

Assessment of public participation in the budget processes of Georgian municipalities

TERMS OF REFERENCE Local researcher

Background

The Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency (GIFT) is collaborating with the Europe Foundation to promote public participation in Georgian municipalities. The initiative includes:

- Developing an analytical tool to assess public participation in the budget process of three target regions (Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Shida Kartli and Guria) with 11 municipalities.
- Conducting intensive training for civil society organizations (CSOs) and local authorities (LAs) from the targeted municipalities on GIFT's principles of public participation in fiscal policies and other relevant instruments.

The assessment will utilize the analytical tool to rank target municipalities and offer improvement recommendations aligned with international standards. Reports summarizing the methodology, key findings and recommendations will be presented during public participation training sessions and relevant workshops/events.

A locally based research consultant with expertise in fiscal openness and budget advocacy is required to lead in-field research and assessment activities in Georgia. The consultant will work closely with the GIFT team, Europe Foundation, CSOs, LAs, and other relevant Georgian stakeholders to ensure the efficient and effective execution of project outputs and deliverables.

Scope of work

The local researcher will work closely with the GIFT Coordination Team and Europe Foundation to:

- Provide technical inputs for the draft methodology, questionnaire and data collection tool, as well as the inception report on the assessment of public participation in the budget processes of Georgian municipalities.
- Rollout the assessment methodology in the 11 selected municipalities.
- Complete the assessment questionnaire for each municipality through research and data collection, involving desk-based research, key informant interviews, formal requests, and cross-checking/verification of inputs and evidence obtained from relevant stakeholders.
- Engage constructively with key stakeholders, including local government, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders to gather pertinent information, insights and evidence supporting responses to the assessment questions.
- Review, validate and respond to comments from GIFT, Europe Foundation, government and/or other external reviewers.
- Participate in internal and external research validation meetings.

- Regularly report progress to the GIFT team, participate in online team meetings, and discuss the overall advancement of the assessment, completion of research questionnaires, review and validation of findings, and the development of draft and final assessment reports.
- Lead the preparation and finalization of the comprehensive draft assessment report, along with 1-2 page performance summaries for each assessed municipality.
- Prepare and deliver presentations on initial and finalized findings and recommendations during training sessions and workshops/events with local authorities, civil society, and key Georgian stakeholders.

Deliverables and timeline

| | Deliverable | Estimated timeline | Payment tranche |
|---|---|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Submission of technical inputs to the draft methodology, questionnaire and data collection tool, and inception report | February 29, 2024 - March 7, 2024 | 5% |
| 2 | Submission of completed assessment questionnaires for each municipality | March 15 - May 15, 2024 | 40% |
| 3 | Provision of response to reviewer comments on the assessment tool | May 15 - June 15, 2024 | 5% |
| 4 | Presentation on emerging assessment findings and recommendations | July 2024 (Final date TBD) | 5% |
| 5 | Submission of draft assessment report | July 15, 2024 | 20% |
| 6 | Submission of final assessment report and 1-2 page performance summary for each municipality | July 30, 2024 | 15% |
| 7 | Presentation on final assessment findings and recommendations | September 2024 (Final date TBD) | 10% |

Qualifications and relevant experience

- Proficiency in both written and spoken English and Kartuli.
- Advanced degree in Economics, Public Administration, Public Policy, Finance, or a related field.
- Additional certifications or training in fiscal transparency, public financial management, public participation, or related areas are highly desirable.
- 5-7 years of extensive experience in budget advocacy work, with a focus on fiscal transparency, and public participation in the budget process in Georgia.
- Strong analytical, research, and technical report writing skills related to fiscal policy and public engagement.
- Proven ability to work effectively with government bodies, CSOs, and international organizations.



- Established working relationships with key actors in the local government and budget accountability ecosystem is highly desirable.
- Excellent communication and facilitation skills.
- Good knowledge and understanding of Georgia's socio-political context is desirable.
- Availability to start on March 1, 2024.
- Proficient and experienced in remote, international work environments, with flexible hours, amidst a demanding agenda with tight deadlines.

Application process

Interested individuals must submit the following to marianne@fiscaltransparency.net by **February 20, 2024**, no later than 5:00 PM (Tbilisi time):

- A comprehensive **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**, including the contact information of at least two professional references.
- A **cover letter** outlining the candidate's suitability for the role and relevant experience as well as daily rate.