

Project:

Cooperation for Development – Support to Decentralisation and Sustainable
Local Development in Georgia (C4D)

Terms of Reference Senior National Coordinator

1.1 Background and Rationale

The project “*Cooperation for Development – Support to Decentralisation and Sustainable Local Development in Georgia (C4D)*” will be implemented by SALAR International, as the operational arm of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) in international development cooperation. By agreement with the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, the implementation period for the programme is 47 months, from May 2024 to March 2028. It is fully funded by Sida.

SALAR and SALAR International

SALAR is a member-based organization, representing and advocating for the interests of all municipalities and regions in Sweden. SALAR has for many years engaged in international exchange and cooperation and has a framework agreement with its subsidiary SALAR International to implement all international development cooperation projects. SALAR and SALAR International have various international experiences of supporting decentralisation reforms, local good governance and democratisation as well as sustainable service delivery across the world, including in the fields of environmental protection, urban planning and sustainable development.

The project was designed during an inception phase between March and November 2023, which investigated the possibilities for strategic support linked to the goals of Sweden’s reform cooperation with Georgia: to strengthen democracy and respect for human rights, to improve the country’s environmental work and to support Georgia’s efforts to strengthen the ties with the European Union. It was identified that SALAR can bring support and added value in i) supporting the Georgian decentralisation process and to strengthen the capacity of the country’s local self-government, ii) the EU accession process and iii) broadly in relation to the Result Strategy for Sweden’s reform cooperation with Eastern Europe and the priorities of the Government of Sweden.

The project will be implemented during a crucial time for Georgia’s European perspective. On 8 November 2023, the European Commission recommended that the Council grants Georgia the status of a candidate country - on the understanding that certain reforms and steps are taken. Accession to the European Union is a merit-based process, fully dependent on the objective progress achieved by each country. Of particular concern to the democratic development of Georgia are the national elections due to be held in October 2024, followed by the local elections in 2025.

Local self-governance is one of the core principles of democracies that respect and promote human rights and contribute to a sustainable way of living. Decentralisation refers to the redistribution of authority, resources, and decision-making from a central authority to regional or local entities. This redistribution is intended to promote more efficient governance, empower local communities, and enhance accountability and responsiveness to local needs. The European Charter of Local Self-Government, ratified by Georgia, lays down standards for protecting the rights of local authorities. The

Charter commits the parties to applying basic rules guaranteeing the political, administrative and financial independence of local authorities.

Whereas the system of local government may differ in different countries, the unique concept of strong local self-government as in Europe, rests on three pillars; clear division of powers, allocation of relevant resources to municipalities and citizens' control and participation. The experience of Eastern European countries shows that decentralisation reforms, delegating state power to local governments, requires substantive coordination among stakeholders both at the national level and between local and national levels.

In 2019, the Georgian Government adopted the Decentralisation Strategy for 2020-2025. Despite the results of its implementation over the last few years, there is still a wide scope for improvements and further reform. The transfer of adequate financial resources to local governments remains a key challenge, coordination between national level institutions is still weak and public involvement and consultations are lacking.

The project is designed to address these needs: to provide support to municipalities, strengthen their capacities to fulfil their mandates and play a fundamental role in democratic and sustainable development in Georgia. It also aims to contribute to evidence-based policy formulation, and to strengthening the use of best practice in central-local consultations and multi-level governance. It will be linked to requirements in Georgias process of EU-accession, the Copenhagen Criteria and the implementation of Agenda 2030.

