

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Subject Matter Expert to support the development of online training content for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Albania

PROJECT:	SOLIDAR – TOGETHER IN HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Category:	Short-term assignment
Corresponding to Outcome:	Outcome 2: Strengthen Emergency Medical System
Support for Activity:	Activity 2.1.8 Create an e-learning platform for the provision of online trainings for doctors, nurses and other health professionals involved in health/medical emergencies.
Period of assignment:	Up to 60 working days within the period from 16.07.2025 – 30.07.2026

1. BACKGROUND

Albania, located in the Western Balkans, is a country in transition, working to develop an open-market economy and democratic governance. Despite progress in the health sector reforms aimed at improving service delivery and quality, critical gaps remain in emergency preparedness and response.

The 2019 earthquake and the COVID-19 pandemic exposed weaknesses in Albania's emergency response system, particularly at the primary healthcare (PHC) level. The 2019 earthquake directly affected 11 municipalities, causing significant damage and highlighting the lack of coordination and infrastructure needed to handle large-scale emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic further strained the healthcare system, disrupting services and increasing mortality rates.

Contributing factors include poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and rapid urbanization, which increase community vulnerability during emergencies. Limited training and insufficient coordination among healthcare institutions further weaken the country's ability to respond effectively.

To address these challenges, the Swiss Government, through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) launched the SOLIDAR Project. This four-year initiative aims to strengthen Albania's health emergency preparedness and response system.

The SOLIDAR Project is structured around three key outcomes:

- 1) Strengthening the Health Emergency System by enabling public health actors to engage in effective preparedness and response.
- 2) Strengthening Emergency Medical Services, by providing high-quality care at all levels, with a specific emphasis on Primary Health Care; and
- 3) Strengthening Community Engagement, by fostering a constructive dialogue between citizens, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and the Government, thereby building resilience to public health emergencies.

Under Outcome 2, a key priority is the development of a Learning Management System (LMS) and related accredited online training content to support continuous professional development for healthcare professionals in 24/7 Health Centers (HCs) and Municipality Hospitals (MHs). Three distinct but interlinked consultancies will support this effort: an IT service provider to build the LMS platform, a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to develop medical training content, and an Instructional Designer to ensure effective digital learning design and integration.

2. RATIONALE

Despite investments in infrastructure and training, healthcare workers in Albania's emergency settings often lack updated knowledge and access to continuous professional development. The SOLIDAR Project addresses this by developing a comprehensive LMS. However, without quality training content, the LMS would remain an empty tool.

The development of high-quality, evidence-based training content is critical to ensuring the LMS becomes a sustainable platform for continuous professional development. Healthcare professionals require access to standardized training modules to enhance their emergency response capabilities. This assignment will ensure that these modules are developed in line with national accreditation standards and are adapted to the technical and instructional specifications of the LMS.

Given the parallel development of the LMS and content, the selected subject matter expert must work in close coordination with the LMS development company and an instructional design expert. This joint collaboration is essential to ensure technical compatibility, alignment with instructional design principles, and effective integration.

3. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of this assignment is to design, develop, and deliver a series of high-quality, interactive and context-relevant online training modules for healthcare workers in 24/7 HCs and MHs, tailored for delivery via the LMS being developed in parallel.

These modules will be uploaded onto the LMS under development. The Subject Matter Expert (SME) will be responsible for developing the full training content package, ensuring technical compatibility, accreditation compliance, and effective learner engagement.

4. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The SME is expected to:

- Develop a comprehensive training content package consisting of online modules covering core areas of EMS, suitable to be taught via the LMS platform. The training package (modules) needs to be defined, based on the best international practice (i.e. referring to international entities already providing such services).
- Ensure content complies with accreditation standards of the Agency for Quality Assurance in Health Care (ASCK) and fulfills professional relicensing requirements.
- Collaborate closely with the IT company developing the LMS to ensure content compatibility and alignment with LMS technical and other features.
- Submit content in SCORM or LMS-compatible format (with the support of the Instructional Designer and IT team).
- Ensure that training modules are interactive, engaging, culturally relevant and based on adult learning principles.
- Pilot the modules and refine them based on user and stakeholder feedback.



5. SCOPE OF WORK

The SME will undertake the following tasks:

5.1 Training needs assessment and inception

- Conduct a rapid training needs assessment for EMS professionals, consulting key stakeholders (QKUM, ASCK, SOLIDAR).
- Define proposed training topics and develop draft learning objectives.
- Compile an inception report summarizing the proposed topics, initial curriculum structure, and instructional approach.

5.2 Curriculum and syllabus development

- Develop a curriculum framework and detailed syllabus for 6–8 online modules, in consultation with QKUM, ASCK, and SOLIDAR.
- Submit the final version of the curriculum and draft syllabus.

5.3 Content creation and module development

- Draft and finalize training materials including written content, video lectures, case studies, knowledge tests, clinical simulations, and practical scenarios/exercises.
- Collaborate with the Instructional Designer to structure the materials into effective online learning journeys.
- Produce the first complete drafts of three online training modules.

