component IV, USAID remains the primary donor and PLGP the key implementer of territorial planning initiatives. The Planning Toolkit prepared by PLGP, in collaboration with the NTPA, was shared with all donors/project implementers and municipalities, and it is being broadly used to guide the preparation of GLTPs. In Year Six, PLGP will continue to support the MUD and NTPA in identifying and securing the support required to prepare GLTPs for the 30 municipalities that have yet to implement this activity.

The exceptional collaboration with Peace Corps/Albania in the first five years of PLGP will continue in Year Six. In Year Six, PLGP will continue to strive to engage Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) fully in the implementation of activities, particularly in facilitating the engagement of citizens with LGUs and supporting the CAPs.

2.0 PLGP WORK PLAN NARRATIVE

2.1 SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE DECENTRALIZATION POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The TAR provides the Government of Albania with a framework to advance decentralization and enhance local governance, and dovetails with PLGP's key objective: to support the GoA and LGUs to implement decentralization legislation, policies, and reforms successfully. During Years Four and Five, PLGP assisted the MoSLI, who coordinates the GoA's decentralization efforts, to enhance decentralization and consolidate local autonomy by supporting the drafting of Albania's Decentralization Strategy and the new Organic Law on Local Self-Governance. With the support of PLGP, the MoSLI made significant advances in implementing decentralization in Albania. However, the underlying structures vital to the effective implementation of the TAR remain weak. Strengthening the laws, policies, and reforms that will operationalize decentralization will be a focus of PLGP's work during Year Six.

The success of the TAR is contingent upon the adoption and implementation of parallel decentralization reforms, particularly in the area of fiscal policy. To this end, in Year Five, PLGP supported the MoF to draft the first-ever comprehensive LGFL, which will ensure thorough fiscal decentralization reform in support of the Decentralization Strategy and TAR. The draft is currently under internal review by the Ministry of Finance, and in the coming months will be shared with the LGFL working group and other key stakeholders. In Year Six, PLGP will continue to support the MoF and work to ensure that consultations on the LGFL remain inclusive.

The LGFL, however, is just one aspect of decentralization in Albania. Throughout Year Six, Component I's top priority will be to support efforts to convene and sustain the long-overdue dialogue on the decentralization policy. It is critical that there is an inclusive and ongoing dialogue between representatives of the central and local governments, in order to advance reforms and build consensus. PLGP will focus efforts on assisting the GoA, local government representatives, and relevant NGOs/municipal associations to make informed decisions, with the goal of achieving a more equitable distribution of resources and improving service delivery.

Component I will build upon the accomplishments of Years One through Five to strengthen Albania's legal framework for decentralization and increase local government resources. PLGP will continue to work with the MoF to increase LGUs' OSR, stabilize intergovernmental transfers, ease access to local borrowing, etc. Through Component II, PLGP will continue to support LGUs to increase tax collection by developing specific action plans related to property taxation, utilizing GIS techniques to map taxpayers, conduct public outreach to increase tax awareness and seek opportunities for PPPs to enhance local services. To enhance dialogue, PLGP will support the creation and operation of a Consultative Council and continue to support Municipal Councils in partner LGUs. To achieve these goals, Year Six activities will once again involve conducting assessments, preparing technical analyses, convening roundtables and other consultations, drafting policy provisions and other activities needed to define problems and identify workable solutions.

Specific Year Six activities for Component I will include:

- **Support the Development and Implementation of a Consultative Council between the Central and Local Governments.** Intergovernmental dialogue and consultation has been a key objective of PLGP. However reluctance on the part of the GoA, coupled with the political divide between Albania’s local government associations, have hindered the creation of a consultative council. PLGP has consistently encouraged the local government associations to work together, and has provided technical studies, policy documents, and other analytical work to facilitate discussions with the central government. In conjunction with the CoE, PLGP has also provided the GoA with recommendations on the composition and functioning of the Consultative Council. PLGP now expects that the council will be established by October 2016 and the project will support its work both through technical assistance and by providing financial support to hire and train a technical specialist for the Council. Moving forward, PLGP will support, assist, and facilitate consultative sessions between the GoA and LGUs and convene thematic roundtables for the local government associations and their members to encourage the sharing of experiences, concerns, and best practices.
- **Support Implementation of the Decentralization Strategy and the Public Finance Management Strategy.**
 - **Support to MoSLI and MOF.** PLGP will continue to support the MoSLI in furthering implementation of Albania’s Decentralization Strategy and the new Organic Law. PLGP will also respond to the MoF’s request to update the implementation action plan for the Public Finance Management Strategy, which will serve as the country’s roadmap for reforming public finances, including fiscal decentralization measures.
 - **Improve Decentralization Policies, Legislation, and Processes.** PLGP will continue to assist LGUs and the GoA in efforts to improve legislation, sublegal acts, and practices that strengthen local governance and advance decentralization. Assistance will include, but not be limited to, territorial planning, water and wastewater utilities, PPPs, local borrowing, local assets and properties, OSR, and intergovernmental transfers.
 - **Training Courses with Mayors of Partner LGUs.** PLGP will organize special trainings with Mayors and senior LGU officials on leadership, public service improvement, PFM, asset management, and planning and civic engagement.
- **Discuss and Complete the Law on Local Government Finances.** Following a request by the Minister of Finance, PLGP developed a draft LGFL and will continue to support this initiative as it moves into the discussion and consultation phase with local governments and stakeholders. The law is expected to provide a more logical and consistent fiscal decentralization framework that will ensure the adequacy, stability, predictability, transparency, and accountability of local finances. Working with the local government associations, PLGP will organize at least three regional roundtables to discuss the LGFL and a national wrap-up conference with all local governments. In addition, PLGP will continue to provide recommendations to the GoA on intergovernmental finance mechanisms and grant-making processes. The project will finalize a policy paper on uniform reporting of financial data/indicators for LGUs.
- **Assess Decentralization Strategy Implementation.** PLGP will assess the status of the Decentralization Strategy and identify new challenges imposed by the TAR, as well as new functions that have been decentralized as a result of the Law on Local Self Governance. The assessment methodology will include but not be limited to, questionnaires, interviews financial analyses and the findings from the “Decentralization One Year Later” conference held at the end of Year Five. The assessment will be particularly useful to the GoA in understanding the current state of decentralization efforts and the measures needed to ensure

the effective implementation of, and alignment between, the Decentralization Strategy and the TAR **Demand-Driven Assistance to the Staff of the MoSLI and MoF.**

- **Support the MoSLI.** PLGP will continue to provide demand-driven assistance to the MoSLI and the MoF on their duties related to the implementation of decentralization and public finance management reforms—building dialogue with LGUs and their associations on the need to improve the legal and sublegal framework.
- **Provide Recommendations to Improve Legislation that Affects Local-Level Financial Reporting.** Timely, accurate, and reliable financial information is one of the keys to effective policymaking and implementation. PLGP will provide recommendations to the MoF on measures it can take to improve: 1) financial reporting at the local level and 2) consolidation and disclosure of financial information. We will update and disseminate a handbook on revenue and expenditure registration and accounting. PLGP will share the updated handbooks with local governments through capacity-building workshops. In addition, PLGP will continue to support the MoF to strengthen its database on local government revenues, expenditures, population, surface area, and demographics to facilitate analysis and enable them to determine the financial consequences of different policy choices.
- **Project Final Conference.** PLGP will organize and implement a national conference on local governance where the project will share efforts made and results achieved in advancing decentralization and strengthening governance in Albania. The event will include reflections from partner municipalities, the GoA, and international partners on achievements and steps needed to address ongoing challenges.

All of these activities will be undertaken in an inclusive, non-partisan manner that will involve regular consultations with local, central government officials, and other stakeholders.

2.2 IMPROVE LOCAL GOVERNANCE

While supporting the GoA to adopt and implement effective decentralization policies and legislation, PLGP will continue its efforts to build the capacities of LGUs. Strengthening LGUs' capacities and disseminating best practices has been a key priority for PLGP and will continue to be so throughout the last year of the project.

As mentioned above, Year Six activities for Component II will focus on continuing to pursue strategies for the development of Municipal Tax Registries and the expansion of the property tax bases of partner municipalities, providing on-the-job training and technical assistance to the newly constituted partner municipalities to strengthen their capacity to manage municipal finance operations, promoting citizen engagement and local democracy, developing PPPs, and continuing ICT support to municipalities.

Year Six activities for Component II are largely a continuation and consolidation of the training and technical assistance initiated in earlier years of the project.

Specific Year Six activities for Component II include:

- **Build Capacities for Public-Private Partnership Management.** Building off of the PPP trainings held in Year Two, PLGP will provide a capacity building and training program for municipal staff to develop feasibility studies and implement specific PPP projects at the local level. PLGP will also prepare feasibility studies in up to three additional model LGUs (LGUs to be determined).
- **Support LGUs on Asset Registration and Management.** During the first year of TAR implementation, local authorities faced asset management issues because territories and asset inventories grew. PLGP will continue to provide assistance to partner LGUs on increasing municipal

staff capacities in asset registration and management with the goal of developing long-term and sustainable strategies/plans. PLGP will provide one-on-one and demand-driven technical assistance that supports the consolidation of municipal assets and the finalization of transfers to the newly created LGUs, using a web GIS platform and FAIS. In addition, PLGP will support the staff from model LGUs to attend capacity-building trainings offered by the National Assessors Association, the University of Tirana and other experts in property assessment.

