

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Support the equipping of 24/7 Health Centres and Municipality Hospitals to ensure their response capacity to medical emergencies in Albania

PROJECT:	SOLIDAR – TOGETHER IN HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Category:	Short-term Expert
Corresponding to Outcome:	Outcome 2: Strengthening Emergency Medical Services
Support for Activity:	Activity 2.1.3: Support the improvement of infrastructure, equipment and services of 24/7 HCs and/or MHs to better respond to health/medical emergencies
Period of assignment:	01.07.2025 – 30.09.2025
Expert days:	up to 15 days

1. BACKGROUND

Albania is a disaster-prone country and occasionally exposed to natural and man-made hazards. Emergency events, such as floods, forest fires, droughts, torrential rains, high snowfalls, heatwaves, landslides, avalanches, earthquakes, and epidemics, are encountered annually. These emergencies pose significant risks to the population, infrastructure, and health systems. In 2019, Albania endured a devastating earthquake affecting 11 municipalities, directly impacting over 47,000 people and indirectly affecting more than 155,000. This disaster resulted in 51 fatalities, 913 injuries, and widespread economic and infrastructural damage. Shortly afterward, the COVID-19 pandemic further strained the already fragile healthcare system, exposing critical gaps in emergency preparedness and response.

The frequency and severity of these disasters are compounded by socioeconomic vulnerabilities, including poverty, inadequate infrastructure, rapid urbanization in high-risk areas, and overexploitation of natural resources such as forests and riverbanks. At the primary healthcare (PHC) level, these challenges are particularly acute, with limited resources, outdated equipment, and insufficient coordination mechanisms, leaving facilities ill-prepared to address health emergencies effectively.

The goal of the project is: People, including the most vulnerable, have improved access to quality emergency care services managed by a more resilient health emergency system at all levels.

The project objectives are: 1) Strengthening the Health Emergency System, 2) Strengthening Emergency Medical Services, and 3) Strengthening Community Engagement. The requested services feed into the first objective.

This assignment directly contributes to **Outcome 2: Strengthening Emergency Medical Services**, addressing critical gaps in equipment and infrastructure at PHC facilities and municipality hospitals, and improving access to quality emergency care for all, particularly the most vulnerable populations.

2. RATIONALE

Field assessments of 24/7 HCs and MHs have highlighted significant gaps in medical equipment, staff training, and infrastructure. Currently, many facilities rely on outdated equipment or lack essential devices altogether, which undermines their ability to respond promptly to emergency cases.

Addressing these gaps through medical device procurement and capacity-building will improve emergency response times and patient outcomes. Ensuring that HCs and MHs are equipped with modern, high-quality medical devices will also help standardize emergency care practices and enhance the overall resilience of the healthcare system.

Furthermore, proper equipping of healthcare facilities will support healthcare workers in delivering better care under pressure. Modern medical devices, combined with targeted training, will empower staff to handle critical situations more effectively and improve overall patient care quality.

3. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this assignment is to support the SOLIDAR project by identifying, prioritizing, and specifying essential medical devices for 24/7 HCs and MHs. The expert will also ensure that the procured devices meet technical and performance standards and support the evaluation of bids during the procurement process.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

The expert is expected to conduct the following tasks:

4.1. Consult the list of devices

- Review the list of medical devices compiled by the Healthcare Operator and the National Medical Emergency Center (QKUM), as well as any other available list (by Ministry of Health, other projects, such as HAP project, SOLIDAR Project assessments, etc.).
- Assess the completeness and relevance of the list, considering the specific needs and operational conditions of 24/7 HCs and MHs.
- Engage with key stakeholders, including healthcare staff, to gather feedback on the adequacy and appropriateness of the listed devices.

4.2. Select priority devices

- Identify and prioritize the most critical devices based on the specific realities and needs of 24/7 HCs and MHs.
- Consider factors such as frequency of use, criticality in emergency care, maintenance requirements, and compatibility with existing equipment, for the identification and prioritization of devices.
- Ensure that the prioritized list aligns with available budget constraints and project timelines.

4.3. Define technical specifications

- Develop detailed technical specifications for the selected devices, ensuring that they meet minimal quality and performance standards.
- Ensure that the specifications are clear and measurable to facilitate a fair and transparent procurement process.

4.4. Evaluate bidders' offers

- Contribute to the bid evaluation process by assessing the offers against the defined technical specifications and selection criteria.
- Ensure that the evaluation of offers is conducted fairly and anonymously to maintain transparency and integrity.
- Provide technical recommendations to support the final decision on supplier selection.



5. LOCATION

The expert will work primarily from Tirana, with possible visits to other healthcare facilities in Albania to assess the operational environment and gather input from healthcare staff.

6. SERVICE PERIOD

The assignment will start on 01.07.2025 and end on 30.09.2025, with a total of up to 15 expert days.

A degree of flexibility may be required to address potential delays or unforeseen circumstances. Any adjustments to the assignment period or deliverables will be agreed upon between the SOLIDAR project team and the expert.

7. DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are expected:

1. **Validated device list:** A list of prioritized medical devices for 24/7 HCs and MHs, validated with input from stakeholders.
2. **Technical specifications document:** Detailed specifications for each selected device, including performance, maintenance, and operational requirements.
3. **Bid evaluation report:** A report on the evaluation process, including an assessment of the offers and recommendations for supplier selection.
4. **Final report:** A comprehensive report summarizing the background, objective and outputs of the assignment, including meeting agendas, meeting minutes (if any), conclusions and recommendations.

8. QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE EXPERT:

The below specified qualifications and experience represent the requirements to address effectively and timely the objective of this assignment:

- Advanced degree in medicine, biomedical engineering, healthcare management, or a related field.
- Minimum of 10 years of experience in medical equipment procurement, emergency healthcare, or related fields.
- Expertise in medical emergency devices and deep knowledge of the Albanian healthcare system, particularly at the primary healthcare level.
- Strong analytical, communication, and negotiation skills.
- Knowledge of the healthcare system in Albania or similar settings is an advantage.
- Fluency in English and Albanian is required.

9. LOGISTICS

The short-term expert is expected to use his/her private laptop. Travel within Albania, if required, will be facilitated and reimbursed according to project specific travel regulations.



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10. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

The SOLIDAR project team will provide logistical support and facilitate necessary access to healthcare facilities, relevant data, and key stakeholders. The team will also monitor the progress of the assignment and provide necessary guidance to the expert.