

# Serbia Local Infrastructure and Institutional Project – LIID

## **Terms of Reference**

Technical assistance and capacity building trainings and CoPs for green cities, engineering, procurement, environmental aware design, contract management

## ABBREVIATIONS

LIID	Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project
EU	European Union
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
LSG	Local Self-Government
ToR	Terms of Reference
GoS	Government of Serbia
MCTI	Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure
SCTM	Standing Conferences of Towns and Municipalities
WB	World Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
PAC	Public Awareness Campaigns
CoPs	Communities of Practice

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# 1. BACKGROUND

## 1.1. Country Background

Serbia is an open upper-middle-income economy that aspires to become a member of the European Union (EU) and reach European levels of prosperity. Major fiscal consolidation and other reforms since 2014 have helped to restore macroeconomic stability. At the same time, the country needs a stronger focus on the key constraints to inclusion, sustainability, and resilience. Poverty and inequality levels in Serbia are still significantly higher than in comparator countries, with disadvantaged groups and subnational regions persistently lagging behind the average population. Environmental sustainability concerns have become more prominent, with pressing issues such as air pollution and an extremely carbon-intensive economy. Improvements in government effectiveness and accountability have stagnated in recent years, despite some reform efforts, holding back stronger progress across other areas.

The European Green Deal will impose significant obligations on Serbia to take steps toward a cleaner, low carbon future because of Serbia's accession ambitions, and the fact that the EU is the major trading partner. The European Green Deal – a new growth strategy towards modern, climate neutral, resource efficient and competitive economies – sets ambitious climate action goals, including reduction of GHG emissions by 55% by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. Serbia's ambitions towards the EU Green Deal and addressing climate change and environmental challenges was endorsed by signing the Sofia Declaration on the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans in November 2020 and the adoption of 58-point action plan for Green Agenda for the Western Balkans for the period until 2030 at EU-Western Balkan Summit in Slovenia on October 6, 2021 as well as number of relevant policies such as the adoption of the Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (SUDS) from June 2019 and its Action Plan in March 2021, adoption of the Law on Climate Change in March 2021, enactment by the Parliament of four new energy related laws in April 2021.

Much of the burden for delivering on the green commitments of the Sofia Declaration will fall to Local Self Governments (LSGs).

The regulatory framework for managing local government finances is relatively well developed, but limited guidance and enforcement of policies are delaying its implementation and quality. LSG financing, budgeting and public finance management are regulated by means of several laws, the most important being the Law on the Budget System, the Law on LSG Financing and the Public Debt Law. The Ministry of Finance (MoF) provides guidelines for preparation of budgets but LSGs have autonomy in terms of expenditures and their design, amount and structure. The level of LSG financing has remained below legally prescribed levels, particularly with respect to non-earmarked funds, and the criteria for allocation have not been specified. Generally, allocations have been frozen since 2013, leading to a drop in un-earmarked funds from 0.87 percent in 2013 to 0.65 percent of GDP by 2019.

## **1.2. General Background of the Project**

The objective of the Serbia Local Infrastructure and Institutional Development Project is to improve LSGs capacity to manage sustainable infrastructure and improve access to economic and social opportunities in climate aware manner. The Project will finance a mixture of investment and technical assistance to improve green and inclusive infrastructure service delivery at the local level, including the implementation of the relevant chapters of SUDS. The Project will focus on strengthening capacities and technical approaches to implement existing regulatory, planning, and legal frameworks. Investments will focus on improving integrated mobility infrastructure and overall resilience of LSGs.

The Project should open a path for a long-term engagement in support of LSGs in Serbia. It will inform the development of a policy and investment framework that can be strengthened over time, allow the Bank and other development partners to contribute and improve absorption capacity. It is designed to potentially secure resources from other donors and also to extend the sectorial coverage above and beyond local roads and mobility.

To incentivize change, the LSGs will receive grant transfers from the central level for infrastructure investments, and will sign an PA with the GoS, which will include a set of commitments to improve public financial and transport infrastructure management at the local level. The PA will define the accountabilities and commitments of LSGs to improve strategic planning, PFM, and transport infrastructure management. The PA will also specify investment project implementation arrangements and responsibilities, including supervision, safeguards, citizen engagement, etc. The draft PA will be part of the POGM. The financing for infrastructure to be provided by the project will be additional, and not substitute for existing infrastructure spending by LSGs.

The total value of the investment is estimated at 300 million USD, of which 100 million USD will be provided by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and 200 million USD by the French Agency for Development.

## **1.3. Sector Background**

Serbia is organized as a unitary state, with a dominant central government level and is characterized by significant regional inequalities. At the subnational government levels, local self-government units (also known as LSGs) consist of municipalities, cities and the city of Belgrade. Most responsibilities are shared between the central government and the LSGs. Regions mostly play a coordinating role with limited functions, but there are efforts of the GoS and the LSGs to create intermunicipal cooperation bodies. The main body lobbying on behalf of the LSGs is the Standing Conferences of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM), which represents their interests and may provide a convening forum for more integrated planning and policy development.

