



REPUBLIKA E ALBANIËS

**OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ALBANIA
2020 – 2022**

Open
Government
Partnership



Explanatory Note :

Methodological Approach

The methodology for the process of drafting the Action Plan 2020-2022 (For Partnership & Open Government) is based on the mechanisms and processes related to Albania's Integrated Planning System. **The Integrated Policy Management Group for Good Governance and Public Administration** under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister and focuses on the Albanian Government's priority for 'Good Governance' at the central and local level have been selected to play the role of the Multi Stakeholder Forum for the OGP process.

The Multi-stakeholder Forum on Open Government/ Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG play the role of the MSF) supports ongoing dialogue between government and Albania civil society on open government. Its mandate is to provide input and advice on the Government of Albania's commitments on open government, identify new areas of focus, and build the open government community across country. The Multi-Stakeholder Forum/ Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG play the role of the MSF) is relevant, eligible and is composed of representative of the Government of Albania, representative from civil society and Development Partner's and is based on the EU requirement.

The integrated mechanism of sector-wide/cross-sector approach within the Integrated Planning System (IPS), approved by Prime Minister Order No.157 dated 22 October 2018, is the main system that defines the tools and mechanisms for integrated public policy planning ensuring effective distribution of financial resources. The IPMG mechanism is clearly formally established by 2 successive Prime Minister's Orders which present the structure's organisation, objectives, membership, functioning rules and operation of five Integrated Policy Management Groups (IPMG), five Sector Steering Committees (SSC) headed by a minister at the political level, and twenty-four Thematic Groups (ThGs).

The Government of Albania considers the mechanism in place on IPMG/MSF as a relevant creating a permanent mechanism for civil society guidance and oversight which offer agility and flexibility in working mechanism. The IPMG/MSF coordinate policies and monitor implementation covering measures related to civil society advancement, decentralization and local governance, public administration reform, service delivery public, transparency & anti-corruption, statistics, e-government and digitalization. It will also coordinate with civil society all measures that will be planned in the Action Plan 2020-2022, enabling consultations in periodic stages.

To facilitate improved coordination, oversight, accountability and stakeholder involvement in the development of the upcoming action plan the Technical Secretariat acts as the Albanian Government Point of Contact (POC)¹.

Alignment with National Priorities and Frameworks

Integrated Planning System

Strategic planning in Albania is based on the Integrated Planning System (IPS), which was initially approved by Decision of the Council of Ministers, no. 244, dated 21.4.2005 and then by DCM, No. 692, dated 10.11.2005. The IPS aims to provide a comprehensive planning framework within which all government policies and financial planning function in a coherent, efficient and integrated manner. The IPS consists of a framework of operating principles and structures that enable the most harmonious possible connection of all planning processes between them.

¹ The Development and Good Governance Unit within the Office of the Prime Minister acts as the Technical Secretariat for the OGP 2020-2022 Action Plan development process.

There are two basic processes that support IPS:

- A medium to long-term strategic planning process, the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), which sets strategic priorities and goals;
- A medium-term budgeting process, the Medium Term Budget Program (MTBP), which requires each ministry to develop a three-year plan within budget expenditure ceilings to achieve policy objectives, in line with the NSDI.

Linking Processes and Drafting the Action Plan 2020-2022

The methodology for the process of drafting the Action Plan 2020-2022 (For Open Government Partnership) is based on the principle of full functioning of all current mechanisms and processes related to the Integrated Planning System.

The drafting of the Action Plan 2020-2022 (OGP) is based especially on the best harmonization with the Medium Term Budget Programming cycle and with the National Plan for European Integration (NPEI) as well as with the strategic planning of the country (sectoral & cross-sectoral strategies).