1.2 Objectives and activities of the project

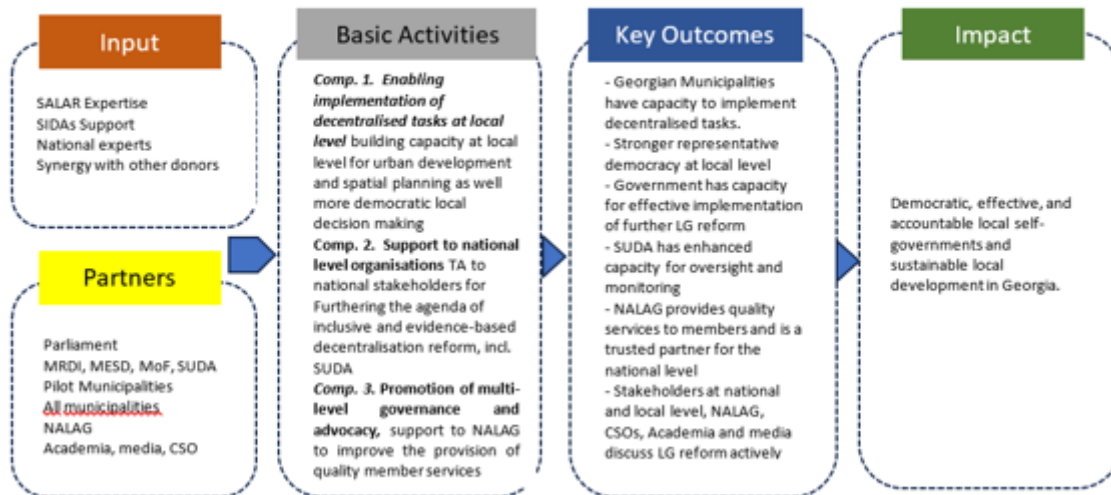
The overall objective of the project Cooperation for Development (C4D) is **to promote democratic, effective, and accountable local self-governments and sustainable local development in Georgia**. The specific objectives intervention and result areas are divided into three Components namely:

Component 1 Contributing to building capacity in municipalities to implement delegated tasks using participatory approaches.

Component 2 Contributing to inclusive and evidence-based decentralisation reform in Georgia

Component 3 Advocating decentralisation reform and strengthening multi-level governance on local development

The proposed intervention logic of the project is:



1.3 Description of the Assignment

Team

For the implementation phase, it is foreseen that a local **Senior National Coordinator (SNC)** will support the processes in Georgia and jointly with the team ensure the successful project implementation. In particular it is foreseen that s/he will coordinate activities related to enabling implementation of delegated tasks at local level, but also provide input to work on the national level as needed.

S/he will report to the Team Leader and Project Manager from SALAR International. The implementation phase will be carried out together with the institutional support functions of SALAR International for administrative, financial and quality assurance purposes.

When the full team has been set up, roles and division of responsibilities will be further discussed and defined among the team members.

Role of the Senior National Coordinator

The SNC should be an experienced, professional, self-motivated person, who can work effectively in a dynamic and changing environment and manage people and processes to reach the targeted results within a limited time and budget allocation. As a senior expert s/he will be engaged to coordinate activities and managing and reporting progress and outcomes on the ground, ensuring alignment with the project proposal and the priorities and strategies which it aims to support.

S/he will be responsible for facilitating contacts and conducting continuous strategic dialogue with cooperation partners, international and national actors, facilitating the operational management, methodological development, trainings and events as well as providing technical and logistical support

in particular to the pilot municipalities, but also to the national association of municipalities NALAG or national ministries such as MRDI and MSED or agencies SUDA as needed.

The SNC will be contracted during the project period as an independent consultant, based in Tbilisi, to work closely with the rest of the team and also play an important role in reviewing the context and institutional framework of Georgia as well as providing advice on advocacy and strategic communications. The position entails leading and supporting program teams and specialists and fostering the roll-out of interventions in pilot municipalities through the selection of candidates for training and capacity building as appropriate.

In close cooperation with the Team Leader and SALAR International the SNC is expected to provide expertise, advice on learnings from previous experiences and methodological support, as well as drawing conclusions that are relevant and of benefit for the Georgian stakeholders and matched with SALARs areas of expertise and priorities of the Swedish Government.

