REPUBLIKA E SHQIPËRISË
**MINISTËR PËR INOVACIONIN
DHE ADMINISTRATËN
PUBLIKE**

LONG-TERM POLICY DOCUMENT
ON THE DELIVERY OF
CITIZEN CENTRIC SERVICES
BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS
IN ALBANIA

APRIL 2016

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List of Abbreviations

ADISA	Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services in Albania
ASPA	Albanian School of Public Administration
BPR	Business Process Re-engineering
CSI	Citizen Satisfaction Index
DAA	Cross-Cutting Strategy "Digital Agenda for Albania"
EU	European Union
GoA	Government of Albania
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPMG	Integrated Policy Management Group
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LTPD	Long-Term Policy Document
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIPA	Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration
NAIS	National Agency for Information Society
NSDI	National Strategy for Development and Integration
OSI	Online Services Index
PAR	Cross-Cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy
PMS	Performance Monitoring System
SPC	Strategic Planning Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WB	World Bank

I.   FOREWORD

Obtaining the status of the European Union candidate country in June 2014 has given an added impetus to the reforms in Albania.

Under the innovative good governance, one of the six priorities[1] of the Government of Albania (GoA) to achieve sustainable economic and social development as set out in the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2015–2020, the focus is the transformation of service delivery in Albania through the citizen-centric approach. This is embodied in the Cross-Cutting Public Administration Reform Strategy (PAR) 2015–2020, which constitutes the overall framework for the modernization and transformation of institutions and practices of public administration in the country, with the vision of providing "high quality services for citizens and businesses in a transparent, effective, and efficient way through the use of modern technologies and innovative services, and that complies with the requirements of European integration through impartial, professional and accountable civil servants, part of efficient setups". The Cross-Cutting Strategy "Digital Agenda for Albania" (DAA) 2015–2020 supports this vision.

At the international level, the vision of GoA for citizen centric services is also supported by the Sustainable Development Objectives, which were approved on September 25, 2015 by the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, and especially SDG 16 to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".

The approval by the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) in April 2014 marks the beginning of initiatives by the GoA under the program "Innovation against corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania" (ISDA), which has received support from its outset by international development partners such as UNDP, EU, WB, the Italian Government and other donors.

Led by Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration (MIPA), the ISDA Program is focused on the reform of administrative services for citizens and businesses in such areas like: property, transport, social and health insurance, civil registry, education, construction permitting, business registration and licensing. The Program consists of four main pillars related to:

i.   Re-engineering of the processes of service delivery for citizens and businesses, including legal, ICT and institutional reforms;

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[1] Albanian government's priorities include: 1) Land and Territorial Reform; 2) Improvement of the Energy Sector; 3) Water Resources and Infrastructure Management; 4) Foreign Direct Investments; 5) Structural Reforms for the Modernization and Consolidation of Public Institutions; 6) Innovative Governance.

ii. Front Office – Back Office separation and service delivery integration[2], as well as the development of their delivery channels;

iii. Digitization of archives and registers, interoperability among ICT systems and online services;

iv. Obtaining citizen feedback and monitoring the performance of public administration in service delivery.

At the institutional level, the key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the citizen-centric services reform are: the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services (ADISA), the National Agency for Information Society (NAIS), as well as the institutional public service providers on scope. Key legal instruments on which this multifaceted reform relies are the law no. 13/2016, dated February 18, 2016 "On the way of delivering public services at front office level in the Republic of Albania", as well as the loan agreement with the World Bank for the project "Citizen-Centric Service Delivery", which entered into force on March 22, 2016.

In order to detail objectives, principles and key interventions for the implementation of the strategic vision and harmonization of activities between all actors involved, at the initiative of the Minister of State for Innovation and Public Administration (MIPA), the Albanian Government has prepared this long-term policy document on the provision of citizen centric services by central government institutions in Albania.

II. POLICY OBJECTIVES

2.1 Scope and Timelines

Government institutions are mandated by law to provide services to citizens and businesses. Despite expectations of beneficiaries, based also on the experience with customer service standards in the private sector, such as banks, telecommunications, etc., the problems they often encounter in interacting with these institutions have to do in various degrees with lack of information, transparency, accountability and efficiency, as well as cases of corruption.

Focusing on administrative services provided by central government institutions, the Government aims at bringing about a transformational change in the way the government interacts with citizens/businesses to impact delivery of public services in general, including those by local government units and independent institutions. Innovative solutions and information technology are considered as crucial contributors in this process.

The beneficiaries targeted by the interventions outlined in the LTPD include all Albanian citizens, and businesses operating in Albania. Foreign citizens living in our country are also

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[2] According to Law no. 13/2016, dated February 18, 2016, "On the way of delivering public services at front office level in the Republic of Albania", Article 4: "Public service" means the product provided by the state administration, independent and local government institutions, within their jurisdiction, to natural and legal persons, upon their request, and which results in a reply of different forms, like a certificate, licence, permit, etc., by the responsible institution provided for by the law.

provided due consideration. The overall approach based on the principles of equal and fair treatment for all is augmented by special attention to the economically disadvantaged, the elderly, women, persons with disabilities, minorities and the rural population, in accordance with respective commitments provided by law.