In particular, **the Action Plan 2020-2022 (OGP) will harmonize:**

- **Relation to the priorities of the Albanian Government and NSDI II**, where the priorities set out in the Government program, as well as the priority sectors of the Government, are an integral part of the vision and policies set by the NSDI.
- **Full link between the MTBP and the NPEI**, where activities, measures and commitments under the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) are an integral part of the MTBP and the NSDI.
- **Relation to the policies included in the national sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies of the country.**

Key Actors

Lead Focal Point Institutions (LFPs)

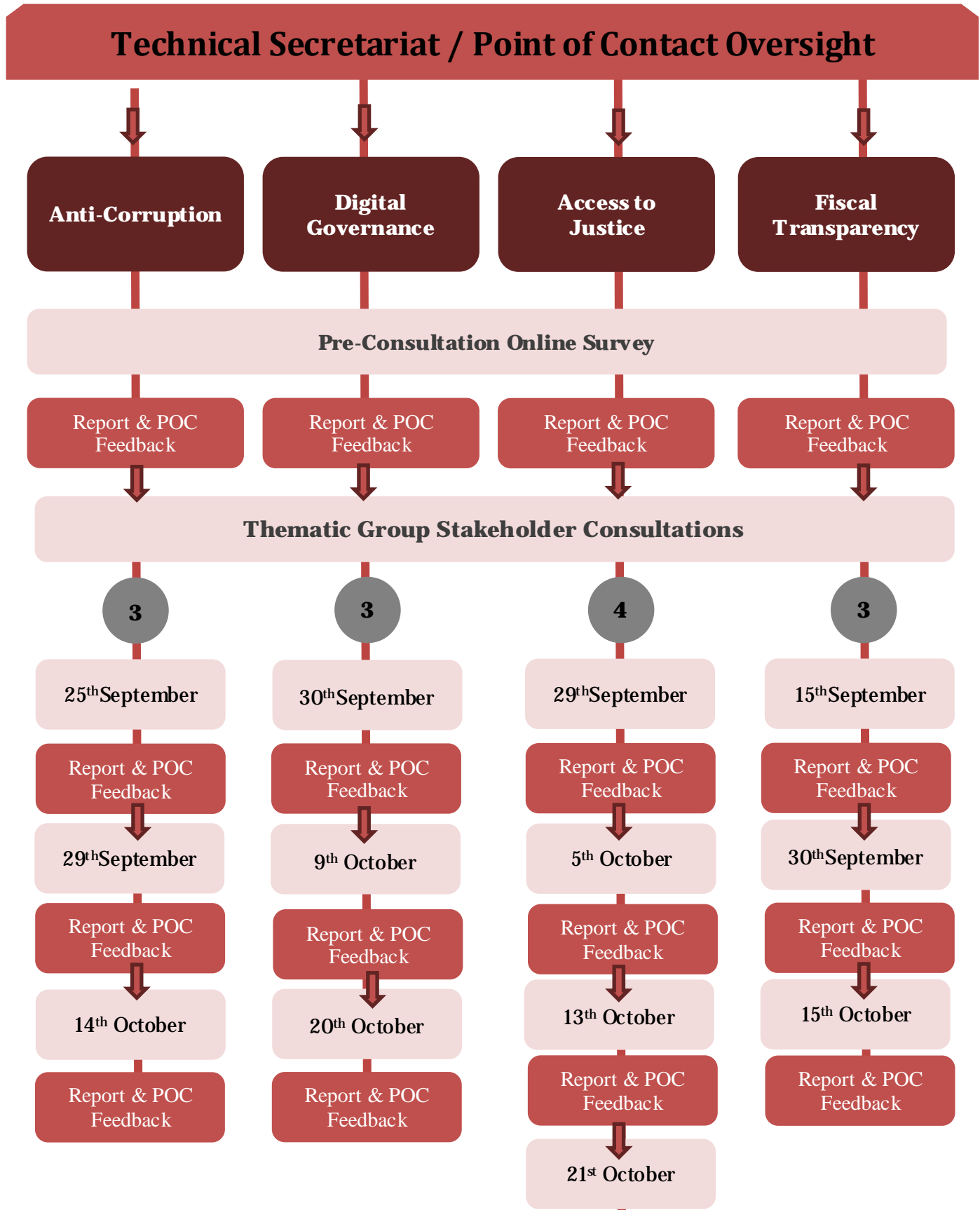
Under the coordination and technical support of the POC Lead Focal Point Institutions (LFPs) oversee the development of Action Plan commitments relevant to their policy area of focus. The LFPs work in collaboration with the POC to co-create commitments with civil society. For more information on co-creation see explanatory note 3.