The SNC will facilitate and coordinate key processes regarding (i) strategic planning and facilitation of contacts with key stakeholders, in particular liaising with the pilot municipalities (ii) plan for and prepare trainings and capacity building activities (iii) produce and compile technical input to materials, reports and communication materials (iiii) provide additional quality assurance of training and communication materials in Georgian language (v) document findings and outputs, (vi) assist as needed with the coordination of the missions of other International and Local Expert(s).

The SNC will also be responsible for a continuous review and assessment of changes or updates in the context of management and related institutional frameworks.

More specifically, and in close cooperation with the SALAR International team, the tasks of the SNC are (but not limited) to:

- Liaise with key stakeholders and existing initiatives relevant for the project, identifying possible gaps, capacity needs and interests of stakeholders
- Support the advocacy and strategic communication strategy of the project with input and advice
- Preparation and delivery of workshops, including assisting with presentation materials, arranging for translations/interpretation if needed with the purpose to implement the activities in order to reach the defined outcomes and objectives
- Supervise and manage short and long-term experts engaged in the project as per dialogue with the project Team Leader
- Monitoring and evaluation of the progress in project implementation related to the Logical Framework including preparing written reports.
- Provide additional comments and strategic advice to the TL/Project Manager during the implementation for monitoring purposes and process and incorporate any needed changes to the programming
- Follow and participate in dialogue the implementation and progress of national action plan for decentralisation, including other relevant policy processes, with government entities and other stakeholders

1.4 Planning and Outputs

Planning & Time Frames

The work will be carried out in consultation with the Team Leader, SALAR International's Project Manager, the Local Experts and the Swedish Embassy in Tbilisi. The Assignment will be implemented during May 2024 – May 2026 (with possible extension to March 2028).

The work is expected to be conducted both in physical meetings and workshops carried out in Georgia, but also through digital means and interactions.

Overall expected outputs

- Consultations and ongoing dialogue with selected key stakeholders and beneficiaries
- Training materials adapted, produced, and disseminated to relevant audiences
- Workshops/trainings and events conducted and documented
- Strategic communications and advocacy plan and related activities and outputs
- Written reports of findings and conclusions as well as oral presentations

1.5 Expert Profile and Scope of the Assignment

Profile Required

- Post-graduate qualification in political science, economics, law or related field and over seven years' experience of working with issues concerning regional and local governance and development cooperation. Experience of/knowledge in urban development is considered an asset.
- Professional experience in Georgia or in other post- Soviet country contexts, preferably working with Georgian municipalities and local government entities
- Experience in the preparation of advocacy and strategic communications plans and implementation of related activities
- Compiling and analyzing data concerning different subjects related to local governance and public administration, EU-accession processes and EU-standards, public service delivery and policy development.
- S/he should have prior experience of drafting materials and reports, competence in writing and preparing publications of an analytical nature in English and Georgian language.
- Experience of team management/supervising and leading work of experts
- Excellent communication and facilitation/coordination skills and ability to respond flexibly in a dynamic environment
- Demonstrated ability to maintain impartiality and objectivity
- S/he must be independent and free from conflicts of interest.

Duration of assignment

The role as Senior National Coordinator entails a full time engagement of on average 19 days/month (228 days/year). The contract will be assigned for two years, with a possible extension of two years. Total number of days for the first two years will be 456 days.

Diversity and equal opportunities

SALAR International embraces diversity and respects human rights in all areas of its work. SALAR International strives to create a gender-equal and diverse working environment. Team members shall respect equal rights of individuals and strive to create an atmosphere where people's differences are accepted and valued. SALAR International supports working arrangements that enable personnel to combine work with family commitments.

Application: Send your application with CV and a cover letter to opportunity@salarinternational.se. Please note "*Georgia Senior National Coordinator*" in the subject line. Interviews will be conducted on an ongoing basis.

Contact person: Anna G:son Berg, anna.gson.berg@skr.se

Deadline: 22 May 2024