Among the main functions of the LSGs in Serbia are services delivery, management of existing assets, and implementation of local investments, often through local public service companies owned by the LSGs. The LSGs are established to support local economic development, develop, maintain and manage local roads and other public infrastructure, and provide local services including for waste, water, public transportation, education and health facilities and other services important for local development. In addition, the LSGs are obliged to exercise so called “public responsibilities“, tasks under the competences of the GoS delegated to LSGs through special laws (sectorial laws). While much of the policy and regulation around these areas is in place, the LSGs often lack the capacity and financing to effectively implement them. This means that existing resources are either not used or not used effectively. A key objective of this project will be to build capacity for the more effective execution of existing systems of implementation.

Decades of underinvestment in infrastructure and related service provision have left LSGs' infrastructure in a poor state and contributing significantly to environmental pollution. This has led to deteriorating living conditions in many cities and towns, increased vulnerability and considerable variability in living standards across the country. Local roads, estimated at twice the length of the national road network, need renewal, while the residential sector accounts for the largest share of electricity and heat energy consumption in the economy. Less than 25 percent of the population has access to safe water sanitation services, and collection rates of household waste are low and much of the municipal solid waste deposited in unsanitary landfills.

Local transport infrastructure, which is among the largest expenditure items for LSGs and the main focus for this operation, suffer from poor infrastructure quality and poor road safety performance, rapidly increasing car ownership and declining public transport services. The poor quality of LSG transport infrastructure is considered a major factor preventing people from regularly accessing social and educational services and employment opportunities outside their immediate communities.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Consultant's assignment involves a comprehensive initiative aimed at fortifying the capacities of Local Self Governments (LSGs) to effectively navigate and implement sustainable urban development projects. Central to this assignment is the advancement of LSGs' expertise in critical areas such as green cities planning, engineering, procurement, environmentally conscious design, and adept contract management. This initiative is essential for aligning LSGs' practices with the overarching goals of sustainable development, thereby facilitating the creation of urban environments that are resilient, environmentally sustainable, and supportive of community well-being.

In fulfilling this mandate, the Consultant will undertake a thorough evaluation of LSGs' existing capabilities in managing and executing projects that contribute to sustainable urban development. This entails an in-depth analysis of current planning methodologies, engineering practices, procurement strategies, environmental design principles, and contract management techniques employed by LSGs. The objective is to uncover effective practices and pinpoint areas requiring improvement. The Consultant will then formulate strategic recommendations aimed at elevating LSGs' performance in channelling public investments toward achieving sustainable development outcomes.

Furthermore, the Consultant is tasked with identifying existing gaps in the skills and knowledge of municipal personnel charged with project management responsibilities. This process is crucial for determining specific training needs where targeted developmental initiatives can bridge these gaps, thus enhancing the overall project management efficacy within LSGs. Moreover, the Consultant will play a pivotal role in developing and delivering a bespoke training curriculum tailored to meet these identified needs. Additionally, the establishment of Communities of Practice (CoPs) is envisaged as a key strategy for facilitating continuous peer learning and the exchange of best practices among municipal staff and stakeholders. These CoPs are expected to foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, critical for the advancement of sustainable urban development initiatives.

A significant aspect of the Consultant's role also involves facilitating LSGs' access to both international and local financing for green city projects. This includes providing strategic guidance to enhance LSGs' capacity to secure necessary funding, aligning with the stringent requirements of international and local financiers. By deepening the understanding of financial mechanisms and opportunities available to municipalities, the Consultant aims to empower LSGs to leverage these financial resources effectively for the implementation of sustainable urban development projects.

**In summary, the key objectives of the Consultant's assignment are:**

- To assess and enhance the capacities of LSGs in the areas of green cities planning, engineering, procurement, environmental aware design, and contract management, thereby improving their performance in managing public investments within the scope of sustainable development.

- To identify gaps in skills and knowledge among key municipal personnel responsible for project management, develop and deliver targeted training curricula, and establish Communities of Practice (CoPs) for ongoing peer learning and sharing of best practices.
- To facilitate access to both international and local financing for green city projects by providing strategic recommendations for capacity building, aligned with the requirements of international and local financiers, and fostering an understanding of financial mechanisms and opportunities among the municipalities.

### **3. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The scope of services includes a series of structured activities aimed at enhancing the capacity of Local Self-Governments (LSGs) in sustainable infrastructure management. It begins with the inception phase resulting in the Inception Report, outlining the project's context and initial plans. Activity 1 involves assessing current capabilities and identifying gaps within LSGs. Based on this, Activity 2 focuses on developing a tailored training program, followed by Activity 3, which delivers these training sessions to key personnel. Activity 4 establishes Communities of Practice (CoPs) to foster continuous learning. Activity 5 covers the development and implementation of tools to support project management and communication. Lastly, Activity 6 involves regular progress and status reporting to track outcomes and improvements.