Figure 1: Proposed Policy Areas of Focus with Lead Focal Point Institutions (LFPs), thematic groups and aligned strategies

Centralized Role of the Technical Secretariat (TS) / Government Point of Contact

With improving participation, transparency and accountability central to Albania's approach to the development and implementation of its next action plan the POC has developed and implemented a new series of support tools, mechanisms and procedures that provide a framework for expanded co-creation related to draft action plan 2020-2022.

Figure 2: Overview of POC Coordination of the Thematic Stakeholder Consultations



POC Developed Tools, Mechanisms and Procedures:

Strengthened collaboration between line ministries (LFPs) and central government (POC) through the implementation of formal feedback mechanisms and regular on communication support and guidance with government departments and ministries / agencies to align ministerial and central government priorities and coordinate planned actions.

The creation of sustainable systems and tools to foster and develop capacity within the public administration aims to promote coordination and engagement between the PMO, line ministries, civil society and international organizations to develop and implement lasting governance reforms. **These systems are intended to also encourage capacity building within the PMO and LFP institutions on OGP principles and processes and their integration into policy development.**

Management Framework

- **Methodology:** The POC developed the methodology framework for the development of the OGP Action Plan 2020-2022. The framework is based on the mechanisms and processes related to Albania's Integrated Planning System.
- **Stakeholder Consultations:** The POC in the entire process have overseen the consultation process and have collaborate through different channels and produced tools between LFPs and stakeholders for each of the four proposed policy areas. Each policy area have conduct 3-4 stakeholder consultations in collaboration with the POC and in total result that only thematic consultations have been conducted in total 14 consultation meetings. An additional stakeholder consultation have been carried out following the drafting of the action plan.
- **Management Calendar:** POC have designed in order to facilitate accountability and ensure all procedures are appropriately followed the POC has created a management calendar with all intermediary tasks involved in the development of the action plan, which have been published in the OGP web.
- **OGP Website:** The POC in close collaboration with the NAIS continuously have ensure that the OGP website is updated with all the relevant reports, contributions and supplementary information for effective and informed stakeholder participation.

Consultation Process Reporting Framework on the National Action Plan 2020-2022

- **Consultation Report developed and published on the OGP web:** Following each consultation initiative each LFP developed a structured, but brief report based on a specific/unified framework produced from POC (POC have developed a unified structure reporting for the consultation feedback). These consultation reports developed have been focused on stakeholder participation during the consultation such as reflecting on the level of engagement, identifying areas for improvement and how this have been achieved in the all consultations and stakeholder's/CSO's feedback. These reports facilitate dialogue between the POC and LFPs and enable for improvements to be made on an on-going basis and are published on the OGP website for public consumption.

- **Report Framework and Templates:** To facilitate reporting that captures the issues of focus through an easy to complete format that does not overburden the LFP with requirements and report writing the POC developed report frameworks with specific questions as opposed to requiring open-ended generalized reports. The templates focus on evidence/ emphasis on identifying areas for improvement regarding engagement and identification of areas where to improve engagement
- **Quality Check for Reports:** The POC developed structured templates and have provided feedback to the LFPs on their reports through the entire process. Answers are flagged as incomplete, partial or complete with recommendations and comments provided by the POC. This system provides a formal and consistent means of feedback to foster consistency in reporting as well as support improvements to stakeholder engagement and participation.
- **Quality Check for Prioritization:** The POC have provided quality control of the prioritization process ensuring all ideas are included and evaluated using the prioritization template (discussed below under ‘stakeholder contribution mechanisms’) which have ensured through the entire process transparency and fairness in the evaluation and selection process.
- **Prioritization Tools and reports have been published in the OGP web.**

Stakeholder Engagement Tools & Mechanisms²

Informational Tools

- **Have been produced and published in the OGP web the OGP Stakeholder Brief:** This package have provided an overview of the OGP process for stakeholders. It promotes participation through by highlighting the independence of the IRM framework and the opportunities that the OGP process offers for stakeholders to partake in policy making and governance.
- **Have been produced and published in the OGP web the Policy Area Specific Stakeholder Brief:** This packages focuses specifically on the policy area being proposed in order to spur brainstorming and the development of ideas as well as to equip stakeholders with sufficient information to engage on the topic with contributions that will be relevant to the OGP process.