- **Provide Finance and Budget Management Assistance to LGUs.** In Year Six, PLGP will extend its assistance to partner LGUs by making a substantial effort to work with the MoF to ensure that the GoA's 2017 Fiscal Package is the product of open consultations with LGUs. In addition to providing direct technical assistance and training on budgetary and local tax provisions, PLGP will focus efforts on disseminating best practices among LGUs.
- **Provide support to LGUs on the Implementation of Property Tax Action Plans and the Establishment of Territorial Databases, for Property Taxation Purposes.** PLGP will assess lessons learned and identify best practices related to partner LGU revenue generation, focusing on the Immovable Property Tax (IPT). The project will then incorporate this information into improved training activities, including internal study visits that promote collaboration, dialogue, and information sharing among municipalities while also building their organizational technical capacities. While PLGP will continue to support data sharing among LGUs and central government agencies such as IPRO during the Year Six, PLGP will also work to create an integrated, multi-use territorial database to improve property tax systems in five partner LGUs.
- **Disseminate Citizens' Guides to the Municipal Budget.** Citizen engagement in decision-making is crucial to increasing the effectiveness of local spending, increasing tax compliance, and improving the accountability of local officials. PLGP will support the publishing of a *Citizens' Guide to the Local Budget* that will facilitate citizens' participation in policy formulation and monitoring of LGU financial activity. Specifically, the guide will provide simplified, user-friendly information to citizens and help them understand—in non-technical terms—the importance of and process for budgeting. This information will allow citizens to participate effectively in policy making while simultaneously increasing the transparency and accountability of the LGUs.
- **Promote Transparency and Support Taxpayer Services and Education.** To help model LGUs achieve transparency and improve their service and education to local taxpayers, PLGP will develop LGU-specific materials that will provide easy-to-understand, useful information to help citizens and members of the business community understand and pay local tax obligations and liabilities. In conjunction with these efforts, the project will conduct responsiveness/awareness sessions for LGU staff, local community representatives, CAP members, and other local CSOs in each municipality. Finally, PLGP will assist partner LGUs to publish the 2017 fiscal package and budget on municipal websites.
- **Assess Public Financial Management Systems.** Strong PFM systems are critical for effective, transparent, and accountable use of public funds and are a key underpinning of good governance. The TAR created an unprecedented opportunity to improve PFM, which is also a precondition to serving the increased number of citizens effectively. In collaboration with two of the project's model LGUs, PLGP will focus on strengthening PFM systems by carrying out a series of PFM assessments at the sub-national level. Using the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability methodology, these assessments will examine the systems, practices, and procedures of the municipalities in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, best practices, and capacity-development priorities. PLGP will also conduct a more limited set of assessments—based on a selected group of indicators—in four additional model LGUs to provide a clearer picture of PFM practices at the local level. An important element of this exercise will be the assessment of budgeting practices in the context of multiyear

strategic planning, which plays an overarching role in ensuring fiscal discipline and efficiency in allocating and using public resources. This exercise will be complemented by an assessment of the internal audit systems in five additional partner LGUs. These various assessments will be followed by capacity-building activities aimed at increasing local government officials' capacities to plan and manage financial resources according to the principles of effectiveness and efficiency and to ensure legal compliance.

- **Extend ICT Solutions and Tools.** Building upon the progress made in the implementation of ICT tools and solutions during the last three years, PLGP will continue to support partner LGUs in Year Six in building and improving their usage of TAIS/FAIS/Billing and Accounting Water Information System (BAWIS). PLGP's goal is to make the LGUs fully able to use these tools prior to project closeout. These efforts will allow partner LGUs to increase the scale and effectiveness of OSR, ensure efficient consolidation of financial administration, and ensure the sustainability of ICT interventions. Based on the project's ICT assessment (conducted in July 2016) PLGP has modified the year Six ICT planned activities in order to ensure that the ICT investment is sustainable. ICT interventions will consolidate project achievements in the following areas:
 - *Improved E-Governance.* The computerization of fiscal and financial functions that are currently performed manually will reduce the time needed for tasks and will provide more frequent, timely, accurate, and reliable fiscal reports that will allow decision makers to make well-informed decisions.
 - *Improved Customer Service.* PLGP's applications and tools will improve revenue collection. This, coupled with better budgeting, will result in more efficient spending, which should allow LGUs to provide better services to the community. The LGU e-Service Portal will provide online services and information and improve delivery of Administrative Services, which will enable better service to citizens and increased citizen participation in the decision making process.
 - *Reduced Corruption and Error.* Automated financial management and tax administration systems will increase monitoring and control, reduce manual errors, and decrease the one-on-one interactions with tax officials that frequently lead to corrupt practices.

Specific Year Six activities for ICT include:

1. Complete Implementation of the TAIS system in Korça Municipality, including:
 - a. Reengineer the existing tax application (to be aligned with TAIS functionalities);
 - b. Ensure full migration of existing data and extend data consolidation at Administrative Units;
 - c. Link territory register build in GIS with taxpayer register into TAIS; and
2. TAIS/FAIS Improvement and Handover in 11 Municipalities (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova, Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora). Activities include:
 - a. PLGP will deliver a second round of trainings in seven partner Municipalities (Kuçova, Berat, Patos, Vlora, Lushnja, Kamza, and Vora) and in one Water Utility (Patos). The training will involve the newly hired staff following the TAR implementation and the subsequent restructuring of the tax and finance departments. Parallel to the training process, we plan to offer two to three days of on the job and online support for all 11 partner municipalities to improve TAIS/FAIS/BAWIS usage.
 - b. Providing on-the-job support to tax/finance staff to extend the usage of TAIS/FAIS systems with regard to taxpayer data consolidation, improvement of fiscal packages, report usage, and customized procedures for revenue collection;

- c. Coaching municipality IT staff on ICT systems and infrastructure administration;
 - d. Conducting demonstrations TAIS/FAIS report generation in partner LGUs; we plan to conduct workshops aimed at reaching a better understanding of the PLGP's ICT tools and the importance of their use by the municipality's senior level management. Workshop training will be delivered to 11 municipalities (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlorë, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora) and 3 Water Utilities (Saranda, Patos and Kamza) where TAIS/FAIS/BAWIS are implemented.
 - e. Conducting three regional workshops; in addition to the direct assistance and on the job support for all partner municipalities that are using TAIS/FAIS, we will organizing three regional workshops to exchange experiences and build communications and networking between finance officials in our partner LGUs.
 - f. Transitioning processes for TAIS/FAIS and related hardware and software infrastructure; and
 - g. Supporting LGU staff in administrating the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for TAIS and FAIS.
3. Improving usage of the LGU eService Portal. In Year Six, PLGP will also focus on working with partner LGUs to use and/or improve their use of the eService Portal. We plan to involve CAP members of our partner municipalities in improving the usage of blogs and forums by citizens. Activities will include:
- a. Providing on-the-job training and support for LGU editorial staff regarding content administration;
 - b. Training portal administrators on portal operation, maintenance and administration;
 - c. Coaching municipal staff on how to upload content to the portal;
 - d. Teaching the LGUs how to use blogs and forums to communicate with citizens; and
 - e. Working with the GoA and LGUs to establish eService Portals as a common approach.
 - f. Setup Dashboards for portal administrators for monitoring purposes, in Google Analytics.
4. Extending the ICT One-Stop Shop (OSS) Platform to Three Additional Municipalities. Following the experience of Year Five in establishing Korça OSS, and the preparation of the manual on Korça Municipality Administrative Procedures, PLGP will implement OSSs in three additional municipalities (Fier, Berat, and Saranda), so that they are able to deliver better administrative services to citizens. The proposed platform is using a customized collaboration application to integrate administrative office front desks seamlessly with back-office decision-makers in these municipalities. These tools also enable both online services and electronic tracking of service requests. Our aim is to push all the municipalities' departments to use OSSs as the only way to deliver services.
5. Improving Usage of GIS tools. PLGP recognizes that improvements in property tax administration and collection represent the best opportunities for LGUs to increase their OSR. In addition to its work at the central government level to build procedures and mechanisms for

providing data to LGUs, PLGP will continue assisting five partner LGUs (Korça, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, and Kamza) to:

- a. Utilize the PLGP-provided GIS platform for maintaining up-to-date municipal tax registers better;
- b. Understand in-depth information about individual properties;
- c. Visualize asset maps and properties; and
- d. Integrate new Urban Plans into the GIS platform.

PLGP will also coach LGU staff in better territory administration using GIS tools.

6. Integration between the Central and Local Government Information Systems. During Year Six, PLGP will continue work to improve integration between central government and local government information systems, specifically incorporating information about LGU activities into the GoA's e-Albania portal. This will enable online service delivery to citizens and businesses.
- **Increase CAP and CSO Capacity and Participation in Local Government Decision Making.** In the area of civic engagement, PLGP's goal is to focus the last year of the project on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the CAPs, many of which are already well situated in their communities. Territorial reform enlarged the geographic scope of partner municipalities to include rural areas, and continues to affect this work. The project have completed the process of restructuring the CAPs to include additional civil society representatives, but full integration of these new members continues and requires capacity-building activities in the areas of community development, citizen advocacy, and participation in local decision-making. This will be in addition to PLGP's regular meetings with CAP members to discuss municipal planning/development and other topics. PLGP will also continue to work with local authorities to cultivate their interest in and commitment to working with their CAP.
 - **Conduct Community Based Scorecards.** A key initiative within PLGP's civic engagement efforts is conducting CBSs, an ongoing collaboration with UN Women. The overall goal is to promote and support good governance and local accountability through inclusive participation of local communities, including women, youth, and Roma. The second wave of CBSs just commenced and will continue into the beginning of the coming year, with the development of six new CBSs. PLGP will continue to track progress for the four municipalities studied last year. With the addition of three more CBSs planned for the third wave in Year Six, a total of 13 scorecards will be developed with our partner municipalities.
 - **Conduct National Conference on Civic Engagement.** In an effort to extend PLGP's civic engagement work beyond the project's partner municipalities, PLGP will conduct a national conference on best practices in civic engagement. One aspect of the conference will be to promote CAPs as an effective instrument for building local participation with the aim of creating a true partnership between government and citizens. PLGP will also promote the use of CBSs as a means to strengthen citizens' voices and build participation in local decision-making.
 - **Conduct a Tailored Annual Training on Local Governance with New Peace Corps Volunteers.** In Year Six, PLGP will continue its collaboration with Peace Corps Albania as a means for furthering the goals of the project. Ongoing activities include an annual volunteer training on local governance and coordination and collaboration with volunteers working in both partner and non-partner municipalities. These efforts link activities at the local level with PLGP support and assistance, thereby achieving synergy in the efforts of the two organizations.