- Activity 0: Initial analysis
- Activity 1: Capacity assessment and identification of gaps
- Activity 2: Development of the Training Programme
- Activity 3: Delivery of Trainings
- Activity 4: Establishment of Communities of Practice (CoPs)
- Activity 5: Development and Implementation of Tools
- Activity 6: Progress and Status Reporting

#### **ACTIVITY 0: INITIAL ANALYSIS**

The Consultant shall compile and prepare a comprehensive initial analysis that encapsulates the status of the project taking into consideration also ongoing and planned activities outside of this assignment.

The activity shall conclude with an Inception Report, including inter alia:

- A succinct Executive Summary of the report, highlighting the main findings including the current state of LSGs, overall strategic approach to development of LSGs, existing cooperations, risks, and significant recommendations.
- An introductory section that outlines the context and background of the assignment.
- Project organisation including key stakeholders, contacts of representatives, communication channels and intervals.

- A summary of the initial assessments of the available documentation provided by the Client, including available reports, regulatory documents, any previous studies, adopted strategic plans, and similar documentation.
- Updated project implementation schedule.

Risks and issues log outlining key risks for the implementation of the assignment.

**Deliverable:** Inception Report (Document #1)

**Deadline:** Within 30 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Document #1: Inception Report.

## ACTIVITY 1: CAPACITY ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF GAPS

At this stage of implementation, the Consultant will conduct a comprehensive capacity assessment of Local Self-Governments (LSGs). This will focus on evaluating their historical and current practices in green cities planning, engineering, procurement, design, and contract management. The assessment will involve data analytics, stakeholder interviews, and comparative studies, aiming to identify areas that require improvement.

### Task 1.1: Assessment of LSGs' Capacities

Conduct a comprehensive review of current capabilities of LSGs with a special focus on their historical and current practices in the areas of green cities planning, engineering, procurement, design and contract management pinpointing areas that necessitate improvement.

The Consultant shall utilize data analytics, stakeholder interviews, and comparative studies.

The Consultant shall work closely with the PIU to gather necessary data and information from participating LSGs, including interviews with representatives **of up to 15 LSGs (up to 3 people from each LSG, based on proposal of responsible personnel from LSGs themselves)**, to be selected by the PIU based on their level of development to provide a representative sample of interviewees.

Additionally, the Consultant shall further **analyse 5 recently completed infrastructure projects implemented by the LSGs**, selected in coordination with the PIU, to identify LSGs' current capabilities, processes and practices during the life cycle of management of public investments.

## Task 1.2: Conducting a Gap Analysis

Through the results of the Task 1.1, conduct a detailed gap **analysis against international standards** (such as ISO 37101:2016 Sustainable development in communities - Management system for sustainable development or World Bank's Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability - PEFA- Framework) and prepare a **Gap Analysis Report** highlighting key skill and knowledge gaps towards improving LSGs' performance in managing public investments.

It is expected that Consultant's findings and recommendations are precise, actionable, and tailored to enhance LSGs' operational effectiveness, thereby paving the way for significant advancements in management of public investments. The recommendations shall also include findings in relation to technological gaps as outlined under Task 1.1.

**Deliverable for tasks 1.1. and 1.2:** Gap Analysis Report (Document #2) highlighting key skill and knowledge gaps towards improving LSGs performance in managing public investments.

**Deadline:** Within 150 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Document #2: Gap Analysis Report.

## Task 1.3: Conducting Training Needs Analysis (TNA)

In tandem with the gap analysis, conduct a **comprehensive Training Needs Analysis (TNA)** to systematically identify and evaluate the specific training requirements within LSGs, specifically targeting areas related to preparation and management of sustainable public investment management.

This analysis will be pivotal in pinpointing the exact skillsets and knowledge areas where training can significantly enhance the capabilities of LSGs' personnel in effectively managing and implementing sustainable development projects. By identifying the precise skillsets and knowledge areas that require fostering, the TNA plays a crucial role in highlighting how training can significantly elevate proficiency of LSGs' personnel in steering and realizing these projects.

The deliverable for Task 2.1 shall be a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis Report that not only consolidates the findings but also outlines specific recommendations for addressing these needs. This report is envisioned to guide the subsequent design and implementation phases of the training programme, ensuring that the educational interventions are precisely aligned with the needs of LSGs' personnel.

**Deliverable for tasks 1.3. :** Training Needs Analysis Report (Document #3)

**Deadline:** Within 175 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Document #3: Training Needs Analysis Report.