Stakeholder Contribution Mechanisms

- **Developed, efficient used and published in the OGP Web the Prioritization/Criteria Guidance & template:** Based in part from the IRM’s stated criteria the POC developed a prioritization framework with categories for verifiability, relevance to OGP principles, estimated impact, civil society engagement, feasibility, alignment with local, national and international priorities. This framework was accompanied with a guidance note for how LFPs can work with civil society to tailor the framework and assess contributed ideas in a transparent and fair manner. The framework is published in the OGP web and all ideas have been assessed according to the framework and their assessment.

²Discussed in further detail in the ‘Co-Creation’ Explanatory Note

- **Consultation Meeting Ideas in frame of the OGP Action Plan:** Stakeholders in the entire process have been encouraged to provide comments, ideas and general feedback during all consultations meetings. All comments and discussions are recorded in the consultation report and have been published on the OGP website. Comments and suggestions made during consultations have been incorporated into the development of the action plan.
- **General and Specific Ideas:** In addition to in-person consultations stakeholders have been encouraged through dedicated emails from LFPs which have stimulates the CSO's to provide feedback and ideas outside of the consultation meetings.
- Both word and googleforms formats produced and published in the OGP web for the feedback consultation have provide opportunities for stakeholders to contribute. A 'general ideas' version focuses on broad issues and solutions relating to the policy focus, meanwhile a 'specific ideas' version enables stakeholders to elaborate and refine their ideas within the format of the OGP requirements.
- All ideas contributed have been published and evaluated using the prioritization framework.

Collaboration with LFPs

- **Partnered Presentations for Stakeholder Consultations:** To encourage informed participation the focal point of the POC have coordinated through entire process with the LFP to facilitate presentations for the stakeholders. The POC have explained to LFPs all the relevant details of their work and suggested ideas and recommendations for the action plan. The POC also have presented through the entire process and in most consultations in order to outline the concept of OGP, outline methodology approach, also have been presented relevant examples from other countries and the ways in which stakeholders can contribute. The content of these presentations is tailored based on the weekly planning meeting, but broadly focuses on equipping stakeholders with the information and tools to utilize their expertise towards developing ideas relevant to the OGP Action Plan – with each presentation building on the previous consultation. Finally, the POC presentations have been emphasized and also have encouraged and promoted the discussion in order to produce a relevant and transparent dialogue between all the stakeholders.

- **Weekly POC Consultation Planning Meetings:**

Each week the POC conducted communication meeting with the focal point of the LFP to address any issues in stakeholder engagement, flag potential areas of concern, discuss any adjustments in approach and develop the strategy for the next period. These meetings have ensure the coherence and harmonization between POC and LFP, also POC to be aware of any issues and can support changes and mitigate any risk in order to address in timing the requirements. Further, POC have facilitated tailoring any guidance/ materials and presentations and have been ensured that fit the particular circumstance of the policy focus (e.g. one focal point may have less stakeholders participating and therefore the outreach strategy may have to be adjusted).

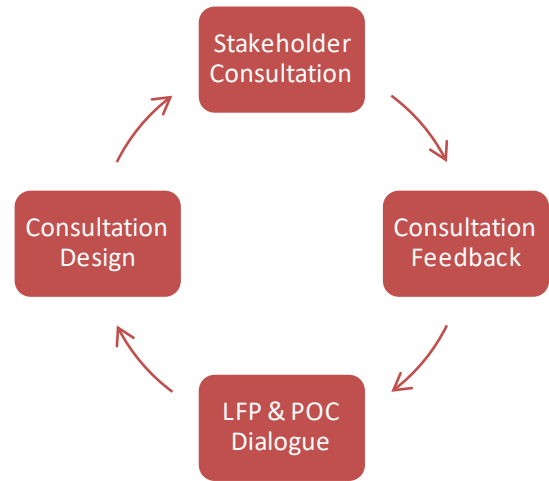


Figure 3: POC Coordination and Feedback Approach with LFPs for Stakeholder Consultations

- **POC Support & Guidance:**

In addition to the more structured meetings POC have ensured with the LFPs availability through different channels in the entire process (via email and communications through regular check-ins with the LFPs). This communication has been effective and has facilitated through the feedback procedures established, thus, promoting more cooperation between the POC, LFPs and co-creation process.