2.3 IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL SERVICES

Year Six activities for Component III will be mainly reoriented to support the partner and model municipalities of Fier, Lushnja, Patos, Vlora, and Tirana to implement their Transition Plans and monitor their Five-Year Performance Improvement Action Plans for delivering water supply and sewerage services in their expanded territories. At the end of Year Five, PLGP decided to extend assistance to the development and implementation of Transition Plans for Patos, Vlora, and Tirana. This was in response to Berat and Kuçova's decision to "disaggregate" their current regional water supply and sewerage company

Berat and Kucova developed a business plan in 2007 for the period of 2008-2012. The Business Plan was designed to provide this newly, merged Company, acting through its Supervisory Council, a "road map" for the physical merging of the two Companies, while also providing mutually agreed performance targets and action plans to move the Company towards financial sustainability. The Business Plan identified priority issues that were unfortunately never addressed. These included the following:

- Find available administrative space, on a temporary basis, and move the central office activities to that location as rapidly as possible, so that the Company operates as a single entity at the Director and central office level. *This never happened which gave the impression that the merged utility was a Berat Utility.*
- Formalize, in detail, the staff reduction, staff reassignment, and staff recruiting processes and programs to be followed, so that all personnel legal procedures are addressed, and the social obligations of the Company are satisfied. *This reduction in staff never happened.*

After the local elections of 2015, Kuçova began complaining of the limited hours of water supply, and therefore wanted to disaggregate. PLGP/Valu Add conducted a study to demonstrate the financial impact of the disaggregation based on the debt repayment that would all go to Kuçova. Once presented with this information Kuçova realized that they should not disaggregate, yet at the same time they sent a formal letter to the contrary to DPUK. During this time, several meetings were held with both municipalities and Berat kept stating that it wanted to stay aggregated. After a few months, Berat began to understand the financial impacts of staying aggregated and then they also asked to disaggregate. The disaggregation of Berat and Kucova prompted PLGP to withdraw its assistance from both municipalities and the Regional Water Utility and transfer assistance to Patos, Vlora, and Tirana.

In line with the new requirements set forth in the GoA's recent Water Sector Reform, Component III will focus on the following activities:

- **Support Vlora and Tirana Municipalities to Develop Transition Plans and Five-Year Performance Improvement Action Plans.** PLGP will provide practical assistance to the Municipalities of Vlora and Tirana to develop their Water Utility Transition Plans and will organize workshops to present the plans, which will include the Mayors, local officials for Vlora and Tirana, and representatives from the water supply and sewerage company. Once the Mayors approve the Transition Plans, the Component III Team will work closely with senior management of the Vlora and Tirana Water Utilities to develop their Five-Year Performance Improvement Action Plans. These plans will include a thorough water demand analysis, a staff-restructuring plan, a budget and revenue needs forecast an identification of capital investment needs, and a recommended tariff and pricing structure for the entire service areas. A unique challenge facing Vlora is the need to combine the current three water supply and sewerage companies into a single entity under unified management.
- **Follow-up Assistance to Patos Municipality in Development of its Five-Year Performance Improvement Action Plans.** PLGP will support Patos Municipality and its Water Utility as they

develop a Five-Year Performance Improvement Actions Plan to address water supply and sewerage services within their newly defined administrative boundaries. In light of the fact, that Patos's Water Utility will be very small, and potentially not viable, the project will continue to explore options for further aggregation with neighboring utilities. PLGP will organize a final workshop to present the five-year Performance Improvement Action Plans to the Mayors and local officials of Patos, Vlora, and Tirana, and will invite central government officials.

- **Monitor Progress in the Implementation of Transition Plans and Five-Year Performance Improvement Action Plans for Lushnja, Fier, Patos, Tirana and Vlora Municipalities and Their Utilities.** PLGP will provide regular monitoring of these municipalities' Transition Plans and Performance Improvement Action Plans by institutionalizing quarterly (or possibly more frequent) review meetings with the Administrative Board of each LGU's utility. The goal is to help develop routine procedures for assessing progress as well as analytical procedures to assess performance against Action Plan targets. PLGP will also help each of these partner municipalities negotiate a suitable new subsidy scheme that reflects the recent methodology and criteria set by the GoA.
- **Support the Development of Public Communication Activities.** PLGP will assist the water utilities in Lushnja, Fier, Patos, Tirana, and Vlora to develop awareness campaigns for water supply and sewerage service delivery. This will include developing leaflets and fact sheets that will be distributed to all new and potential customers in the Administrative Units and designing posters and other materials that encourage citizens to pay their water bills.
- **Update the Existing Water Utility Administrative Council Training Manual/Course.** PLGP will work closely with the Association of Water Supply and Sewerage of Albania to update the training manual and training course for the new Water Utility Administrative Board Members based on the recent legislative and institutional developments in the Water Sector Reform package. In addition, the project will hold a one-day training for all members of Water Utility Administrative Boards of the PLGP Model/Partner Municipalities (totaling 13 municipalities) to discuss their new responsibility to provide oversight and manage water supply and sewerage service delivery.
- **Support on the Finalization of GLTPs.** In collaboration with the Component IV Team, Component III will review and comment on the water supply and sewerage sections of the GLTPs prior to final review. PLGP will also prepare presentation materials and actively participate in the approval hearing sessions for each GLTP presentation.
- **Support Integration of the Water Utility Database Management Systems Already Installed in Patos, Saranda, and Kamza Municipalities/Utilities.** This technical assistance will include supporting the utilities to extend the usage of the BAWIS system for with regard to customer data integration, asset inventories, and human resource data consolidation for all communal systems that will be added to the new service area of the utilities.

2.4 ASSIST THE GoA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO PLAN AND MANAGE URBAN AND REGIONAL GROWTH

Since the beginning of the project, PLGP has provided support in the areas of urban and regional planning to both national- and local-level planning authorities. At the national level, PLGP will continue to cooperate with MUD and NTPA, but at a significantly reduced pace, as Year Six is the final year of implementation. At the local level, PLGP's work will take two approaches:

1. Working with the 11 partner municipalities on capacity-building activities (mainly thematic trainings). MUD and NTPA have requested that PLGP include other LGUs in the urban territory

planning trainings, if possible, and record the trainings to allow dissemination to other LGUs. PCVs have also asked that their municipalities be involved in local planning trainings. PLGP will accommodate these requests to the extent possible, but the first priority will be model municipalities, followed by other partner municipalities.

2. Collaborating closely with five model municipalities (Fier, Lushnja, Kuçova, Elbasan, and Berat) to provide direct support in the submission of their respective GLTPs (drafted during Year Five) for approval.

Based on the challenges and opportunities mentioned in Section 1.2 and keeping in mind that Year Six has an abbreviated timeline for activities, the strategic approach and the activities planned for this coming year are as follows:

- **Provide Capacity-Building Support to National Planning Institutions—MUD and NTPA—in Implementing the Planning Law.** Through tailored training, Urban Planning Experts will support MUD and NTPA staff on the use of financial land development instruments.
- **Support Municipalities (Planning Departments, Mayors, and Local Councilors) to Increase Their Capacities in Territorial Planning and Land Development.** In Year Six, PLGP will deliver trainings to local councilors in partner municipalities on territorial planning and governance and, in cooperation with MUD and NTPA, deliver trainings to LGU staff on the use of land development instruments and the implementation of GLTPs. The project will develop recorded trainings as a means of disseminating knowledge on territorial planning and development to additional municipalities. PLGP will also deliver thematic trainings to all 11 partner municipalities on implementation of the planning legislation (how to draw plans and deliver building permits), GIS use for GLTPs (for the five model municipalities only), and financial development instruments.
- **Support Five Model Municipalities in Drafting and Submitting their GLTPs.** PLGP will continue to work with the five model municipalities that have drafted their GLTPs with project support. The next step is to prepare the plans for the approval process, revise the documents as needed, and prepare to present them to the National Territory Council (NTC) and their respective local council. PLGP will have completed its GLTP-related contractual requirements once municipalities submit their plans to the local councils for approval. Nevertheless, the submission process requires several steps, including preparing the final GLTP presentation. PLGP will support our partners to deliver high-quality presentations. The project envisions that the approval process will take three months, though it may take longer because of political issues. Finally, PLGP experts will work on finalizing the GIS databases for the five GLTPs (to be handed over to municipalities and NTPA) and (because of legal requirements) will convert these databases into the Territory Register format.

3.0 COMPONENT ACTIVITIES

3.1 COMPONENT I: DECENTRALIZATION FRAMEWORK

3.1.1 Objective: Support the GoA’s Work to Implement Effective Government Decentralization Policies and Legislation

LOP Expected Results:	LOP Indicators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The GoA process of providing competitive grants to local governments is transparent, effective, and equitable among local government entities. 2. The GoA, local governments, and other stakeholders utilize formal collaborative processes to make legislative and policy decisions that affect local government finances, services, and operations, and use of government assets under local government jurisdictions. 3. Policies and legislation improved to increase the predictability, accuracy, and transparency of local government budgetary processes. 4. Civil society groups and other non-governmental organizations participate substantially in local government communications and decisions that affect local communities and citizens. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Procedures and criteria for distribution of unconditional grants officially submitted for approval. <i>(Milestone 1 – September 2016)</i> 2. The National Crosscutting Strategy for Decentralization and Local Governance (NCSDLG) 2015–2020 is drafted and officially submitted for approval <i>(Milestone 4 – September 2016)</i> 3. Number of institutions represented at the Decentralization Roundtable events. <i>(Indicator 1.1, Years 1–5)</i> 4. Number of municipal council members successfully completing USG-sponsored training and/or capacity-building activities. <i>(Indicator 1.2, Years 1–5)</i> 5. Number of laws/amendments or government decisions affecting and promoting decentralization drafted with USG assistance. <i>(Indicator 1.3, Years 1–5)</i>

Year Six Critical Assumptions and Outputs:

Critical Assumptions:

- GoA remains committed to decentralization and fiscal decentralization
- GoA remains committed to developing the first ever Law on Local Finances.
- GoA maintains its commitment to establish the Consultative Council
- LGU Associations maintain their commitment to work together
- Donor coordination critical

Outputs:

- The new law on local finance developed through a consultative process.
- One National Conference on the closure of the PLGP.
- One National Conference on fiscal decentralization.
- Six Regional roundtables to discuss the LGFL.
- Recommendations for the draft-regulation for the internal functioning of the Municipal Council.
- Recommendations on intergovernmental finance mechanisms and grant making processes.
- Assessment of implementation of decentralization strategy and the challenges imposed by the territorial reform.
- A policy paper on a unified system for reporting local government finance data developed.

Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 1): Assist GoA & LGUs to improve communication and collaboration around decentralization of local governance	1. a. Provide technical studies, guides, policy documents, and analysis to inform the decision making process of the Consultative Council. b. Provide financial support to employ and train one technical staff from the Consultative Council. c. Organize 4 roundtables to achieve consensus on local government issues. <i>(Component I, Results 2, 3)</i>				STTA	F. Nurja, E. Stafa, S. Meko	1.1
	2. Organize 2–3 joint thematic roundtables for LGU associations and their members to share experiences, concerns, and best practices. <i>(Component I, Results 2, 3)</i>					F. Nurja, E. Stafa, S. Meko	1.3
	3. Provide recommendations on the draft-regulation for the internal functioning of the Municipal Council <i>(Component I, Result 2; Component II, Results 2, 5)</i>					F. Nurja	1.2
Activity 2): Assist GoA/LGUs to improve policies, legislation, and processes that strengthen local governance and advance decentralization	1. Assist the MoSLI and MoF in implementing the Decentralization Strategy and the Public Finance Management Strategy including through improving policies, legislation, and processes and providing training to LGU Mayors. <i>(Component I, Results 2, 3, 4)</i>				MoSLI, MoF, AAM, Association of Local Authorities (ALA), Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), dldp	F. Nurja, E. Stafa, S. Meko	1.3
	2. Assist the MoF in developing and consulting the Law on Local Government Finances. (technical assistance and recommendations) <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				STTA, Tony Levitas, Peter Clavelle, Sabina Ymeri, IP3	E. Stafa, S. Meko, F. Nurja,	1.3
	3. Provide recommendations to the GoA on intergovernmental finance mechanisms and grant making processes. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3,4)</i>						1.3

Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
	4. Organize 3 regional roundtables to facilitate inclusive consultation of the Law on Local Government Finances. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				MoF, MoSLI, LGUs, AAM, ALA	E. Stafa, S. Meko, F. Nurja	1.3, 2.2
	5. Organize one national conference on Fiscal Decentralization to discuss the final provisions of the Law on Local Government Finances. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				MoF, MoSLI, LGUs, AAM, ALA	E. Stafa, S. Meko, F. Nurja	1.3, 2.2
	6. Finalize policy paper on uniform reporting of financial data/indicators for LGUs. <i>(Component I, Results 2, 3)</i>				T. Levitas and IP3	E. Stafa, S. Meko	1.3
	7. Assess the implementation of the decentralization strategy and the challenges imposed by territorial reform. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				STTA (Clavelle)	F. Nurja, S. Meko, E. Stafa	1.3
Activity 3): Provide intensified technical support to key central government institutions (MoSLI and/or MoF)	1. Provide demand-driven assistance to the staff of the MoSLI and MoF to coordinate efforts for achieving decentralization goals and facilitating dialogue with LGUs to improve the legal and sublegal framework. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				MoSLI	F. Nurja, E. Stafa, S. Meko	1.3, 2.2
	2. Organize PLGP Final Conference: lessons learned, best practices, and challenges ahead. <i>(Component I, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>					All Staff	2.2

3.2 COMPONENT II: LOCAL GOVERNANCE

3.2.1 Objective: Improve the Efficiency, Transparency, and Accountability of Local Government Operations

LOP Expected Results:	LOP Indicators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Selected local government operations, accountability, and transparency improve. Selected local governments have the tools, skills, and procedures needed to increase local revenues, utilize central government assets under their jurisdiction optimally, and create accurate and transparent public budgets. Selected local government revenues increase and budgetary processes improve. Community groups, civil society groups, and other NGOs increase their participation in selected local government decision making. Selected municipal councils perform their roles more effectively. Selected local governments write effective proposals for accessing relevant EU funding for pre-accession. Selected local governments have the tools, skills and procedures for offering administrative services in all the new territory via administrative offices. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CAP concept endorsed in each MoU and established in each partner community. (<i>Milestone 2 – Actual: Completed in November 2012</i>) Percentage of attendees at public hearings on budgets and services who report (post-meeting questionnaire) that they felt the meeting was transparent and that government was responsive to citizen/community-based organization ideas. (<i>Indicator 2.1; Years 2–6</i>) Number of local government staff that receives USG-assisted municipal management and operational skills training. (<i>Indicator 2.2; Years 2–6</i>) Number of LGUs receiving USG assistance to improve their performance. (<i>Indicator 2.3; Years 1–6</i>) Average percentage increase in own-source revenues for partner communities. (January 2012–December 2015) (<i>Indicator 2.4; Years 2–4</i>) Average percentage increase in OSR for partner communities (January 2016–December 2016). (<i>Indicator 2.5; Year Five</i>) Number of partner LGUs that establish a regular mechanism to solicit input from civil society on constituent needs and priorities (regular meetings, councils, or roundtables) (<i>Indicator 2.6; Years 1–6</i>) Number of partner LGUs that regularly publish the Municipal Council Decisions and make available to the public through different media (websites, gazette, print, etc.). (<i>Indicator 2.7; Years 1–6</i>) Number of partner LGUs assisted in securing alternative financing. (<i>Indicator 2.8; Years 2–5</i>) Number of civil society representatives successfully completing USG-sponsored training and/or capacity-building activities. (<i>Indicator 2.9; Years 2–5</i>) Number of local governments (including the Municipal Administrative Offices) and water utilities that use computerized systems (LGUs for finances, taxes, asset management, e-government tools, OSSs for providing administrative services and water utilities for the web improvement and billing software). (<i>Indicator 2.10; Years 3–5</i>)

Year Five Critical Assumptions and Outputs:

Critical Assumptions:

- Interest from the private sector will assist partner LGUs to implement PPP projects.
- The Local Government Finance Law is adopted.
- LGUs cooperate and agree to disseminate detailed financial data to facilitate the publishing of citizens' guides to city budgets.
- LGUs cooperate in publishing sensitive information on the functioning of internal systems and regulations enabling the completion of PFM and PEFA assessments.
- The Training of Trainers on Local Public Finance Management has the support of the Ministry of Finance.
- The Albanian School of Public Administration can officially provide certification to selected officials under the Training of Trainers on Local Public Financial Management.

Outputs:

- Produce feasibility studies in up to three LGUs.
- Conduct a PPP Capacity Building/Training Program
- Publish a practical citizen's guide to the budget for two model LGUs.

-
- Develop city-specific informative materials related to local tax obligations and liabilities for 2–3 selected partner LGUs (Fier, Berat, and/or Elbasan)
 - Conduct thorough PEFA assessments in the municipalities of Fier and Kuçova.
 - Conduct a practical assessment of the PFM systems in the municipalities of Korça, Berat, Lushnja, and Elbasan.
 - Assess the internal audit systems in 5 partner LGUs.
 - Conduct 3 workshops for municipal finance staff on internal auditing.
 - Conduct 1 workshop with partner LGUs on measures to improve Public Finance Management.
 - Implement the TAIS system in Korça model municipality including in its respective Administrative Centers.
 - Improve and hand over TAIS/FAIS system in all Municipalities where it is implemented (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora).
 - Improve eService portals in seven partner LGUs (Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, Kuçova, Patos, Saranda, and Vora) through the development of regular mechanisms for updating information.
 - Implement case management tool to support the one-stop-shop for administrative service provision in three partner municipalities (Fier, Berat, and Saranda), including their respective Administrative Offices.
 - Conduct a National Conference on Civic Engagement.
 - Develop 3 additional Community Based Scorecards.
-

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 1): Provide technical assistance to Partner LGUs in regard to PPPs	1. Conduct a PPP Capacity Building/Training Program. <i>(Component II, Results 3, 9)</i>				LGUs, STTA,	E. Jorgji, STTA	2.8
	2. Prepare feasibility study/studies in up to three municipalities to be determined. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 7)</i>				LGUs, STTA	E. Jorgji	2.8
Activity 2): Provide assistance to GoA and Partner LGUs in regard to consolidation, transfer and registration of municipal assets	1. One-on-one training and demand-driven assistance to 5 selected partner LGUs (Korça, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, and Kamza) on processes and procedures to identify and register municipal assets using a web-GIS platform. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 7)</i>				GoA (AITR/IPRO), partner LGUs, ICT subcontractor	E. Jorgji, G. Radovicka	2.2, 2.10
	2. Coach partner LGU staff to implement the asset management component of FAIS. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3, 7)</i>				LGUs, ICT subcontractor	G. Radovicka, E. Jorgji	2.2, 2.10
	3. Capacity building for the asset management staff of 6 model LGUs through trainings by National Assessors Association, University of Tirana, and other available sources through cost sharing with respective LGUs. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3, 7)</i>				LGUs, National Assessors Association, University of Tirana	E. Jorgji	2.2, 2.10
Activity 3): Provide assistance to GoA and Partner LGUs in regard to Finance and Budget Management	1. Support MoF in preparing the annual budget and fiscal package by recommending LGU suggestions for fiscal policy design and facilitating the process of consultation with LGUs. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				MoF, LGUs, AAM, ALA, MoSLI, AITR, CoE	S. Meko, E. Stafa,	1.3, 2.2
	2. Organize one workshop for senior technical staff from partner LGUs on changes to local tax legislation and new budgetary provisions related to municipal finance and the LGFL. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3)</i>				LGUs, MoF/GoA	S. Meko, E. Stafa	2.2
	3. Provide on-the-job training and one-on-one technical advice to partner LGUs on: a. Understanding new legal changes/LGFL; b. Adapting new techniques for OSR generation and forecasting as well as local budget and fiscal package preparation; and c. Strengthening implementation capacities for public finance-related instructions issued by MoF. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3)</i>				LGUs	S. Meko, E. Stafa	2.2
	4. Organize two ¹ internal study visits to share and learn from municipal finance best practices. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3)</i>				LGUs/DLDP	S. Meko, E. Stafa	2.2

¹ PLGP is considering Durres or Shkodra (dlp partners) or Elbasan/Berat or Korça (PLGP partners) as cities, which could offer good practices in financial management to share with other LGUs.