Given the broad scope of activities, the focus in the first phase (the period until the end of 2018) will be on services provided by central government institutions that meet defined primary criteria, such as high number of transactions and level of priority for citizens, need for intervention, and reference to international best practices in service delivery reforms. This phase will also mark the beginning of all the interventions outlined in the LTPD. In the second phase (2019 - 2025), the consolidation of the undertaken steps will be accompanied by the roll out to all services to citizens and businesses provided by central government institutions.

2.2 Objectives

Policy objectives for citizen-centric services that derive from the core reference documents: the NSDI, DAA and PAR, relate to:

1. Reduced time and administrative burden for citizens and businesses;
2. Improved service access and delivery quality;
3. Increased number of satisfied citizens from government services;
4. Reduced corruption, increased efficiency, transparency and accountability in service delivery.

The results of the interventions outlined in the LTPD are defined as follows:

- Transition to 100 percent e-Services;
- Anytime, anywhere service access to citizens;
- Creating a 360 degree view of beneficiaries;
- Achieving an overall high level Citizen Satisfaction Index (CSI);
- Albania's classification as one of the top 20 European countries as per the United Nations eGovernment Survey Report on the Online Services Index (OSI).

2.2.1 Transition to 100 percent e-services

Transition to 100 percent e-services refers to the end-to-end service delivery lifecycle from the service provider to the beneficiary, which includes:

- Access to information in an online mode;
- Online submission of application;
- Automated and online processing of application (with minimal manual intervention);
- Online tracking of the status of an application;
- Online delivery of services to citizens and businesses.

Electronic services enable government institutions to take advantage of improved work efficiency to respond to the growing demand for services by citizens and businesses, utilizing

fully the opportunities for business process re-engineering and interoperability with other government institutions.

The online mode refers to multiple channels such as websites, mobile or call center.

2.2.2 Anytime, anywhere service access to citizens

Anytime and anywhere access implies triggering availability of services on a "24 x 7" basis. As government institutions in Albania progress towards 'Anytime, Anywhere access', there will be multiple channels of access to government services for citizens and businesses, which will facilitate transactions by ensuring easy and time-saving procedures at all times.

2.2.3 Creating a 360 degree view of beneficiaries

Having a 360 degree view of citizens entails a fundamental shift from operating on the basis of a narrow or isolated departmental view onto a citizen-centric perspective. The government will thus have holistic and timely information into the citizens or businesses obtaining public services. This implies that there will be complete transparency as to what government services or benefits the citizens or businesses obtain based on their unique identification and ensuring interoperability between all government institutions. Main advantages include the reduction of administrative burden on citizens and businesses in obtaining services, avoidance of improper benefits and substantive positive impact on policy making.
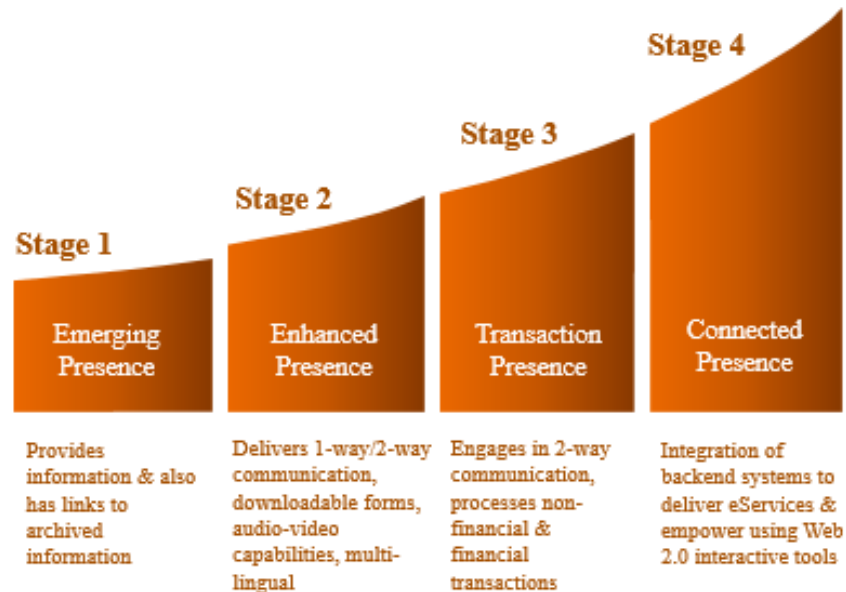
2.2.4 Achieving a high index of citizen satisfaction

Measurement of the citizen satisfaction index (CSI) with service delivery will be conducted with focus on four areas: 1) access to information; 2) ease of access to services; 3) quality of services and 4) deadlines of their delivery. This will occur regularly through surveys, feedbacks or consultations in accordance with public service delivery legislation in force.

