

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Provision of technical assistance for the development of an Action Plan for Primary Health Care

PROJECT:	SOLIDAR – TOGETHER IN HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Category:	National Short-term Expert (Health Policy)
Corresponding to Outcome:	Outcome 1: Strengthening the Health Emergency System
Support for Activity:	Activity 1.1.1 Provide technical support in reviewing, refining and finalizing the Draft Operational Plan for Primary Health Care 2026–2030 with a focus on the systematic integration of Health Emergency Preparedness and Response measures.
Period of assignment:	20.04.2026 – 30.10.2026
Expert days:	up to 40 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. In 2019, Albania experienced a strong earthquake and shortly afterwards, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and put the Albanian healthcare system under considerable pressure, with health services disrupted and many lives lost. Both disasters implied a heavy burden on the country's economy, livelihoods, and human development. The dimension of disasters in Albania are impacted by the level of poverty, state of infrastructure, constructions in risk areas due to fast urbanization, and exploitation of natural resources, such as overuse of forests and riverbanks. The lack of medical emergency supplies and resources during disasters plays a key role, and gaps in coordination between institutions and agencies involved in emergency preparedness and response. Especially, the primary healthcare (PHC) level has limited capacities to respond to a health emergency.

The SOLIDAR project has therefore set itself the goal of: 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.

2. RATIONALE

Emergency health care is a key priority in national policies in Albania, with the relevant regulatory framework enshrined in several documents covering all levels of the health system. The COVID-19 pandemic has put health emergency preparedness and response at the top of the health policy agenda, as visible in the National Health Strategy 2021-2030. The strategy is composed of five (5) strategic goals, one of which is “Strengthening the system response to emergencies”. This implies that mechanisms, resources, and capacities need to be strengthened to create a stronger, more coordinated,

and better-resourced preparedness, detection, and response system in Albania. This needs special attention at the PHC level, the level of care with the most impact on the vulnerable populations.

The policy analysis indicates that there are more than 40 old and new laws, bylaws, standards, and policies regulating health emergency preparedness and response at the PHC level in Albania. There are several relevant national strategies, such as the “National Health Strategy 2021-2030”, “Strategy for the Development of Primary Health Care Services in Albania 2020-2025”, “National Hospital Plan 2022 – 2030”, “National Strategy on Development and European Integration 2021-2030”, “All Emergency Operational Plan (EOP) 2020”. However, despite this extensive regulatory and strategic framework, significant gaps remain in terms of coherence, coordination and operationalization, particularly for the effective development of emergency services at PHC level. This is especially critical given that PHC services constitute the primary access point for vulnerable populations.

Currently, there is no dedicated, integrated National Primary Health Care Emergency Action Plan, which limits the ability to translate existing policies into coordinated, actionable interventions at service delivery level. Addressing this gap is essential to ensure both the quality and continuity of emergency services provided at 24/7 Health Centres (HC) and Municipal Hospitals (MH), in both routine conditions and during crises.

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) has established a working group to assess the implementation of the Primary Health Care Strategy 2020–2025. Based on the results and findings of this assessment and evaluation, as well as the objectives set by the ministry’s new leadership team, an Action Plan for Primary Health Care in Albania for the period 2026–2030 will be developed.

3. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVE

The objective of this assignment is to provide technical expertise to support the development of a comprehensive and operational Action Plan for strengthening Primary Health Care in Albania. The expert will support with translating existing policy frameworks, assessment findings, and strategic priorities into a coherent, evidence-based, and implementable Action Plan for the period 2026-2030, ensuring alignment with national health strategies and best practices.

4. SCOPE OF WORK

Under this assignment, the expert will provide technical assistance to the MoHSW and the designated Working Group in the development of the Primary Health Care Action Plan 2026–2030.

The expert will be responsible for:

1. Take note of prior developments by MoHSW as well as other documents developed by the Working Group established for the drafting of the Action Plan for Primary Health Care Services in Albania 2026-2030, particularly the Assessment and Evaluation Report of the Strategy for the development of Primary Health Care Services in Albania 2020-2025, etc. and documents developed within the SOLIDAR project i.e., legal framework analysis, report of the field visits in 31 24/7 HCs, MHs, Knowledge, Attitudes, Practice and Behavior (KAPB) study, and other material

provided by the project and of relevant national developments, documents and other materials on an ongoing basis. ,.