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 4): Provide technical assistance and trainings to Partner LGUs, to improve Local Tax Administration, and other municipal finance operations	1. Conduct training with 13 partner LGUs on local tax administration in the new territorial organization and related debt management, and disseminate and provide instruction on the associated practical guide. <i>(Component II, Results 2, 3)</i>				STTA /LGU	S. Meko, E. Stafa	2.2
	2. Assist four partner LGUs (Saranda, Kuçova, Berat, and Patos) to revise and implement their Action Plans to improve the IPT taxable base and collections in the new territorial organization <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				LGU	S. Meko	2.2, 2.5
	3. Organize an internal study visit in Fier ² on IPT and other local tax administration issues to share and learn from the best practices. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				LGU	S. Meko	2.2, 2.5
Activity 5): Provide assistance to Partner LGUs to increase tax compliance, awareness, transparency and citizen engagement in decision-making.	1. Work with 2–3 selected partner LGUs (Fier, Berat, and/or Elbasan), to develop city-specific informative materials related to local tax obligations and liabilities. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU	S. Meko, L. Memo	2.2, 2.5
	2. Disseminate a citizens' guide to the municipal budget providing practical information on revenues, expenditures, and strategic plans for two model LGUs. <i>(Component I, Result 4; Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU, STTA	E. Stafa, S. Meko, L. Memo	2.2, 2.5
	3. Conduct responsiveness/awareness sessions for LGU staff, local community representatives, CAP members, and other local CSOs in five partner LGUs. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU	S. Meko, L. Memo	2.2, 2.5, 2.9
	4. Assist all partner LGUs to ensure that the 2017 fiscal package and budget, including all other detailed information on tax rates, due payments dates, and expenditures, are published on the municipal websites/portal. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU	S. Meko, E. Stafa, G. Radovicka	2.2
Activity 6): Assist Partner LGUs to strengthen public finance management at local level	1. Assess the public finance management systems for model LGUs to identify best practices, lesson learned, and capacity development priorities (2 thorough PEFA assessments in Fier and Kuçova and 4 practical assessments in the remaining model LGUs). <i>(Component II Results 1,2,3)</i>				LGU, MoF, STTA	E.Stafa, S.Meko,	2.2, 2.5
	2. Assess the internal audit systems in 5 partner LGUs. <i>(Component II Results 1,2,3)</i>						
	3. Conduct 3 workshops for municipal finance staff on internal auditing <i>(Component II Results 1,2,3)</i>						

² This is planned for Y5 (by September 2016), with a focus on IPT and GIS tool. However, it may be postponed to in Y6. This depends on when the GIS tool will be functional.

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
	4. Conduct 1 workshop with partner LGUs on measures to improve Public Finance Management. (Component II Results 1,2,3)						
Activity 7): Support partner LGUs to improve ICT solutions	1. Reengineer the existing tax application in Korça (aligned with TAIS functionalities), ensuring full migration of existing data and extending data consolidation at Administrative Units (Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 7)				ICT subcontractor, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka	2.10
	2. Deliver a second round of trainings in seven partner Municipalities (Kuçova, Berat, Patos, Vlora, Lushnja, Kamza, and Vora) and in one Water Utility (Patos). The training will involve the newly hired staff (Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 7)						
	a. Improve and hand over TAIS/FAIS in all 11 municipalities where it is implemented (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora): b. On-the-job support to tax/finance staff to extend the usage of TAIS/FAIS systems for taxpayer data consolidation, improving fiscal packages, usage of reports, and adding customized procedures for revenue collection. c. Coaching IT staff of partner municipalities on ICT systems and infrastructure administration. d. Handover process for TAIS/FAIS and related hardware and software e. Conduct workshopping activities in all 11 municipalities (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora) and 3 Water Utilities (Saranda, Patos and Kamza) where TAIS/FAIS/BAWIS are implemented f. Demonstration of reports generated from TAIS/FAIS (with senior managers and members of City Councils in partner LGUs). g. Organizing 3 regional workshops for exchanging experience and building communication and networking between tax/finance officials in our partner LGUs. h. Support responsible LGU staff in administrating the SLA. (Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 7)				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka, S. Meko, ICT subcontractor	2.2, 2.10
	3. Work with 11 partner LGUs to use (Korça, Berat, Vlora, and Kamza) and improve (Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, Kuçova, Patos, Saranda, and Vora) eService Portal by building upon regular mechanisms for updating the information, which include: a. On-the-job training and support for LGU editorial staff regarding content administration.				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, Peace Corps, LGUs	G. Radovicka, S. Weiss, ICT subcontractor	2.10

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Training portal administrators on portal operation, maintenance and administration. c. Supporting responsible persons to upload content in the Portal. d. Setup Dashboards for portal administrators for monitoring purposes, in Google Analytics e. Encouraging LGUs to use blogs and forum to communicate and share opinions with the citizens. f. Conduct trainings and on-the-job support activities for CAPs and/or other civil structures, in improving the usage of blogs and forums by citizens. g. Work with GoA and LGUs to establish eService Portals as a common approach. <p><i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>						
	<p>4. Make further improvements to online services and/or implementing new online services for citizens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Linking eService portal with “e-Albania” and possible migration of the services from eService portal to e-Albania. b. Implementing e-Gov. on-line applications on eService Portal and integrating existing LGU computerized services that can provide on-line services for citizens. c. Working with NAIS to implement Payment Gateway for providing online payments for local obligations <p><i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>				PLGP, STTA, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka	2.10
Activity 8): Expand e-Government Tools to Improve Service Delivery	<p>1. Work with Saranda Municipality to prepare a Service Delivery Guide. Transform the service provision procedures into workflows and working lists in the IT case management workflows to deliver administrative local services to the community.</p> <p><i>(Component I, Result 4; Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka,	2.10
	<p>2. Deploy the updated solution implemented at Korça OSS and implement it in the municipalities of Berat Fier and Saranda.</p> <p><i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka,	2.10
	<p>3. Develop and publish a “Service Delivery Guide for Local Officials” on the preparation of the manual of procedures for local administrative services delivery</p> <p><i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, NAIS, LGUs	G. Radovicka,	2.10
	<p>4. Organize capacity-building workshops to discuss the administrative procedures and respective workflows for delivering local services to the community and to roll out the Service Delivery Guide.</p> <p><i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i></p>				PLGP, LGUs	G. Radovicka,	2.10

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 9): Supporting Model Municipalities in their work for establishing territorial databases for property taxation through the usage of GIS tools	1. Support Korça and Fier municipalities to enhance their GIS capabilities on building functionalities to create an integrated, multi-use territorial database for property taxation. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, Korça and Fier Municipality,	G. Radovicka, S .Meko	2.2, 2.5, 2.10
	2. Coach Elbasan, Lushnja, and Kamza municipalities to operate GIS tools and functionalities for the creation of the territorial databases for property taxation. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, Elbasan, Lushnja and Kamza LGUs,	G. Radovicka S .Meko	2.2, 2.5, 2.10
	3. Conduct capacity-building activities with five model municipalities (Korca, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, and Kamza) staff to update and deploy GIS data and tools. <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i>				PLGP, partner municipalities	Co-Plan, G. Radovicka	2.2, 2.10
	4. Assess the impact of the Web-GIS implemented in 5 partner Municipalities and prepare a report with recommendations for broadly shared and replicated on “Lessons learned and best practices for Utilizing GIS to Support Municipal for building territory register.” <i>(Component II, Results 1, 2, 3, 4, 7)</i>				STTA (International), PLGP, partner municipalities	G. Radovicka S .Meko	2.2, 2.10
Activity 10): Support CAPs and CSOs to build their capacities and increase their participation in local government decision making	1. Conduct regular meetings, capacity building and sustainability activities, and awareness campaigns to support CAPs in 11 partner LGUs. Topics will include annual budget, local finances, local planning, PPPs, ICT, etc. <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				CAPs, LGUs	L. Memo, S. Weiss	2.6, 2.9
	2. Conduct CBSs in three partner LGUs (Patos, Saranda, and Vora). <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				UN Women, CAPs, LGUs	L. Memo, S. Weiss	2.1, 2.6, 2.9
	3. Support Fier, Korça, Lushnja, and Kuçova CAPs to monitor the implementation of the second wave of the CBSs. <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				UN Women, CAPs, LGUs	L. Memo, S. Weiss	2.6, 2.9
	4. Conduct a National Conference on Civic Engagement with focus on CAPs and CBSs <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				UN Women, CAPs, LGUs	L. Memo, S. Weiss	2.6, 2.9
	5. Conduct tailored annual training on local governance with the new PCVs. <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				Peace Corps	S. Weiss, L. Memo	2.9
	6. Continue to coordinate and collaborate with PCVs in identifying opportunities to further the goals of the project. <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				Peace Corps	S. Weiss, L. Memo	2.9
	7. Prepare regular updates (through emails, individual meetings, quarterly reports) for PCVs to ensure mutual beneficial collaboration. <i>(Component II, Result 4)</i>				Peace Corps	S. Weiss, L. Memo	2.9
1. Conduct a final PLGP National Conference. <i>(See Component I, Activity 3.2).</i>				National and local stakeholders	L. Memo, S. Weiss, ALL	2.6, 2.9	

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 11): Develop PLGP outreach	2. Design/publish/disseminate two PLGP newsletters (one interim and one final).				PLGP	All staff	
	3. Update PLGP website regularly.				PLGP	D. Tabaku, all staff	