## ACTIVITY 2: DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Consultant will develop a comprehensive training programme designed to address the gaps identified in the previous capacity assessment and Training Needs Analysis (TNA). The programme aims to enhance sustainability practices within Local Self-Governments (LSGs), focusing on improving skills in sustainable project management.

### Task 2.1: Development of a Training Programme

Prepare a training programme that clearly defines the training objectives based on the identified gaps from the previous gap analysis and training needs analysis, aligning them with the overarching goals of enhancing sustainability practices within LSGs.

To ensure the training program is comprehensive and directly addresses the needs identified in the gap analysis and Training Needs Analysis (TNA), it shall encompass **several key modules**.

Each module shall focus on distinct aspects of investment project management, **including project planning and development, financial management and funding strategies, sustainable and green project design principles, procurement processes, and contract management**.

Additionally, the program shall consist of **interconnected modules** including but not limited to:

- a) **leadership and communication skills module to enhance project coordination and stakeholder engagement;**
- b) **a module on step-by-step guidelines on how to establish and promote Communities of Practice (CoPs) among LSG personnel which shall be developed in line with the World Bank Group Community of Practice Toolkit, focusing on creating a supportive network for sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices in sustainable project management**
- c) **a module on the requirements of international and local financiers, ensuring LSGs are well-informed about the available financial mechanisms and how to access them effectively for their projects.**

The overall curriculum shall be designed with specific objectives in mind, such as enhancing understanding of sustainable development principles, improving proficiency in project planning and execution, increasing awareness of green financing options, and strengthening stakeholder communication and management skills.

To ensure these objectives are met, the training content shall include **case studies, real-life examples, and best practices in sustainable project management**.

Furthermore, interactive sessions shall be incorporated to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills among participants. Training methods and delivery formats shall be varied to cater to the diverse learning

styles of the target audience. This may include in-person workshops for hands-on learning experiences, e-learning modules for flexible self-paced study, and seminars led by experts in sustainable development and project management. The training schedule shall be structured to accommodate the availability of LSG personnel, ensuring maximum participation and engagement.

Resource requirements for the training program shall be carefully outlined, including materials for course content, technology support for e-learning modules, and logistics for in-person workshops and seminars.

**An evaluation mechanism shall be established to measure the effectiveness of the training programs, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative metrics such as pre- and post-training assessments, participant feedback, and the application of learned skills in ongoing projects.**

The Consultant shall approach the task with long-term trainings and capacity building in mind, including utilisation of technology tools for trainings, reporting, communication, and other key activities throughout the project.

The expected outcome of this task is a well-structured training programme that not only bridges the identified skill and knowledge gaps but also equips LSGs' personnel with the tools and insights necessary to contribute more effectively to sustainable public investment initiatives.

**Deliverable for tasks 2.1. :** Training Programme (Document #4)

**Deadline:** Within 255 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Document #4: Training Programme.

### ACTIVITY 3: DELIVERY OF TRAININGS

#### Task 3.1: Organisation and Delivery of Training Sessions

The Consultant, in close coordination with the PIU and in line with the developed training programme, **shall organize and conduct training sessions for key personnel from LSGs, using a mix of workshops, seminars, and hands-on exercises designed to enhance necessary skills and knowledge effectively.**

Anticipating the organization of **15 training sessions (with varying duration depending on the subjects, from 1 to 2 days), the Consultant shall accommodate up to 30 participants per session with focus on key LSG personnel proposed by LSGs themselves**, thereby ensuring an intimate yet comprehensive learning environment. Each session shall target specific areas of improvement identified in the earlier phases of the assignment, spanning critical subjects such as green cities planning, engineering, procurement, environmental aware design, and contract management.

To optimize the learning experience, the training sessions shall incorporate interactive methodologies such as case studies, group discussions, and simulation exercises, enabling participants to apply concepts in real-world scenarios.

The Consultant shall ensure preparation of adequate training materials to be distributed among the participants either before or after each session. **The Consultant shall prepare 10 sample project concept notes in various sectors, with specific focus on LSG projects.**

The Consultant shall work closely with the PIU to identify optimal dates and locations for the sessions, considering the geographic distribution of participants to minimize travel constraints and maximize accessibility.

**A comprehensive evaluation strategy shall be implemented** to assess the effectiveness of each training session, gathering feedback from participants on the content, materials, delivery, and applicability of the training. This feedback shall be instrumental in refining future sessions, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with the evolving needs of LSG personnel. After each training session and after the completion of whole training programme, the Consultant shall provide PIU training assessment reports which shall include; summary of received feedback, list of registered participants, copies of the training material (written, audio, video), lessons learnt and recommendations for future training.