2. Conduct a structured desk review on national health strategies and best practices to extract key findings, gaps, and implications for the development of the PHC Action Plan 2026–2030 and establish a structured document library of all sources reviewed and used throughout the assignment, ensuring the alignment with the National Health Strategy 2021–2030.
3. Develop a process of assessment if any additional information gaps are identified (including interviews, field visits, etc.) of the current situation of PHC level in Albania, needs for further development and draft the Assessment Report in close coordination with SOLIDAR, the expert team and potentially other partners.
4. Obtain additional information through interviews and / or field visits, if needed in close coordination with SOLIDAR and the expert team.
5. Work actively with the Working Group to ensure alignment of activities and the use of a common template and approach for drafting the Action Plan at Primary Health Care (PHC) level 2026–2030.
6. Lead the coordination process of the expert team, with partner organizations and donors supporting the Working Group in the drafting of the Action Plan for Primary Health Care Services in Albania 2026–2030.
7. Discuss, review and decide on the most relevant international models of PHC services and best models recommended by WHO and other international health institutions, in the provision of Primary Health Care services in close coordination with the international STE.
8. Lead the conceptual and methodological work with support from the international STE providing guidance and expertise in strategic planning methodologies, including SWOT analysis, goal setting, action planning, and performance measurement during working group meetings and workshops that will brainstorm ideas, discuss findings, and draft Action Plan components.
9. Provide conceptual guidance for the development of a comprehensive framework for the Action Plan at Primary Health Care level, including objectives, goals, key performance indicators.
10. Develop recommendations for building capacity in primary health care settings to enhance preparedness and response to health emergencies in collaboration with other experts and partners.
11. Support the Working Group in drafting the Action Plan document based on the agreed-upon framework, incorporating input and feedback from the working group.
12. Review and refine together with int. STE the draft Action Plan document as necessary to ensure clarity, accuracy, and relevance.
13. Develop a report on the legal framework adjustments needed for the implementation of the desired changes proposed by the Action Plan at PHC level.
14. Contribute to the finalisation and presentation of the draft documents of the Action Plan at PHC level to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare for approval/ adoption, together with SOLIDAR project team, including preparation of supporting materials and key messages for the decision-makers.
15. Maintain close contact with SOLIDAR team, the expert team and partners, and flag any obstacles related to coordination and activity implementation.



5. DELIVERABLES

1. Situational Analysis Report, including assessment framework, and methodology, desk review, summary of stakeholder consultations, document library, etc.
2. Action Plan Framework, agreed structure / outline of the plan, including outlining the vision, mission, objectives, activities and indicators, etc.
3. Written contributions to Draft Action Plan document, including proposed interventions, roles and responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, implementation arrangements, financial consideration and M&E
4. Legal Framework Adjustment Report, analysis of regulatory gaps and recommendations for amendments required to implement the Action Plan.
5. Presentation materials and other supporting documents for Working Group Sessions
6. Final Consolidated Report, a consolidated final report summarizing all activities undertaken, key outputs delivered, outcomes achieved, challenges encountered, and lessons learned throughout the assignment.

6. DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The assignment is expected to be implemented over a period of approximately six months, from April to October 2026. The estimated level of effort for the expert is up to 40 working days, to be delivered on a non-continuous basis over the assignment period, in accordance with the agreed work plan and timeline of deliverables. The workload will be distributed across the different phases of the assignment, including situational analysis, working group sessions, and final reporting. The detailed implementation schedule and sequencing of activities will be discussed and finalized during the contract award phase. Adjustments to the timeline may be made by mutual agreement to accommodate stakeholder availability, validation processes, and institutional review requirements, without affecting the overall scope, outputs, or total level of effort. The assignment will be considered completed upon the submission and formal acceptance of all deliverables.

Anticipated timeline:

No	Deliverable	Deadline
1	Situational Analysis Report	30.05.2026
2	Action Plan Framework	30.05.2026
3	Written Contributions to Action Plan	30.09.2026
4	Legal Framework Adjustment Report	30.09.2026
5	Working Group Sessions	30.09.2026
6	Final Consolidated Report	16.10.2026



7. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE CONSULTANT

Educational Background

- Advanced university degree (Master's or higher) in Public Health, Family Medicine, Epidemiology, or related health sciences.
- Additional qualifications or certifications in field of health systems strengthening and health strategic planning will be an asset.