Whenever satisfaction rating is below 50 percent, comprehensive reviews will be conducted at the institutional level accompanied by measures to effect change and improvements in alignment with the functional duties of each government institution. In the case of more than two consecutive ratings below this threshold, the matter will be reviewed at the level of the Prime Minister's office or the respective Interministerial Committee, in order to promote increased accountability and the implementation of relevant effective measures.

2.2.5 Albania's classification as one of the top 20 European countries as per the United Nations eGovernment Survey Report on the Online Services Index (OSI)

UN electronic governance ranking[3] is considered to be a reflection of the progress made by various countries in improving governance by using ICT. OSI is an evaluation matrix consisting of four levels, as described in the adjacent diagram.

As per the 2014 survey, Albania ranks 84th globally and 33rd in Europe in terms of OSI classification.

Stage 1 — Emerging Presence
Provides information & also has links to archived information

Stage 2 — Enhanced Presence
Delivers 1-way/2-way communication, downloadable forms, audio-video capabilities, multi-lingual

Stage 3 — Transaction Presence
Engages in 2-way communication, processes non-financial & financial transactions

Stage 4 — Connected Presence
Integration of backend systems to deliver eServices & empower using Web 2.0 interactive tools

As part of a long-term commitment, the target is to elevate the current ranking to that amongst the top 20 European countries in terms of online services.
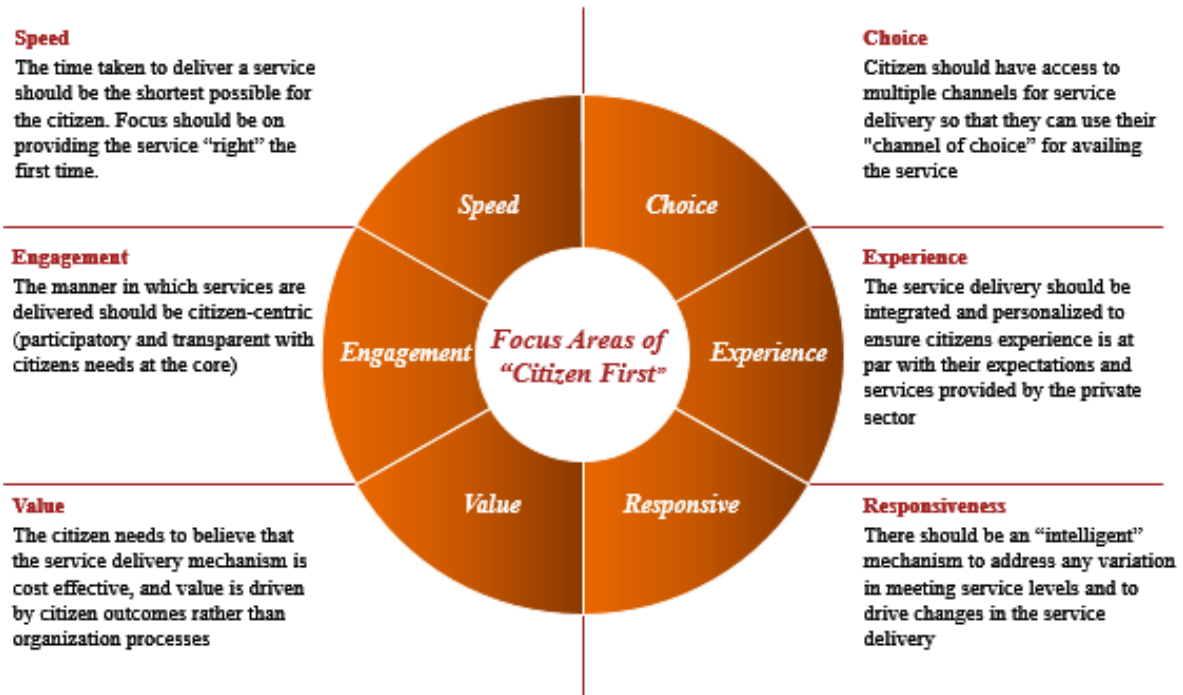
III KEY PRINCIPLES AND INTERVENTIONS

3.1 Policy Framework

3.1.1 Putting the Citizen First

In order to improve the process of service delivery by government institutions, as part of the approach that keeps citizen's needs at the core of every decision from strategy formulation and design through to execution, GoA will focus on several key areas, as summarized in the following diagram:

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[3] Every 2 years, UNPACS conducts an e-governance focused survey across 193 participating countries, evaluating each country's technology-enabled governance ecosystem through 3 indicators, namely, OSI, Telecommunications Infrastructure Index (TCI) and Human Capital Index (HCI). The average of each of the indices constitutes the overall e-Government Development Index (EGDI).

Speed
The time taken to deliver a service should be the shortest possible for the citizen. Focus should be on providing the service "right" the first time.