3.3 COMPONENT III: UTILITY MANAGEMENT

3.3.1 Objective: Improve Local Government Management and Oversight of Selected Public Utilities to Provide Services in Accordance with EU Standards

LOP Expected Results:	LOP Indicators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selected local governments effectively oversee jointly owned utility companies. 2. Supervisory boards' roles in selected local governments are better defined and utility performance improves. 3. Selected local governments implement policies and procedures for utilities that are consistent with EU standards. 4. Selected partner utilities local governments, GoA regulatory agencies, civil society groups, and other NGOs improve communication and interactions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of partner LGUs that have developed Strategic Action Plans to exercise effective oversight of jointly owned companies. (<i>Indicator 3.1; Year 3</i>) 2. Number of utility/service Supervisory Council members, utility/service members, and LGUs staff trained to improve their capacity and awareness in compliance with the EU standards. (<i>Indicator 3.2; Years 2–5</i>) 3. Number of water utilities developing and implementing five-year Business Plans based on the National Approved Model. (<i>Indicator 3.3; Years 2–3</i>) 4. Number of improved water utility customer service practices adopted by utilities (as specified in their: 1. Public Relations/Communication Plans, and 2. Customer Service Operations Plans). (<i>Indicator 3.4; Years 2–5</i>) 5. Number of model municipalities developing Water and Sewage Transitional Plans (<i>Indicator 3.5; Years 4–6</i>)

Year Five Critical Assumptions and Outputs:

Critical Assumptions:

- The GoA adheres to the new Council of Minister Decision No 63, (passed on January 2016) on the reorganization of all services of drinking water supply, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal, which emphasizes *authority, responsibility, and accountability*.
- All units of drinking water supply, wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal are organized as joint stock companies under the system with one administrative level.
- The governance of the water utilities is managed through the creation of new Administrative Councils consisting of two members from the local government and the General Director of the Utility.
- Performance agreements are signed between local governments and central government (MTI) and local governments with the administrative board of the water utility and are monitored using clear performance indicators tracking.

Outputs:

- Transitional Plans and five-year Performance Improvement Forecasts developed and monitored for model municipalities.
- Water Supply and Sewerage Plans developed to supplement General Territory Plans for five model municipalities.
- Water utility administrative board training manual and training course updated and delivered to all model municipalities.
- Water utility websites updated and populated with information including an on-line application for customer complaints and customer new connection requests.
- Water utilities staff trained and monitored to operate the database systems and to generate analytic reports.

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 1): Support “Model/Partner Municipalities” to develop Transitional Plans and 5 Year-Performance Forecasts to Manage Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery for the Expanded Areas	1. Work with Vlora and Tirana partner municipalities to develop Transition Plans for water supply and sewerage services that take into consideration the legal, institutional, administrative, procedural, and operational issues associated with providing these services to the total population within the newly defined, local government administrative boundaries. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority	P. Giantris, E. Gjinali, S. Kasimati, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello, F. Bisha	3.5
	2. Organize a workshop to present the final Transition Plans with the Mayors and local officials of Vlora and Tirana and representatives from the water supply and sewerage companies. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGU, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority	P. Giantris, E. Gjinali, S. Kasimati, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello, F. Bisha	3.5
	3. Work with the partner municipalities of Tirana, Patos, and Vlora to prepare a comprehensive Current Conditions Assessment for the expanded service area, identify priority issues, and develop new integrated strategic goals and performance improvement plans. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3, 4)</i>				LGUs, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority	P. Giantris, E. Gjinali, S. Kasimati, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello, F. Bisha	3.5
	4. Carry out a thorough Water Demand Analysis, staff restructuring plan, budget, and revenue needs analysis; present new tariff structure for Tirana, Patos and Vlora water utilities; and identify areas to promote efficiency. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				LGUs, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority	P. Giantris, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello,	3.5
	5. Identify the need for capital investments, during the planning period, to improve services for the Tirana, Patos, and Vlora service areas. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 4)</i>				LGUs, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure, General Directorate for Water Supply and Sewage, donors	S. Kasimati, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello, F. Bisha	3.5
	6. Organize a final workshop to present five-year Performance Improvement Action Plans to the Mayors and local officials of Tirana, Patos and Vlora municipalities and central government officials. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3; Component II, Results 1, 2)</i>				LGUs, Water Utilities	P. Giantris, S. Kasimati, E. Gjinali, A. Dajko, E. Lekbello, F. Bisha	3.5; 2.2
	7. (i) Monitor progress of the Performance Improvement Action Plans for Fier/Lushnja/Patos/Vlora and Tirana during the transitional period of service area expansion, and assist utilities to negotiate a suitable new subsidy scheme based on the criteria set by central government. <i>(Component III, Results 1)</i>				LGUs, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority, General Directorate for Water Supply and Sewages	E Gjinali, P. Giantris, S. Kasimati, E. Lekbello	3.2; 2.2

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners & Key GoA Counterparts	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
	(ii) Organize regular meetings with the new Administrative Boards of the water utilities of Fier, Lushnja, Patos, Vlora, and Tirana to monitor implementation of the transition plan and assist each LGU/water utility to apply for a new license at the Regulatory Authority, and to negotiate performance contracts with the central government. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 4; Component II, Results 1, 2)</i>						
	8. Develop an awareness campaign for water supply and sewerage service delivery, which includes leaflets and utility fact sheets that will be distributed to all new potential customers from former communal systems. Design and display water bill payment posters and notifications that will be placed in the central and cashier offices of the Lushnja, Fier, Patos, Vlora, and Tirana Water Utilities. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 4; Component II, Results 1, 2)</i>				LGUs, Water Utilities, Water Regulatory Authority	P. Giantris, S. Kasimati	3.4
	9. (i) Update the Supervisory Council (Administrative Council) Training Manual and Training Course based on the recent water sector reform institutional developments. (ii) Organize one-day training workshop with all the new members of the Administrative Boards of partner and model municipalities on their responsibilities to manage and provide oversight to water companies. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3; Component II, Results 1, 2)</i>				LGUs, Water Regulatory Authority, water utilities	E. Gjinali E. Lekbello A. Dajko S. Kasimati	3.2, 3.5
Activity 2): Support the Development of General Local Territory Plans for provision of Water Supply and Sewerage Services	1. Support Component IV Team to review and finalize the water supply and sewerage section of each GLTP. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				LGUs, water utilities	E. Gjinali E. Lekbello F. Bisha	4.2
	2. In full coordination with Component IV Team, prepare presentation materials and actively participate at approval sessions in support of GLTPs presentations. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3)</i>				LGUs, water utilities	E. Gjinali E. Lekbello F. Bisha	4.2
Activity 3): Support Integration of the Water Utility Database Management Systems Already Installed in Patos, Saranda and Kamza Municipalities/ Utilities.	1. Provide on-the-job support to the utilities of Kamza, Saranda, and Patos to extend the usage of BAWIS systems related to customer data integration, asset inventories, and human resource data consolidation for all communal systems that will be included in the new utility service area. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 4; Component II, Results 1, 2, 7)</i>				PLGP, ICT subcontractor, water utilities	A.Dajko, G. Radovicka, ICT subcontractor	3.4; 2.10
	2. Assist partner utilities to update their website information based on changes to their service area and transitional plans. <i>(Component III, Results 1, 2, 3; Component II, Results 1, 2, 7)</i>				Water utilities	S. Kasimati F. Bisha	3.4; 2.10

3.4 COMPONENT IV: URBAN PLANNING

3.4.1 Objective: Strengthen the Capabilities of the GoA and Local Governments to Plan and Manage Urban and Regional Growth

LOP Expected Results:	LOP Indicators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NTPA and MUD will improve their capacities to exercise their mandate to effectively implement the Territorial Planning Law. 2. NTPA and MUD develop a conceptual framework for the National Territorial Plan in accordance with the Territorial Planning Law. 3. Selected local government planning departments increase their capacity to draft and review local territorial plans in accordance with the Territorial Planning Law. 4. Civil society groups, businesses, and other NGOs in the selected local governments increase participation in and oversight of territorial planning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conceptual framework (Request) for the GNTP drafted with USG assistance and submitted to the GoA for approval. <i>(Milestone 3 – December 2013)</i> 2. Territorial Strategies (TS) for 5 model municipalities are drafted and submitted to the municipal councils for approval. <i>(Milestone 5 – April 2016)</i> 3. A toolkit for territory planning and development drafted and disseminated to national and local territory planning and development institutions. <i>(Milestone 6 – November 2015)</i> 4. Number of planners, Mayors, NTPA, Ministry of Urban Development, municipal staff, and local councilors in the selected LGUs trained and/or coached with regard to the implementation of the Territorial Planning Law and related regulations. <i>(Indicator 4.1; Years 1–6)</i> 5. Number of local governments drafting (for approval submission) GLTPs, local detailed plans, and territory monitoring reports within the established guidelines and regulations of the Territory Planning Law. <i>(Indicator 4.2; Years 2–4, 6)</i> 6. Number of citizen participation events organized by local government held in partner LGUs to explain and solicit input into the local territory planning and land development instruments. <i>(Indicator 4.3; Years 2–6)</i> 7. Number of local stakeholders participating in the preparation process of the local territory planning and land development instruments and of participatory/inclusive planning manuals/guidelines. <i>(Indicator 4.4; Years 2–6)</i> 8. Number of territory planning and development tools prepared for MUD and NTPA in support of strengthening local planning capacities. <i>(Indicator 4.5; Years 2–5)</i>

Year Four Critical Assumptions and Outputs:

Critical Assumptions:

- Cooperation with the MUD and NTPA will remain solid and consistent with the agreed upon cooperation plan with PLGP.
- The priorities of the GoA (including MUD and NTPA) on territory planning and development will not change and negatively affect PLGP's outputs.
- The pre-electoral period will not change GoA priorities or create obstacles to PLGP's work on local and national planning, including obstructing approval of the model municipality's plans.
- PLGP partner local governments (especially the five model municipalities) will be willing to cooperate intensively with PLGP and will assume and implement their roles in the GLTPs' preparation processes.