5.4 Collaboration and coordination

- Coordinate closely with the IT company developing the LMS to ensure integration feasibility.
- Adapt all content to be interactive and user-friendly within the LMS format.

5.5 Quality assurance, accreditation and finalization

- Pilot test modules with a small group of healthcare professionals.
- Revise content based on technical integration testing and user feedback.
- Produce a pilot integration and revision summary report detailing the feedback received and changes made.
- Prepare an accreditation application package for ASCK approval.
- Produce a final report summarizing the instructional methodology, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations.

6. DELIVERABLES

In the context of the consultancy service, the following deliverables are expected from the service provider, subject to approval by the SOLIDAR Project:

- Inception report including proposed training topics and draft content of curriculum and learning objectives for all modules.
- Final content of curriculum and draft syllabus.
- First complete drafts of 3 online training modules (in collaboration with instructional design expert)
- All finalized training modules (SCORM-compatible format).
- Accreditation application package (for ASCK approval).
- Final report summarizing the methodology, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations.

7. APPROACH

The development of the e-learning solution for emergency medical services under the SOLIDAR Project will follow a parallel and collaborative working approach, bringing together the LMS developer, the Subject Matter Expert (SME), and the Instructional Designer. Each actor will contribute their technical expertise toward the creation of an integrated, accredited, and user-centered online training system. The approach will be guided by the following principles:

- Joint planning and coordination: From inception, the three parties will hold joint sessions—convened by the SOLIDAR Project—to define expectations, timelines, and interdependencies. Coordination with the National Medical Emergency Center (QKUM) and the Agency for Quality Assurance in Health Care (ASCK) will ensure contextual and accreditation alignment.
- Learner-centered and modular design: All modules will follow a modular structure with clearly defined learning outcomes, interactive instructional components, and integrated assessments. Content will reflect the everyday realities of healthcare professionals in 24/7 HCs and MHs.
- SCORM-compliance and LMS compatibility: Training content will be developed and structured in SCORM-compatible format and other LMS-ready formats as needed. The IT company will guide and support SME and Instructional Designer to ensure technical integration is smooth.
- Pilot testing and iterative refinement: A pilot phase will be conducted in selected regions (minimum 3 Health Centers and 2 Municipality Hospitals). Feedback from healthcare professionals will be collected and jointly analyzed by the SME, Instructional Designer, and IT company to refine both platform functionality and training content.
- Accreditation alignment: The SME, supported by the Instructional Designer, will ensure that all training modules meet ASCK standards and contribute to professional relicensing (CME credits).
- Sustainability and usability: The LMS will be equipped with user guidance, admin training, monitoring and evaluation tools, and user support mechanisms to ensure long-term usability by QKUM and other national stakeholders.

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

The SME must:

- Collaborate with the LMS developer and the Instructional Designer throughout the process.
- Ensure compliance with adult learning and instructional design principles.
- Guarantee content accuracy, cultural relevance, and alignment with national/international best practices.
- Ensure adherence to SCORM standards or equivalent LMS-compatibility.
- Conduct rigorous internal review and adapt content based on user and peer feedback.

9. SERVICE PERIOD

The content development and accreditation process is expected to take 12 months, running in synchronization with the LMS development and instructional design assignments (16.07.2025 – 30.07.2026), with a total of up to 15 expert days.

The suggested timelines for all deliverables are shown below:

Deliverables	Deadline
Inception report including proposed training topics and draft content of curriculum and learning objectives for all modules.	11.08.2025
Final content of curriculum and draft syllabus.	15.09.2025



First complete drafts of 3 online training modules (in collaboration with instructional design expert)	19.10.2025
All finalized training modules (SCORM-compatible format).	31.11.2025
Pilot training integration and module revision report summarizing the feedback received and the revisions made (in collaboration with the subject matter expert and IT Service Company)	30.02.2026
Accreditation application package (for ASCK approval).	13.03.2026
Final report summarizing the methodology, challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations	30.07.2026

10. QUALIFICATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE EXPERT

The SME must have the following qualifications:

- Medical degree or advanced degree in Emergency Medicine, Primary Health Care, or Public Health.
- At least 7 years of professional experience in emergency medical services, preferably including curriculum development or training experience.
- Familiarity with accreditation processes and continuing medical education (CME) systems.
- In-depth knowledge of emergency response protocols, triage systems, and medical guidelines.
- Ability to translate complex clinical content into accessible and engaging learning materials.
- Strong collaboration skills to work effectively with IT specialists and instructional designers.
- Fluency in Albanian and proficiency in English.

11. LOGISTICS

The expert is expected to use his/her private laptop and software tools.

The expert is expected to work from Tirana or remotely, with regular virtual coordination meetings with the SOLIDAR Project team, the IT company, and the Instructional Design expert. Occasional in-person meetings may be organized in Tirana depending on project needs.

Travel within Albania (if needed) will be arranged and reimbursed according to SOLIDAR project regulations.

12. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

The SOLIDAR Project team will:

- Arrange coordination meetings with all parties involved (SME, IT company, project team).
- Monitor progress and ensure alignment across the three actors.

All activities should be conducted in accordance with the requirements and timeline included in these Terms of Reference.