Choice
Citizen should have access to multiple channels for service delivery so that they can use their "channel of choice" for availing the service

Engagement
The manner in which services are delivered should be citizen-centric (participatory and transparent with citizens needs at the core)

Experience
The service delivery should be integrated and personalized to ensure citizens experience is at par with their expectations and services provided by the private sector

Value
The citizen needs to believe that the service delivery mechanism is cost effective, and value is driven by citizen outcomes rather than organization processes

Responsiveness
There should be an "intelligent" mechanism to address any variation in meeting service levels and to drive changes in the service delivery

3.1.2 Whole of government

"Whole of government" represents an integrated approach to attain the citizen-centric service delivery model. It tackles the problem of fragmentation in the government sector to enable more efficient design and implementation in service provision by using seamlessly all the instruments at the disposal of the government institutions.

Increasing
- Efficiency
- Accountability
- Information sharing and access
- Competitiveness
- Policy coherence

Decreasing
- Costs
- Waste
- Duplication and redundancy
- Conflicting policies and activities
- Overall time

"Whole-of-government" will provide a comprehensive view of the citizen, enabling a proactive stance by institutions in providing services throughout his/her life cycle. As a result, institutions will have a more complete, timely, and holistic insight into service beneficiaries.
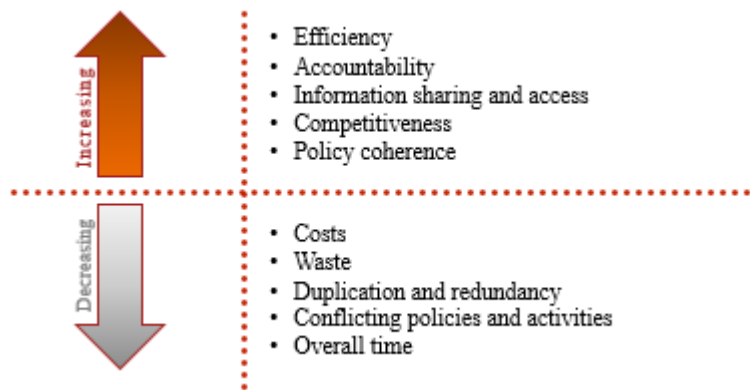
Furthermore, under the same integrated approach, through the "Once Only" principle, citizens or businesses will need to only provide their primary information one time. It then becomes the responsibility of the government institutions to capture this data in the most optimal way and internally share it across the entire government network. This means that it will not be necessary for citizens or businesses to provide the same information again while accessing the same or other services.

3.1.3   Process Reforms

Processes reform refers to the transformation of service processes through a combination of measures, including Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) and technology enablement. In this context the focus will be on process transformation and not mere process automation or bringing services online in an as-is form. This transformation entails also having a relook at the very basis for which a service is mandated, the service requirements and manner of delivery, along with other parameters such as timeline and administrative roles.

As part of the processes reforms, GoA will also focus on the "Digital First" as a principle for promoting the adoption of technology as a solution enabler for good governance.

3.1.4   Standardization

Standardization in all services for citizens or businesses will ensure a uniform experience, predictable and of high quality while they avail of these services, no matter which is the institution responsible or the channel used. This means, on the one hand, common standards of service based on the principles of customer care and, on the other, well-defined standard operating procedures in all government institutions.

3.1.5   Developing Sustainable Capacity

UNDP defines capacity building as "the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives".[4] Also, the World Bank has similarly defined "capacity" (as opposed to the activity of capacity building) as "the combination of people, institutions and practices that permits countries to achieve their development goals".[5]

People are an element of critical importance for the reform. Sustainable capacity development is a focused approach towards management of resources and their competences in all institutions responsible for the delivery of services to citizens and businesses.

3.1.6   Legal reforms

Striving to eliminate constraints for the effective implementation of the citizen-centric service delivery, legal reforms will comprise the following categories of activities:

- Review of the underlying policies related to service delivery of services and identification of the need to revise the legislation in force;
- Formulation of new policies for the evolution of service delivery into a modern, transformed and personalized system for all citizens and businesses, as well as new regulatory instruments' impact assessment;
- Incorporation of new tools and technologies for enabling service delivery transformation.

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[4] Capacity development, UNDP, June 2009.
[5] Demand for Good Governance Stock taking Report, World Bank – August 2008.

3.1 Key Interventions

As part of long-term policies for the citizen-centric service delivery reform, several key intervention categories have been identified, listed[6] in the table below, which enable one or more key policy frameworks outlined in the preceding section.

#	Basic Principles ——————— Interventions	Putting the citizen first	Whole of Govern-ment	Processes Reform	Standardi-zation	Legal Reforms	Development of Sustainable Capacity
1.	Prepare and publish Citizen Charter	√			√		
2.	Implement a centralized grievance redressal mechanism	√	√	√	√		√
3.	Ensure citizen feedback for every service request	√		√			√
4.	Training and capacity augmentation		√		√		√
5.	Provide choice of channels	√	√			√	√
6.	Front Office – Back Office separation		√	√	√	√	√
7.	Adopt performance management framework				√		√
8.	Implement FIFO (First In, First Out)			√	√	√	
9.	Provide reasons for cases in which service request has to be rejected			√	√	√	
10.	Enforce disciplinary measures for delays in service delivery	√			√	√	
11.	Decentralize government service delivery authority	√	√	√		√	√
12.	Mandate Right to Services	√			√	√	
13.	Ensure transition to Digital Government	√	√	√	√	√	√
14.	Make service delivery by default	√	√	√		√	

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[6] The order of initiatives does not signify priority or implementation sequence. It is based on an assessment of the degree of complexity in their execution from the lowest to the highest.