In addition to trainings delivered by the Consultant and PIU, the Consultant shall also draft a **short list of trainings which will be required for further enhancement of LSG capacities, including tailor-made and licences trainings** (e.g., FIDIC, project management trainings, trainings on use of specific tools, etc.). The Consultant shall consider the number of personnel, duration, budgets and other aspects of such trainings, endeavouring to maximise the participation and usefulness of such trainings. To this end, the Consultant shall explore open source trainings, organised licensed trainings, online training platforms, and other ways of achieving the outlined objectives.

The Consultant shall be responsible for the costs such as venue, training materials, translation services (if any), catering and alike. The Consultant shall not be responsible for covering the costs related to travel/accommodation of participants.

**Deliverable for Task 3.1:**

- 10 project concept notes (Document #5)
- Report on delivery of trainings and short list of trainings which will be required for further enhancement of LSG capacities, including tailor-made and licences trainings (Document #6)

**Deadlines:**

- Within 255 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Document #5: 10 project concept notes

- Within 365 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Report on delivery of trainings, Document #6.

## ACTIVITY 4: ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COPS)

### Task 4.1: Establishment of CoPs

**The Consultant shall facilitate formation of 1 Communities of Practice (CoPs) among municipal staff and other stakeholders to encourage continuous learning and sharing of best practices in managing public investments within the scope of sustainable development.**

The CoPs should cover **3 key areas**, namely the **LSGs' infrastructure project development and financing; LSGs' project implementation and management; and LSG's capacity building and cooperation.**

The Consultant shall create a **comprehensive database of municipal officials** (expected 30 people) who possess specialised knowledge and skills that can be leveraged across municipalities. The development of this database shall include HR assessment and interview process to identify municipal officials who not only exhibit exceptional expertise in their respective fields but also possess the aptitude and willingness to disseminate this knowledge to colleagues across different LSGs.

This process shall be designed to ensure that most qualified and motivated individuals are identified (10 people) to contribute to the Core Team of the CoPs as experts and potential candidates for expanding towards the Core Group (20 people) are also pre-selected.

For each selected official, a short bio-profile shall be created, detailing their professional background, areas of expertise, and notable achievements within the realm of sustainable development and public investment management. **The Consultant, in collaboration with the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), shall ensure that the list of profiles, including the detailed bio-profiles, is shared among future CoPs members, thereby enabling easy access to a wealth of knowledge and expertise.**

Working closely with the Core Team, the Consultant shall employ a strategic approach to expanding the CoP, leveraging the database and bio-profiles to identify and engage additional municipal officials who can contribute to the collective knowledge pool.

The Consultant shall also assist the CoPs to develop a **draft community charter** - a concept note that describes what the community is about, and how it's set up to achieve its purpose; and a short-term action plan (3 months or less) which focuses on member engagement plan.

The Consultant, then shall provide technical assistance to the CoPs in setting up a member roster and starting to track progress, adopting the charter as a guiding document, attracting more resources to the community,

growing the membership, and possibly, more staff, developing a calendar of events and establishing a community rhythm.

The CoP shall convene on regular basis, once per quarter, for 2-3 days. The Consultant shall and PIU support in organisation of the meetings in close cooperation with the PIU to agree on location, duration, available budget, and other considerations. The materials and agenda for the meetings shall be developed by the Consultant and the PIU, with the focus on key issues identified via previous activities.

Once the CoPs is established, the Consultant shall prepare a **comprehensive strategy to foster active participation and growth within CoPs**. The Consultant shall facilitate quarterly meetings and developing a community charter for the CoPs. Additionally, to ensure that the CoPs' agendas, visions, and organizational structures are clearly defined and aligned with their overarching goals, the Consultant shall guide the CoPs in articulating a detailed vision statement that encapsulates their aspirations and objectives. This vision shall serve as a roadmap, guiding the CoPs' activities and ensuring that all members are united in their efforts towards the defined goal.

Furthermore, the Consultant shall assist in the **definition of the CoPs' organizational framework**. This includes defining roles and responsibilities within the community, establishing governance structures, and setting up operational protocols to ensure smooth functioning. The organizational structure shall be designed to promote inclusivity, facilitate decision-making, and enable effective management of community resources.

In relation to organizing the Communities of Practice (CoPs), the Consultant shall be responsible for the costs such as venue, training materials, translation services (if any), catering and alike. The Consultant shall not be responsible for covering the costs related to travel/accommodation of participants.

#### **Deliverable for Task 4.1:**

- Database of municipal officials for curation of CoPs
- Report on establishment of CoPs (Document #7)

#### **Deadlines:**

- Within 395 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Database of municipal officials for curation of CoPs
- Within 425 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Report on establishment of CoPs (Document #6)

#### **Task 4.2: Promotion of CoPs**

Following the establishment of CoPs, the Consultant will support ongoing engagement by facilitating quarterly meetings, which may include digital or in-person formats depending on availability and member preference.