Professional Experience

- Minimum of 10 years of professional experience in public health and health systems strengthening, including leading or advising the development of health service delivery strategies, roadmaps, or costed actions plans.
- Proven experience in primary health care policies, service delivery modelling, defining essential public health functions or developing actionable implementation frameworks for health service management.
- Demonstrated familiarity with EU public health frameworks, particularly with regard to the organization and strengthening of primary health care services.
- Experience working with primary healthcare system actors, Health Care Service Operator (HCSO) and Local Health Care Units (LHCUs), etc.

Additional Competencies

- Strong analytical and organizational skills, with the ability to synthesize technical information and translate it into strategic and planning documents.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively with government institutions, academic partners, and international organizations and experts.
- Excellent communication skills in English and fluency in Albanian are required.

8. COORDINATION FOR THE ASSIGNMENT

Throughout the assignment, the expert shall work in close cooperation with the SOLIDAR Project Team, including participation in regular coordination and progress review meetings to ensure alignment with the agreed work plan and timely validation of outputs. The SOLIDAR Project Team will facilitate access to relevant national and sub-national stakeholders as required for data collection, consultations, and the implementation of workshops and roundtables.

Logistical support for the organization and implementation working group meetings and individual meetings with main stakeholders (including venue arrangements, participant coordination, and related administrative support) will be provided by the SOLIDAR Project Team.

The expert is invited to work at the GFA office in Tirana or will work remotely from home, with a requirement to take part in in-person meetings in Tirana. The 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.

The expert will also work in close collaboration with the expert team. In addition, the assignment shall be implemented in close coordination with the MoHSW, Health Care Services Operator (HCSO),



Institute of Public Health (IPH), Compulsory Health Insurance Fund (CHIF), National Center for Medical Emergency (NCME), as key national counterparts.

The expert will be responsible for the technical quality, completeness, and timely delivery of all outputs and deliverables as defined in the Scope of Work and Deliverables sections of these ToR.

9. CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE TENDER PROCESS

The Call/Tender will be published on the project website <https://solidar.org.al/>.

The conditions for participation, documents to be filled in and award criteria will be provided to the interested bidders after their Expression of Interest (EoI).

Bids must be submitted in English language.

Bids must be submitted physically to the project address:

GFA Consulting Group GmbH - Dega Shqiptare

Rruga Janos Hunyadi

P. 34, Kati 2, Zyra Nr.2

Njesia Administrative Nr.5

1019 Tirana, Albania

All bidders are requested to submit two (2) separate sealed envelopes as follows:

i. Technical Proposal

A physical and electronic copy of the proposal (on a USB stick) placed in a sealed envelope clearly marked: **“Provision of technical assistance for the development of an Action Plan at Primary Health Care level in Albania” – Technical Proposal**”.

The envelope shall contain the technical proposal and all its scanned accompanying documents.

ii. Financial Proposal

A physical and electronic copy of the financial proposal (on a USB stick) placed in a sealed envelope clearly marked: **“Provision of technical assistance for the development of an Action Plan at Primary Health Care Level in Albania – Financial Proposal**”.

The envelope shall contain the financial proposal and its scanned version.

Public officials, civil servants, and other government employees are not eligible to be engaged as experts or otherwise hired under this contract.

Offers will be evaluated on an ongoing basis as they are received. The contracting authority reserves the right to assess and compare compliant offers before the submission deadline and may proceed with evaluation, clarification, negotiation, or award procedures accordingly. Submission of an offer at an earlier stage may therefore be advantageous.



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Bids submitted after the deadline specified in the Call published on the project website <https://solidar.org.al/> will not be considered.

Any commercial, technical, or procedural queries shall be submitted **electronically** to solidar.office@gfa-group.de within the deadline indicated in the Call.

Enquiries by telephone or any other form of direct contact are **not admissible** and may lead to **disqualification**.

No costs incurred by the bidder in the preparation and submission of the tender will be reimbursed. All such costs shall be borne solely by the bidder.

By submitting a tender, the bidder accepts to receive notification of the outcome of the procedure by electronic means. Should you decide not to submit a tender after expressing your interest, we would be grateful if you could inform us in writing, indicating the reasons for your decision.