#	Basic Principles ———————— Interventions	Putting the citizen first	Whole of Govern-ment	Processes Reform	Standardi -zation	Legal Reform s	Development of Sustainable Capacity
15.	Implement "Silent Consent" for select services	√		√		√	

1. PREPARE AND PUBLISH CITIZEN CHARTER

Develop and publish citizen charters as a mandate for all the government services defining the goal, timelines, roles and responsibilities, as well grievance escalation and problem-solving matrix

The citizen charter represents a commitment of the government towards service standards, quality, transparency and accountability to citizens, clearly defining expectations. This charter will be developed by each institution in collaboration with ADISA, in adherence to the responsibilities defined by law and the approved unified standards for service delivery to citizens and businesses. For each service, the charter will include the essential information on delivery channels, application and hours of operation, measurable standards, such as service fee, time required, point of contact and grievance redressal process.

The formulation and extensive publication of the charter in print or electronic format will be implemented in full consideration of ease of access by the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including women, the elderly and minorities.

2. IMPLEMENT A CENTRALIZED GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

Develop and implement a centralized system to track grievance redressal for service delivery related issues

In order to facilitate an effective and timely resolution of complaints from citizens and businesses related to service delivery, ADISA will implement a centralized mechanism, which will enable the registration of all these complaints, and track the delivery of responses and redress in accordance with determined deadlines and responsibilities. This mechanism will also ensure the escalation of complaint processing in line with established protocol. By providing effective monitoring of such a framework, this mechanism will also be an enabler in the conduct of performance monitoring of government employees, and will contribute to continuous improvements in service delivery.

This intervention will be implemented with the help of ICT to ensure effective results.

3. ENSURE CITIZEN FEEDBACK FOR EVERY SERVICE REQUEST

Engage with citizens on a more proactive basis seeking feedback for every service request

To increase citizen participation in the provision of input for service delivery, GoA will enable anytime anywhere access to a mechanism for gathering feedback and suggestions through the availability of multiple channels:

i. *Service windows / citizen service centers,* through pre-designed forms available both in print and online at the time of service delivery;

ii. *Mobile,* via SMS or a dedicated mobile application;

iii. *Government Contact Center,* through applicant dial-in and dial-out services.

The system will enable feedback for each service experience, and will encourage access from the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. It will serve to measure the citizen/business satisfaction index; identify issues in service delivery, including those that are gender-based as well as corruption cases; monitor performance, and develop strategies to improve service delivery.

4. TRAINING AND CAPACITY AUGMENTATION

Adopt a comprehensive framework for capacity augmentation and training of institutions involved in delivery of services to citizens

GoA will maintain a persistent focus on the development of appropriate sustainable institutional capacities to attain the citizen-centric service delivery reform goals. The activity areas, taking stock of gender mainstreaming policies, will include:

i. *Capacity augmentation*

Successful implementation of the reform in Albania will require individuals with a range of skills both in the short and long term. Evaluating requirements for accountability, flexibility, the projection of needs over time, type of expertise, availability and cost-benefit considerations, GoA will recruit on government payroll or hire external contractors on an individual basis or by empaneling agencies. As appropriate, resourcing will either be centralized or carried out at the agency level.

ii. *Training*

The alignment of government employees' competencies with their job requirements based on the goals of the citizen-centric service delivery reform will take place in a centralized and continuous fashion through a comprehensive well-structured training platform, as described in the following diagram. It will be rely on the close cooperation among ADISA, institutional service providers and the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA).
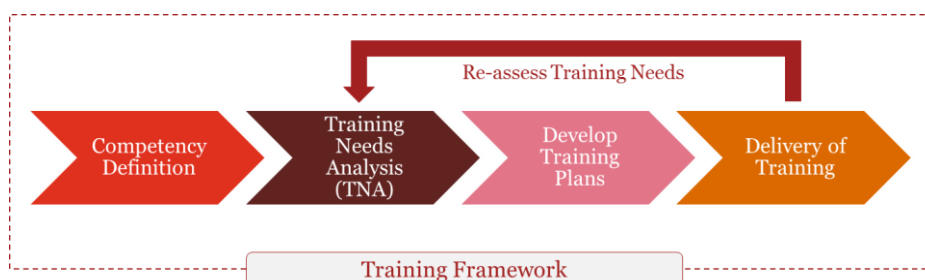
5. PROVIDE CHOICE OF CHANNELS

Develop and implement integrated Choice of Channels for the provision of "Anytime Anywhere Access" to citizens

The 'Choice of Channels' is a very important component in implementing "Putting the citizen first" philosophy as it enables citizens to avail services at their own convenience. This intervention tangibly empowers the rural population, the disadvantaged, women, the elderly, minorities and persons with disabilities in service access. It takes into account the characteristics of beneficiaries, development trends in the country, and opportunities for cooperation with local governments and entrepreneurs.