Outputs:

- Trainings for MUD, NTPA, and partner municipalities delivered.
- Five local databases for GLTPs established and adapted into the Territory Register format.

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
Activity 1): Support national planning institution/s to improve capacities in implementing the planning law	1. Provide training for MUD and NTPA staff on the use of financial land development instruments as one of the tools needed to implement GLTPs. (Component IV, Result 1)					R. Toto, STTA T. Favro	4.1
Activity 2): Support the GoA in preparing the GNTF	<i>This activity has been completed, including additional work done in Years 4 and 5.</i>						
Activity 3): Support Local Governments (planning departments and Mayors) to increase their capacities in territory planning and land development according to the planning legislation (new/revised).	1. Deliver training to local councilors in partner municipalities on territorial planning and governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare curricula (territorial planning and governance, legal framework in Albania, the role of councilors, next steps). • Deliver half-day training. (Component IV, Result 3, Component 2, Result 5)					Z. Bajrami and local STTA A. Shtylla	1.2, 4.1
	2. Deliver a training program (in cooperation with national planning institutions) on the use of land development instruments and the implementation of GLTP, based on the drafted/approved GLTP for PLGP partner municipalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the curricula and organize the calendar. • Deliver training(s) (the exact timing will depend on finalization of the GLTPs, so that the training will be tailored to the local context). (Component IV, Result 1,3)				NTPA and MUD	R. Toto, Z. Bajrami, STTA T. Favro, D. Shutina	4.1
	3. Deliver training on GIS use for territory planning to the planning staff of the 5 model municipalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare curricula (importance of GIS for territorial databases and planning; GIS in Albania; GIS use in GLTP). • Deliver training (1–2 day workshop). (Component IV, Result 3)					R. Toto, Z. Bajrami, D. Shutina	4.1
Activity 4): Support 5 model municipalities to draft and submit for approval general local territory plans	1. Formulate territorial databases related to GLTPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete GIS territorial databases related to the GLTPs for the 5 model municipalities. Incorporate NTPA comments and submit to municipalities prior to final approval. • Convert all databases into the Integrated Territory Register format (either the current version or version revised by NTPA) (Component IV, Result 3)					Z. Bajrami, STTA A. Shtylla, Local STTA	4.2

Major Activity	Key Tasks and Action Steps	Calendar			Implementing Partners	Responsible Staff	Related Indicator
		Q1	Q2	Q3			
	2. Support the 5 model municipalities in securing approval for GLTPs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the formal GLTP ppt. presentations for the municipal councils and support the planning staff in each municipality to deliver the presentations. • Support municipalities in revising the GLTP documents and maps based on municipal council comments and comments received by NTPA during the compliance verification process. • Support municipalities to revise GLTP documents and maps based on NTC comments, prior to formal adoption. • Conduct final printing of documents and maps. <i>(Component IV, Result 3)</i>				NTPA and MUD	R. Toto, Z. Bajrami, D. Shutina, A. Shtylla, Local STTA	4.2
Activity 5): Assist civil society groups, citizens, businesses, and NGOs to increase their participation in and oversight of territorial planning (with CAPs).	<i>Tasks belonging to this activity were completed during Year Five.</i>						

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct– Dec 2016	Jan– Mar 2017	Apr– Jun 2017
COMPONENT I: SUPPORT GOA'S WORK TO IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION POLICIES AND LEGISLATION			
Activity 1) Assist GoA & LGUs to improve communication and collaboration around decentralization of local governance			
1. a. Provide technical studies, guides, policy documents, and analysis to inform the decision making process of the Consultative Council.			
b. Provide financial support to employ and train one technical staff from the Consultative Council.			
c. Organize 4 roundtables to achieve consensus on local government issues.			
2. Organize 2–3 joint thematic roundtables for LGU associations and their members to share experiences, concerns, and best practices.			
3.			
4. Provide recommendations on the draft-regulation for the internal functioning of the Municipal Council.			
Activity 2) Assist GoA/LGUs to improve policies, legislation, and processes that strengthen local governance and advance decentralization			
1. Assist the MoSLI and MoF in implementing the Decentralization Strategy and the Public Finance Management Strategy. (recommendations on action plans and/or policy changes, demand driven assistance)			
2. Assist the MoF in developing and consulting the Law on Local Government Finances. (technical assistance and recommendations)			
3. Provide recommendations to the GoA on intergovernmental finance mechanisms and grant making processes.			
4. Organize 3 regional roundtables to facilitate inclusive consultation of the Law on Local Government Finances.			
5. Organize one national conference on Fiscal Decentralization to discuss the final provisions of the Law on Local Government Finances.			
6. Finalize policy paper on uniform reporting of financial data/indicators for LGUs.			
7. Assess the implementation of the decentralization strategy and the challenges imposed by territorial reform.			
8.			
Activity 3): Provide intensified technical support to key central government institutions (MoSLI and/or MoF)			
1. Provide demand-driven assistance to the staff of the MoSLI and MoF to coordinate efforts for achieving decentralization goals and facilitating dialogue with LGUs to improve the legal and sublegal framework.			
2. Hold PLGP Final Conference: lessons learned, best practices, and challenges ahead.			
COMPONENT II: IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY AND MANAGEMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS			
Activity 1): Provide technical assistance to Partner LGUs in regard to PPPs			
1.			
2. Prepare feasibility study/studies in up to three municipalities to be determined.			
Activity 2): Provide assistance to GoA and Partner LGUs in regard to consolidation, transfer and registration of municipal assets			
1. One-on-one training and demand-driven assistance to 5 selected partner LGUs (Korça, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja and Kamza) on processes and procedures to identify and register municipal assets using a Web-GIS platform.			
2. Coach partner LGU staff to implement the asset management component of FAIS.			
3. Capacity building for the asset management staff of the 5 selected partner LGUs (Berat, Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja and Kuçova) through trainings by National Assessors Association, University of Tirana and other available sources through cost sharing with respective LGUs			
Activity 3): Provide assistance to GoA and Partner LGUs in regard to Finance and Budget Management			

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct– Dec 2016	Jan– Mar 2017	Apr– Jun 2017
1. Support MoF in preparing the annual budget and fiscal package by recommending LGU suggestions for fiscal policy design and facilitating the process of consultation with LGUs.			
2. Organize one workshop for senior technical staff from partner LGUs on changes to local tax legislation and new budgetary provisions related to municipal finance and the LGFL.			
3. Provide on-the-job training and one-on-one technical advice to partner LGUs on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understanding new legal changes/LGFL; b. Adapting new techniques for OSR generation and forecasting as well as local budget and fiscal package preparation; and c. Strengthening implementation capacities for public finance-related instructions issued by MoF. 			
4. Organize two internal study visits to share and learn from municipal finance best practices.			
Activity 4): Provide technical assistance and trainings to Partner LGUs, to improve Local Tax Administration, and other municipal finance operations			
1. Conduct training with 13 partner LGUs on local tax administration in the new territorial organization and related debt management, and disseminate and provide instruction on the associated practical guide.			
2. Assist four partner LGUs (Saranda, Kuçova, Berat, and Patos) to revise and implement their Action Plans to improve the IPT taxable base and collections administration in the new territorial organization.			
3. Organize an internal study visit in Fier on IPT and other local tax administration issues to share and learn from the best practices.			
Activity 5): Provide assistance to Partner LGUs to increase tax compliance, awareness, transparency, and citizen engagement in decision-making.			
1. Work with selected partner LGUs (2-3) - Fier, Berat and/or Elbasan, to develop city-specific informative materials related to local tax obligations and liabilities.			
2. Disseminate a citizens' guide to the municipal budget providing practical information on revenues, expenditures, and strategic plans for two model LGUs.			
3. Conduct responsiveness/awareness sessions for LGU staff, local community representatives, CAPs members, and other local CSOs in five partner LGUs.			
4. Assist all partner LGUs to ensure that the 2017 fiscal package and budget, including all other detailed information on tax rates, due payments dates, and expenditures, are published on the municipal websites/portal.			
Activity 6): Assist Partner LGUs to strengthen public finance management at local level			
1. Assess the public finance management systems for model LGUs to identify best practices, lesson learned, and capacity development priorities (2 thorough PEFA assessments in Fier and Kuçova + 4 practical assessments in the remaining model LGUs).			
2. Assess the internal audit systems in 5 partner LGUs.			
3. Conduct 3 workshops for municipal finance staff on internal auditing			
4. Conduct 1 workshop with partner LGUs on measures to improve Public Finance Management.			
Activity 7): Support partner LGUs to improve ICT solutions			
1. Reengineer the existing tax application in Korça (aligned with TAIS functionalities); ensuring full migration of existing data and extending data consolidation at Administrative Units			
2. Deliver a second round of trainings in seven partner Municipalities (Kuçova, Berat, Patos, Vlora, Lushnja, Kamza, and Vora) and in one Water Utility (Patos). The training will involve the newly hired staff			
3. Implement FAIS ensuring full migration of all available data for the consolidated Municipality of Korça.			