These meetings will focus on sharing practical insights, addressing challenges, and fostering peer support within the CoP network. To further encourage participation, the Consultant will make use of accessible digital tools to enable remote engagement and ensure that meeting content is available for later access.

Additionally, the Consultant shall assist in defining the agendas for the CoPs' regular meetings and interactions. These agendas shall be strategically crafted to address current challenges, explore emerging trends in sustainable urban development, and discuss progress on ongoing projects. By focusing on topics of critical relevance, the agendas shall ensure that meetings are productive and meaningful, encouraging active participation from all members. The creation of a short-term action plan, focusing on member engagement, shall involve setting concrete targets for expanding the CoPs' membership and enhancing member involvement. This plan shall outline specific strategies for outreach, recruitment, and retention, aiming to build a diverse and dynamic community of practice. To further enrich the CoPs' knowledge base and inspire innovation, the Consultant shall prepare and present case studies of successful CoPs. These case studies shall be carefully selected in collaboration with the PIU, highlighting best practices and lessons learned from communities that have effectively harnessed collective knowledge to drive sustainable development initiatives by exemplifying tangible impacts that can be achieved through collaborative efforts.

**The Consultant will introduce select case studies of successful CoPs, which, once reviewed by the PIU, will serve as examples of best practices in sustainable urban development.** These case studies will highlight adaptable strategies that CoP members can draw upon to enhance their initiatives.

To strengthen CoP involvement without overburdening members, additional promotional efforts will include the following activities:

- **Member Engagement Guidelines:** the Consultant will create a set of easy-to-follow guidelines to encourage ongoing participation, including tips for staying involved, contributing to discussions, and accessing shared resources.
- **Resource Sharing:** A simplified digital library of key resources should be curated, offering a collection of articles, templates, and relevant materials, accessible to all CoP members.
- **Periodic Updates:** the Consultant should send periodic email updates summarizing recent CoP activities, new resources, and upcoming events, allowing for flexible and streamlined communication.
- **Informal Feedback Collection:** The Consultant will use informal feedback methods, such as brief surveys or group discussions during meetings, to gauge member satisfaction and identify areas of interest for future CoP activities.
- **Gradual Member Expansion:** The Consultant will explore opportunities for gradual growth by reaching out to potential new members through existing networks, focusing on organic expansion to bring in participants who are genuinely interested in sustainable development.

**Deliverable for Task 4.2:** Strategy for promotion of CoPs (Document #7)

**Deadlines:** Within 395 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Strategy for promotion of CoPs (Document #7)

## **ACTIVITY 5: DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF TOOLS**

### **Task 5.1: Development and implementation of toolset**

**Conduct a comprehensive analysis of toolsets and software at the disposal of PIU and LSGs to communicate, manage capacities, resources and projects, with the aim of identifying technological gaps which hinder PIU's and LSGs' efficiency and effectiveness in executing their activities in a smooth and timely manner.**

As a part of this activity, the Consultant shall support the PIU in utilising available internet tools for the purpose of data collection from wider group of LSGs (beyond the 15 LSGs which will be focal groups and will require in-person meetings and potentially visits subject to agreement with the PIU) and improving efficiency of data collection activities. The Consultant shall periodically visit this process and improve upon the communication between the PIU, LSGs and other stakeholders, including through the use of new tools that become available.

**The Consultant shall undertake the creation of a comprehensive and tailored toolkit designed specifically to empower CoPs in achieving their goals.** This toolset shall include a broad spectrum of tools and resources that cover various aspects of CoP operations and activities. The toolset shall include inter alia,

- an ecosystem analysis tools, enabling CoPs to map out the landscape in which they operate, including key players, potential collaborators, and influential stakeholders within the sustainable development arena.
- a detailed stakeholder analysis module, which shall aid CoPs in identifying and understanding the interests, needs, and potential contributions of different stakeholders to their projects.
- member needs assessment tools to enable CoPs to regularly evaluate and respond to the evolving needs and interests of their members, ensuring that the community remains relevant and valuable to all participants.
- financial modelling tools which can be used to provide initial financial structure and project parameters.
- emissions calculation tools to be used to evaluate current emissions levels and demonstrate expected project impacts.
- fundraising tools to support CoPs in identifying funding opportunities, developing compelling proposals, and securing financial resources necessary for their projects and initiatives.

- action planning tools for a structured approach to setting goals, defining strategies, and outlining actionable steps for achieving the CoPs' objectives.
- calendaring and event planning tools to assist in the organization of meetings, workshops, seminars, and other community events, ensuring efficient scheduling and coordination.
- monitoring and evaluation impact tools to enable CoPs to assess the effectiveness of their activities, track progress towards their goals, and identify areas for improvement.
- reporting tools to facilitate the preparation of comprehensive reports that document achievements, challenges, and lessons learned, supporting transparency and accountability within the community.