In this context, GoA will adopt an integrated approach based on ICT solutions, which ensures on one hand, a seamless and uniform experience for citizens, and on the other hand, a better synchronized operation by government institutions. This approach means that, for example, a citizen can apply for the service through the online portal and is able to track the service status through the mobile application on his/her phone, or by calling the contact center, not to mention visiting a service window.

Multiple channels of service delivery will include:

i. *Government portal e-Albania* www.e-albania.al, which will serve as a single window for citizens and businesses to access services and information on them online;

ii. *Mobile,* which given the high level of mobile penetration in Albania has great usage potential. It consists of: a) SMS; b) Mobile applications.

iii. *Government Contact Center for services*, which will offer a variety of access options to citizens, starting from phone-based through a single unique number, then email or online communication.

iv. *One Stop Shops* modeled after: a) separated service windows for citizens and businesses, as well as integrated centers offering services in the same space; b) Mobile delivery facilities, particularly in remote and low density areas; c) Self-service kiosks.

6. FRONT OFFICE - BACK OFFICE SEPARATION

Undertake functional restructuring by defining the separation between decision-making (BO) and interaction with citizens (FO)

This intervention aims to allow the BO to focus on carrying out its functional duties, including decision making pertaining to the service requests by citizens and businesses, while the FO gives its full attention to the citizen's experience.

GoA will continue its commitment in this direction for more transparency, accountability and focus on citizens, cognizant of FO-BO complementariness and interdependence, and pursing reforms in both aspects.

The management of separate FOs will be implemented using internal resources or by engaging external service providers based on well-defined technical criteria and quality standards.

7. ADOPT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Develop and implement a Performance Management Framework across all government institutions responsible for service delivery to citizens and businesses

To ensure that public service delivery is as effective and efficient as possible, GoA will adopt and implement a Performance Management framework, which will consist in a multi-pronged approach including the following elements:

i. *Implementing a Performance Monitoring System (PMS),* which refers to a centralized ICT platform that will provide an overview of the situation of services delivered to citizens and businesses relative to: applications, delivered services, compliance with deadlines, complaints, beneficiaries, utilized channels of service delivery. It will also enable comparative performance analysis, time series; etc. The data will be made public online.

ii. *Developing, customizing and implementing a Result Framework* to track the progress of specific initiatives at the agency level in terms of improving services to citizens and businesses. This is based on the formulation and adoption of expected results under the reform for each institution, and tracking of their implementation;

iii. *Designing and implementing the "Rewards and Recognition" program,* which will recognize annually in a public ceremony the best performers at the national level, individuals and institutions, in terms of the citizen-centric service delivery reform key performance indicators (KPI). GoA will also implement and publish a ranking system of institutions based on data retrieved from PMS.

8. IMPLEMENT "FIRST IN, FIRST OUT" (FIFO) FOR SERVICE PROCESSING

Redesign service delivery based on the principle of "First In, First Out" (FIFO)

In the spirit of greater transparency, equal treatment and accountability, the FIFO principle application takes away the opportunity for arbitrary decision by a government employee on the order of review of service applications from citizens and businesses. It mandates processing of all service requests within any given institution in a sequential manner based on the time of application, leaving no room for "jumping the queue" for any specific service request. If priority processing is needed, this will take place against a recorded additional fee. ICT can contribute in the effective implementation of FIFO, enabling also real-time process monitoring.

9. PROVIDE REASONS FOR CASES IN WHICH SERVICE REQUEST HAS TO BE REJECTED

Implement rejection reasoning for all services across each institution

Mandating the provision of reasons for rejecting a service request and making them available to the applicant means that the institutions should identify all probable causes for rejection for each service, train the staff, and communicate them effectively to the public. Although this is

not a pure technology intervention, ICT support contributes to the effective implementation of this mandate by government employees and the improvement of the citizen experience.

10. ENFORCE DISCIPLINARY MEASURES FOR DELAYS IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Implement enforcement of disciplinary measures on government officials in order to make delays in service delivery unacceptable and punishable

Government institutions are responsible for the time-bound delivery of services and the redressal of grievances in the identified time period. As such, any delay or deviation in service delivery or grievance redress beyond the declared timelines in the citizen charter will be treated as unacceptable and will trigger the application of the legal provisions in effect regarding disciplinary proceedings for government employees.

Clearly defined roles in service delivery, and reliance on ICT solutions for system alerts and reminders during the process as well as reports on timelines, have direct bearing on the effective implementation of disciplinary measures for delays.