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct–Dec 2016	Jan–Mar 2017	Apr–Jun 2017
4. Improve and hand over TAIS/FAIS in all Municipalities where it is implemented (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça and Vora):			
a. On-the-job support to tax/finance staff to extend the usage of TAIS/FAIS systems for taxpayer data consolidation, improving fiscal packages, usage of reports, and adding customized procedures for revenue collection			
b. Coaching IT staff of partner municipalities on ICT systems and infrastructure administration			
c. Handover process for TAIS/FAIS and related hardware and software			
d. Conduct workshop activities in all 11 municipalities (Elbasan, Fier, Berat, Lushnja, Kuçova Vlora, Saranda, Patos, Kamza, Korça, and Vora) and 3 Water Utilities (Saranda, Patos and Kamza) where TAIS/FAIS/BAWIS are implemented			
e. Demonstration of reports generated from TAIS/FAIS (with senior managers of LGUs and members of City Councils, in partner LGUs.			
f. Organize 3 regional workshops for exchanging information on experiences, building communications and networking between tax/finance officials in our partner LGUs			
g. Support responsible LGU staff in administrating the SLA for TAIS and FAIS.			
5. Work with 11 partner LGUs to use (Korça, Berat, Vlora, and Kamza) and improve (Elbasan, Fier, Lushnja, Kuçova, Patos, Saranda, and Vora) eService Portal by building upon regular mechanisms for updating the information, which include:			
a. On-the-job training and support for LGU editorial staff regarding content administration			
b. Training portal administrators on portal operation, maintenance and administration			
c. Supporting responsible persons to upload content in the Portal.			
d. Setup Dashboards for portal administrators for monitoring purposes, in Google Analytics			
e. Encouraging LGUs to use blogs and forum to communicate and share opinions with the citizens			
f. Conduct trainings and on-the-job support activities for CAPs and/or other civil structures, in improving the usage of blogs and forums by citizens			
g. Work with GoA and LGUs to establish eService Portals as a common approach			
6. Further improvements to online services and/or implementing new online services for citizens.			
a. Linking eService portal with “e-Albania” and possible migration of the services from eService portal to e-Albania.			
b. Implementing e-Gov. on-line applications on eService Portal and integrating existing LGU computerized services that can provide on-line services for citizens.			
c. Working with NAIS to implement Payment Gateway for providing on-line payments for local obligations			
Activity 8): Expand e-Government Tools to Improve Service Delivery			
1. Work with Saranda Municipality to prepare a Service Delivery Guide. Transform the service provision procedures into workflows and working lists in the IT case management workflows to deliver administrative local services to the community.			
2. Deploy the updated solution implemented at Korça OSS and implement it in the municipalities of Berat Fier and Saranda.			
3. Develop and publish a “Service Delivery Guide for Local Officials” on the preparation of the manual of procedures for local administrative services delivery			
4. Organize capacity-building workshops to discuss the administrative procedures and respective workflows for delivering local services to the community and to roll out the Service Delivery Guide.			
Activity 9): Supporting Model Municipalities in their work for establishing territorial databases for property taxation through the usage of GIS tools			
1. Support Korça and Fier Municipality to enhance their GIS capabilities on building functionalities to create territorial databases for property taxation.			

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct– Dec 2016	Jan– Mar 2017	Apr– Jun 2017
2. Coach Elbasan, Lushnja, and Kamza municipalities to operate GIS tools and functionalities for the creation of the territorial databases for property taxation.			
3. Conduct capacity-building activities with 3 model municipalities (Elbasan, Fier, and Lushnja) staff to update and deploy GIS data and tools.			
4. Assess the impact of the Web-GIS implemented in 5 partner Municipalities and prepare a report with recommendations for broadly shared and replicated on “Lessons learned and best practices for Utilizing GIS to Support Municipal for building territory register”.			
Activity 10): Support CAPs and CSOs to build their capacities and increase their participation in local government decision making			
1. Conduct regular meetings, capacity building and sustainability activities, awareness campaigns to support CAPs in 11 partner LGUs. Topics will include annual budget, local finances, local planning, PPPs, ICT, etc.			
2. Conduct CBSs in three partner LGUs (Patos, Saranda, and Vora)			
3. Support Fier, Korça, Lushnja and Kuçova CAPs to monitor the implementation of the second wave of the CBSs.			
4. Conduct a National Conference on Civic Engagement with focus on CAPs and CBSs			
5. Conduct a tailored annual training on local governance with the new PCVs.			
6. Continue to coordinate and collaborate with PCVs in identifying opportunities to further the goals of the project.			
7. Prepare regular updates (through emails, individual meetings, quarterly reports) for PCVs to ensure mutual beneficial collaboration			
Activity 11): Develop PLGP outreach			
1. Conduct a final PLGP National Conference (see Component 1, Activity 3.2).			
2. Design/publish/disseminate two PLGP newsletters (one interim and one final)			
3. Update PLGP website regularly			
COMPONENT III: IMPROVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT OF PUBLICALLY OWNED UTILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH EU STANDARDS			
Activity 1): Support “Model/Partner Municipalities” to develop Transitional Plans and 5 Year- Performance Forecasts to Manage Water Supply and Sewerage Service Delivery for the Expanded Areas			
1. Work with Vlora and Tirana partner municipalities to develop Transition Plans for water supply and sewerage services that take into consideration the legal, institutional, administrative, procedural, and operational issues associated with providing these services to the total population within the newly defined, local government administrative boundaries.			
2. Organize a workshop to present the final Transition Plans with the Mayors and local officials of Vlora and Tirana and representatives from the water supply and sewerage companies.			
3. Work with the partner municipalities of Tirana, Patos, and Vlora to prepare a comprehensive Current Conditions Assessment for the expanded service area, identify priority issues, and develop new integrated strategic goals and performance improvement plans.			
4. Carry out a thorough Water Demand Analysis, staff restructuring plan, budget, and revenue needs analysis; present new tariff structure for Tirana, Patos, and Vlora water utilities; and identify areas to promote efficiency.			
5. Identify the need for capital investments, during the planning period, to improve services for the Tirana, Patos and Vlora service areas.			

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct– Dec 2016	Jan– Mar 2017	Apr– Jun 2017
6. Organize a final workshop to present five-year Performance Improvement Action Plans to the Mayors and local officials of Tirana, Patos and Vlora municipalities and central government officials.			
7. (i) Monitor progress of the Performance Improvement Action Plans for Fier/Lushnja/Patos/Vlora and Tirana during the transitional period of service area expansion, and assist utilities to negotiate a suitable new subsidy scheme based on the criteria set by central government. (ii) Organize regular meetings with the new Administrative Boards of the water utilities of Fier, Lushnja, Patos, Vlora, and Tirana to monitor implementation of the transition plan and assist each LGU/water utility to apply for a new license at the Regulatory Authority, and to negotiate performance contracts with the central government.			
8. Develop an awareness campaign for water supply and sewerage service delivery, which includes leaflets and utility fact sheets that will be distributed to all new potential customers from former communal systems. Design and display water bill payment posters and notifications that will be placed in the central and cashier offices of the Lushnja, Fier, Patos, Vlora, and Tirana Water Utilities.			
10. (i) Update the Supervisory Council (Administrative Council) Training Manual and Training Course based on the recent water sector reform institutional developments. (ii) Organize one-day training workshop with all the new members of the Administrative Boards of partner and model municipalities on their responsibilities to manage and provide oversight to water companies.			
Activity 2): Support the Development of General Local Territory Plans for provision of Water Supply and Sewerage Services			
1. Support Component IV Team to review and finalize the water supply and sewerage section of each General Local Territory Plan.			
2. In full coordination with Component IV team, prepare presentation materials and actively participate at approval sessions in support of GLTPs presentations.			
Activity 3): Support Integration of the Water Utility Database Management Systems Already Installed in Patos, Saranda and Kamza Municipalities/Utilities			
1. Provide on-the-job support to the utilities of Kamza, Saranda, and Patos to extend the usage of BAWIS systems related to customer data integration, asset inventories, and human resource data consolidation for all communal systems that will be included in the new utility service area.			
2. Assist partner utilities to update their website information based on changes to their service area and transitional plans.			
COMPONENT IV: STRENGTHEN THE CAPABILITIES OF THE GOA AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO PLAN AND MANAGE URBAN AND REGIONAL GROWTH			
Activity 1): Support national planning institution/s to improve capacities in implementing the planning law			
1. Provide training for MUD and NTPA staff on the use of financial land development instruments as one of the tools needed to implement GLTPs.			
Activity 2): Support the GoA in preparing the GNTP			
This activity has been completed, including additional work done in Years 4 and 5.			
Activity 3): Support Local Governments (planning departments and Mayors) to increase their capacities in territory planning and land development according to the planning legislation (new/revised).			
1. Deliver training to Local Councilors in partner municipalities on territorial planning and governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare curricula (territorial planning and governance, legal framework in Albania, the role of councilors, next steps); • Deliver ½ day training. 			

Key Tasks and Action Steps	Q1	Q2	Q3
	Oct– Dec 2016	Jan– Mar 2017	Apr– Jun 2017
2. Deliver a training program (in cooperation with national planning institutions) on the use of land development instruments and the implementation of GLTP, based on the drafted/approved GLTP for PLGP partner municipalities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the curricula and organize the calendar • Deliver training(s) (the exact timing will depend on finalization of the GLTPs, so that the training will be tailored to the local context). 			
3. Deliver training on GIS use for territory planning to the planning staff of the 5 model municipalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare curricula (importance of GIS for territorial databases and planning; GIS in Albania; GIS use in GLTP) • Deliver training (1–2 day workshop) 			
Activity 4): Support 5 model municipalities to draft and submit for approval general local territory plans			
1. Formulate territorial databases related to GLTPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete GIS territorial databases related to the GLTPs for the 5 model municipalities. Incorporate NTPA comments and submit to municipalities prior to final approval. • Convert all databases into the Integrated Territory Register format (either the current version or the version revised by NTPA) 			
2. Support the 5 model municipalities in securing approval for GLTPs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the formal GLTP ppt. presentations for the municipal councils and support the planning staff in each municipality to deliver the presentations; • Support municipalities in revising the GLTP documents and maps based on municipal council comments and comments received by NTPA during the compliance verification process; • Support municipalities to revise GLTP documents and maps based on NTC comments, prior to formal adoption. • Conduct final printing of documents and maps. 			
Activity 5): Assist civil society groups, citizens, businesses, and NGOs to increase their participation in and oversight of territorial planning (with CAPs).			
Tasks belonging to this activity were completed during Year Five.			
REPORTS			
Monthly Alert Reports (2 reports per quarter)	● ●	● ●	● ●
Closeout Plan		●	
Quarterly Reports (1 report)		●	●
Monthly Financial Reports (2 reports per quarter)	● ●	● ●	● ●
Quarterly Accrual Reports (1 report)		●	●
Final Report			●
STTA Reports & Special Reports	● ●	● ●	● ●

Key:

- = Event or Report
- = Ongoing Activity
- = Intermittent Activity
- ▲ = Activity Execution or Milestone

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