**Moreover, the Consultant shall also consider additional tools and resources that could benefit CoPs in the future, ensuring that the toolset remains dynamic and adaptable, capable of evolving to meet the changing needs of CoPs as they continue to grow and develop.**

**In terms of technological support to CoPs, the Consultant shall recommend suitable IT systems and digital tools that enhance the CoPs' operational capabilities.** This might involve setting up dedicated online platforms for knowledge sharing, collaboration tools for project management, and communication systems to keep members connected. These digital solutions shall be selected based on their ability to meet the CoPs' specific needs, ensuring that members have access to state-of-the-art resources that facilitate seamless interaction and collaboration.

In order to provide comprehensive ecosystem for use of CoPs by LSGs and PIU, **the Consultant shall draft technical requirements for a software for the use of LSGs in order to facilitate use and dissemination CoPs.** The technical requirements shall be drafted based on outcomes of previous tasks and needs identified by the Consultant, and shall outline a solution which can be implemented and used in a quick and efficient manner by the stakeholders for the purposes of improving efficiency and effectiveness in achieving programme objectives. The technical requirements shall also take into consideration use of emerging technologies such as AI and its use cases in the context of the programme.

The Consultant shall identify and assess potential solutions already available in the market and their usability in the context of the assignment, including information on pricing and customization.

The objective of this task is for Consultant to provide the technical requirements as outlined above, and to utilise tools and technology to establish clear communication between the PIU, LSGs and other stakeholders. The Consultant shall propose a way to measure the impact of these tools on the efficiency of communication and document preparation prior to tool implementation and based on PIU / LSG needs (e.g., KPIs, such as time spent on certain tasks, speed of communication, participant's engagement; participant questionnaire, etc.). Consultant should be mindful not to implement tools which are ineffective in this specific context and add to PIU / LSG workload rather than improving efficiency.

The Consultant is obligated to ensure that all digital solutions provided as part of the project are fully integrated with the project's official website or, if full integration is not technically feasible, are clearly accessible through direct links from the project website.

The software solution itself is to be implemented by the Client at a later date, based on the technical specifications and the recommendations / findings of this Activity. This does not include the initial toolset for the CoPs.

#### **Deliverable for Task 5.1:**

- Customized toolset for the CoPs
- Technical Requirements for Software to Facilitate the Use and Dissemination of CoPs (Document #8)

#### **Deadlines:**

- Within 465 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Customized toolset for the CoPs
- Within 465 calendar days after the Contract signing, the Consultant should provide the Technical Requirements for Software to Facilitate the Use and Dissemination of CoPs (Document #7)

### **ACTIVITY 6: PROGRESS AND STATUS REPORTING**

#### **Task 6.1. Preparation of Quarterly Reports**

Throughout to project the Consultant shall prepare Quarterly Progress Reports, outlining the status of the implementation. Quarterly Reports shall include inter alia:

- Executive summary for the period
- Overview of planned activities for the period
- Overview of implemented activities for the period
- Overview of planned activities for next period
- Updated risks and issues log including mitigation measures and responsible persons

#### **Task. 6.2. Preparation of Final Report**

The Consultant shall compile and prepare a comprehensive final report that encapsulates the entirety of the project's journey—from the initial assessments and gap analysis to the development and implementation of the training program and Communities of Practice (CoPs), and finally, the creation of an essential toolset. This Final Report shall provide a holistic overview of the project's achievements, lessons learned, and a

roadmap for future endeavours in capacity building within Local Self Governments (LSGs). The Final Report shall include inter alia;

- A succinct Executive Summary of the report, highlighting the main objectives, methodologies, key findings, and significant recommendations.
- An introductory section that outlines the context and background of the assignment, including the rationale behind the focus on enhancing LSGs' capacities and the specific objectives set at the commencement of the project.
- Detailed description of the methodologies employed throughout the project, including the approaches taken for the gap analysis, Training Needs Analysis (TNA), the organization and delivery of training sessions, the establishment and promotion of CoPs, and the development of the toolset.
- A summary of the initial assessments conducted, detailing the identified gaps in skills, knowledge, and capacities within LSGs.
- Insights into the training sessions conducted, including participant feedback, evaluations of the training effectiveness, and the impact on LSG personnel capabilities.
- An evaluation of the CoP formation and growth process, detailing the activities undertaken, member engagement levels, and the benefits realized from these collaborative networks.
- Feedback on the adoption and usage of the developed toolset by LSGs and CoPs, including its effectiveness in supporting their activities and achieving their objectives.
- Based on the project's findings, detailed recommendations for continuous capacity enhancement of LSGs, including areas for further training, CoP development, and toolset expansion.
- Recommendations aligned with the needs and requirements of international and local financiers, providing LSGs with guidance on leveraging key financial mechanisms and opportunities to support sustainable urban development projects.
- Software technical requirements and clear recommendations for next steps to be implemented by the PIU and other stakeholders.
- A concluding section that encapsulates the overall impact of the project, reflecting on the progress made towards enhancing the capacities of LSGs and the path forward for continuous improvement and engagement with financiers.
- Supplementary materials including detailed data analyses, training materials, CoP guidelines, toolset documentation, and other relevant documents produced or utilized throughout the project.