11. DECENTRALIZE GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY AUTHORITY

Decentralize the authority to provide government services at the lowest appropriate level of administration

As part of the citizen-centric service delivery reform program, GoA will adopt the principle of decentralization in ***service processing***. Through business process re-engineering, it will enable the delegation of approval authority from the highest to the lowest possible levels for less red tape and service delivery that is quick and effective.

This intervention also foresees the decentralization of services through transferring or delegating delivery to ***local government***, leveraging the large interface and touch points it has with the population.

12. MANDATE RIGHT TO SERVICES

Make access to services a fundamental right of citizens

GoA is committed to ensure the essential service standards for citizens and businesses under the Right to Services Act. The provisions of this legal instrument will include:

- The mandate for all government institutions to formulate and publish the citizen charter;
- The right of citizens to access information on services and progress of the application process including the reasons for rejection when that is the case;
- A comprehensive and functional grievance redressal mechanism;
- Disciplinary measures for delays in service delivery;
- The right to compensation for citizens if the service is not provided as per the citizen charter;
- Commitment to continuous improvement in response to citizen feedback.

13. ENSURE TRANSITION TO DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

Adopt "Digital First" as a policy mandate across all government institutions to ensure a time-bound transition to ICT systems and move away from the paper-based ones

Transition to digital governance refers to the policy of moving all service processes and transactions on to ICT systems in a time-bound manner for all government institutions within the set time frame. This includes a move away from the paper-based manual service processing.

GoA has been focusing and investing in a digitization program wherein records are converted into digital data, indexed and integrated into ICT systems. Interoperability is also considered part of the process. This program will contribute in the efficient delivery of electronic services.

The transition to digital governance for services for citizens and businesses from government institutions will progress in line with BPR initiatives and according to the stages outlined in this LTPD. It will include the following steps:

- Transition of all services to the online mode;
- Immediate hard stop to manual or paper based processing of service requests;
- Acceptance of digital or electronic documents including supporting ones as part of service requests;
- Development and adoption of technological solutions which support continuous processing (whether online and / or offline) to address any connectivity issues;
- Implementation of security, authentication, storage, availability, maintenance of digital documents and systems as per the standards defined by NAIS.

14. MAKE SERVICE DELIVERY BY DEFAULT

Adopt and implement the concept of "Services by Default" for all government services whenever this is possible

Full integration of the entire service delivery process and a government administration that has a complete view of citizen will enable the implementation of a proactive stance vis-à-vis citizens' demands for certain services, which can be provided on a default basis rather than following specific requests.

The implementation of "Services by Default" has a significant impact on improving the experience of citizens in obtaining services, especially for the most vulnerable groups. This intervention will rely on legal and technology enablement, as well as process redesign. Notwithstanding the application of this approach when it is possible, all services for which the application by the citizen is necessary to start the process, such as those of a sensitive nature, are exempted from this intervention.

15. IMPLEMENT "SILENT CONSENT" FOR SELECT SERVICES

Adopt the concept of 'Silent Consent' for an identified set of services increasing accountability in government institutions

Further expansion of "Silent Consent" application in services for citizens and businesses by government institutions will be adopted for the given category of services for which this is applicable. For such services a comprehensive review, monitoring and evaluation framework will be in place, where roles and responsibilities in applications processing as well as supervision are clearly defined. Concept implementation will be supported by an ICT platform that enables automatic alerts during different stages of processing, as well as at the occurrence of silent consent. From the performance standpoint, this will be viewed as an exception rather than the norm, and will be subject to immediate inspection. Silent consent application will be a monitored KPI for government employees for the eligible services.

3.2   Planning

The outlined interventions in the previous section have varying degrees of complexity, which has a direct impact on their start time, duration and effort needed to implement them. The table below lists these intervention categories and identified subcategories by their level of complexity, from the lowest to highest, based on the following four parameters[7]:

I.   **Scale**, which defines the relative magnitude and coverage range of each initiative. The higher these are, the more complex the intervention is considered to be;

II.   **Scope**, which defines the tasks and activities that need to be performed in order to successfully implement an initiative. The higher the number of these tasks or activities, the more complex the intervention is considered to be;

III.   **Dependence**, which is defined as the number of factors on which an intervention is dependent. The greater the number of factors, the more complex the intervention is considered to be;

IV.   **Readiness**, which captures the tasks already undertaken by GoA towards implementation of the initiative. The more has been already undertaken, the less complex the intervention is considered to be.

#	Intervention	Parameters of Complexity				Level of complexity
		Scale	Scope	Dependence	Readiness	
1	Prepare and publish Citizen Charter	High	Low	Low	High	Low
2	Implement a centralized grievance redressal mechanism	High	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium

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[7] At the moment of LTPD formulation, each intervention has been assessed on every parameter in comparison with the other initiatives and assigned a relative ranking of 'low', 'medium' or 'high'. The overall complexity for an intervention has been derived as an average of the individual level of complexity associated with the four identified parameters.

#	Intervention	Parameters of Complexity				Level of complexity
		Scale	Scope	Dependence	Readiness	
3	Ensure citizen feedback for every service request	High	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
4	Training and capacity augmentation	High	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
5 i&ii	Provide choice of channels: *e-Albania & Mobile*	Low	Medium	Low	High	Medium
5 iii	Provide choice of channels: *Call Center*	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
5 iv	Provide choice of channels: *One Stop Shops*	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
6	Front Office – Back Office separation	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
7 i	Adopt performance management framework: *Performance Monitoring System (PMS)*	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Medium
7 ii	Adopt performance management framework: *Result Framework*	High	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
7 iii	Adopt performance management framework: *Rewards and Recognition program*	High	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
8	Implement FIFO (First In, First Out)	High	Low	Medium	Low	Medium
9	Provide reasons for cases in which service request has to be rejected	High	Medium	Low	Low	Medium
10	Enforce disciplinary measures for delays in service delivery	High	High	High	Low	High
11	Decentralize government service delivery authority	High	High	High	Medium	High
12	Mandate Right to Services	High	High	Low	High	Medium
13	Ensure transition to Digital Government	High	High	High	Medium	High
14	Make service delivery by default	High	High	High	Medium	High
15	Implement "Silent Consent" for select services	High	High	High	Low	High

IV   IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

4.1   Governance and Implementation Structures

The sustained commitment from the highest government level and the institutions providing services to citizens and businesses, embodied by a well-functioning citizen-centric reform

governance and implementation structure, constitutes a prerequisite to ensure that the vision, focus and continuity are maintained throughout the reform's journey.

The governance structure consists of both, the strategic and functional levels by harmonizing at the highest government level decision making based on integrated planning management on one hand, with approvals and monitoring of relevant policies, on the other. The latter is carried out by the specific Interministerial Committee chaired by the Prime Minister, with the participation of all ministers of government institutions on focus, as well the minister for local government. The Committee meetings are convened periodically by the responsible minister leading the reform.

At the juncture between the governance and operational structures stands the steering committee composed of key institutional stakeholders in reform implementation, key departments at the Prime Minister's Office, as well as the specific management group established by the responsible minister for the reform. Under this chairmanship, the steering committee is responsible for making operational decisions and carrying out oversight, whereas the specific managerial group provides for coordinated planning and implementation of activities to achieve results. Appropriate management capacities operating under the responsible minister provide effective support in reform governance.

Government institutions with specific functions in the citizen-centric service delivery reform, such as ADISA, NAIS and those with legal responsibilities for delivering administrative public services, play the primary role in implementing the policies of this reform. Ministry and dependent institutions' working groups constitute the intra-agency operational mechanisms.

Meanwhile, the integrated policy management group (IPMG), which is chaired by the responsible minister for the reform, utilizing at the technical level also the instrument of the thematic group, serves to support inter-agency coordination, whose highest level is the Interministerial Committee.

To support the implementation and the long-term success of the citizen-centric service delivery reform, as a component part of the working group approach, GoA will adopt the practice of appointing reform champions who will be responsible for intra- and inter-agency information exchange and coordination. There will be periodic monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess competencies and performance of these reform champions along with a performance based incentive scheme for their advancement and growth.

4.2   Funding Models

Funding models for the citizen centric service delivery reform, which integrates the measures and resourced detailed under PAR and ADA, consist in:
- State budget funding;
- Funding from development partners.

Overall, the choice of the most appropriate funding model will be based on considerations related to:
- Type of initiative and envisaged results;

- One time or recurrent expenditure;
- Long-term or short-term funding requirements;
- Return on investment;
- Feasibility study.

4.3   Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Monitoring and evaluation will play a crucial role in measuring the impact of the citizen-centric service delivery reform policies, assessing the achievement of objectives and identifying the main directions for improvements at the policy level. As part of the M&E process, quarterly, bi-annual and annual reports based on a results framework and relevant indicators that capture also the approved strategies, will be regularly produced. They will cover the implementation progress of contemplated interventions, as well as budgeting or budget reallocation aspects.

From the overall strategic point of view, the LTPD will be reviewed and re-assessed on a three-year basis, relying on impact assessment as an instrument which will help gauge whether the set goals have been met, as well as guide and further detail the following steps. This assessment will also be instrumental in identifying and quantifying the social impact of the reform.

4.4   Communication and Stakeholder Engagement

The communication strategy will address the following aspects of the citizen-centric service delivery reform, targeting the members of the public/beneficiaries as well as government institutions employees:

- Increase awareness and information about the vision, objectives and results;
- Build support for change, i.e. re-engineered processes, new and transformed service delivery channels, etc.;
- Create confidence among members of the public interacting with government institutions for the use of technology and e-services;
- Create demand for the use of improved services;
- Continuously improve information exchange;
- Engage citizens, as the main beneficiaries, in the reform processes, and motivate employees to contribute effectively and consistently in achieving the objectives.

GoA will continue to implement a broad beneficiary engagement platform, with due consideration for the participation of the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, to ensure feedback and input in terms of policy as well as in prioritizing and assessing interventions. Besides consultations or traditional channels, this engagement will be enabled through the use of ICT solutions.