**Deliverables for Tasks 6.1 and 6.2:** Quarterly report (x4) and Final report

All reports produced under this assignment shall be in English, delivered in word and pdf formats to the Client through electronic means.

#### **LIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED BY THE CLIENT**

- Relevant legal and policy documents.
- Existing studies and reports on local infrastructure financing.
- Existing reports or studies that highlight skill and knowledge gaps among municipal personnel.
- List of key institutions, including national government bodies and LSGs for interviews.
- Contact information and profiles of key personnel from these LSGs who will be involved in the project.

- List of and access to tools used by the PIU and LSGs.
- LSG investment plans and ongoing capital investments.

## 4. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

### Location

Various locations within Serbia, primarily in regions with beneficiary LSGs. The Consultant shall have presence in Belgrade and shall work closely with the PIU to deliver the assignment.

The consulting team will be provided with office space in Serbia, preferably in the capital city for accessibility and close cooperation with the PIU. The Consultant shall be responsible for organising its own travel to LSGs when necessary and agreed with the PIU.

### Start Date and Implementation Period

The project is anticipated to start immediately upon contract signing, expected to be in April 2025, with an estimated duration of 18 months.

### Meetings

Regular meetings with the PIU, LSG representatives, international experts, core team of CoPs and other stakeholders as necessary.

## 5. REQUIRED POSITIONS

### Key Specialist

- **Project Manager** - An experienced Project Manager with expertise in capacity building trainings, including in areas such as engineering, procurement, environmentally aware design, contract management, infrastructure finance and climate-resilient planning, with at least 15 years of experience in such projects financed by IFIs or the EU. At least 10 years of experience working in Serbia and the region. Demonstrated understanding of Serbian legal system in context of IFI financing and project implementation for LSGs. Preferably an MSc in relevant field. Knowledge and experience in Serbia and the region, specifically on projects for LSGs will be considered a distinct advantage. Fluency in English and Serbian languages. Minimum time input expected is 12 person-months.
- **Procurement Specialist** - A Procurement Specialist with at least 15 years of experience in Serbia or the region, with specific experience in public procurement according to IFI guidelines and public procurement according to Serbian national laws. Specific experience in working with LSGs on

projects involving procurement and capacity building. Fluency in English and Serbian languages. Minimum time input expected is 8 person-months.

- **Engineer** - An Engineer with 15 years of experience in project / design development including environmentally aware design, experience in implementation of infrastructure projects including for LSGs, experience on IFI-financed projects, experience in projects concerning LSGs. The engineer shall hold adequate licenses in accordance with national law. Demonstrated understanding of Serbian legal system in context of IFI financing and project implementation for LSGs. Experience in capacity building and trainings will be considered a distinct advantage. Fluency in English and Serbian languages. Minimum time input expected is 12 person-months.
- **IT Specialist** - IT Specialist with 15 years of experience in IT and system integration advisory and capacity building, development of technical requirements and specifications, development of customised toolsets. At least 10 years of experience in public sector including Ministries, LSGs and public companies, with experience on IFI-financed projects being considered a distinct advantage. Fluency in English, with fluency in Serbian being considered a distinct advantage. Minimum time input expected is 6 person-months.
- **Specialist In Climate Resilience And Low-Carbon Energy Transition** - Specialist In Climate Resilience And Low-Carbon Energy Transition with at least 15 years of professional experience, including in emissions calculations based on internationally accepted methodologies, decarbonisation of economy, development of strategies and mechanisms for climate resilience and low-carbon energy transition in the public sector. Experience in Serbia and the region. Demonstrated understanding of EU regulations and laws in regard to decarbonisation and green energy transition. Minimum time input expected is 12 person-months.

### Non-Key Specialist

- The consultant shall propose a pool of non-key specialist to support the key specialist in discharging their duties and achieving the project objectives. The non-key specialists shall have at least 5 years of professional experience, preferably in infrastructure projects, and experience in Serbia or the region. Knowledge of English language; knowledge of Serbian language will be considered a distinct advantage. Minimum time input expected from the non-key specialists is 48 person-months. The indicative list of non-key specialists is presented below and shall be supplemented by the consultant as necessary:
  - Contract management Specialist
  - Event Organization Specialist
  - Community Engagement Specialist
  - Project Coordinator
  - Financial Specialist
  - Policy Analyst
  - PR And Visibility Specialist
  - Backstopping