



# Involving Local Authorities In the programming process of EU Cooperation in Gambia

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES ROADMAP FOR THE 2021-2027 CYCLE OF EU COOPERATION



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**December 2020**

# **GAMBIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES (GALGA)**



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# **GALGA ROADMAP FOR THE PROGRAMMING PROCESS FOR THE 2021-2027 CYCLE OF EU COOPERATION**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The UCLG Africa recognizes the important role that National Associations of Local Authorities play in supporting initiatives that improve the environment in which local governments operate to better manage areas under their jurisdiction. By launching this support project, UCLGA seeks to strengthen the association to undertake its role as the collective voice of local governments in the country. The specific focus of this support aims to ensuring that the national associations participate in the EU Country Programming process for the period 2021-2027.

The European Union has concluded a new financing instrument, the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) that will guide its next programming of the next 6 years (2021-2027). The EU programming exercise is meant to identify strategic and priority areas and sectors for interventions to be financed by the EU cooperation within the framework of a political dialogue to be launched with the central governments, local authorities and other development actors of (civil society, private sector ...). “The NDICI shifts the main focus and ‘centre of gravity’ of the EU cooperation to the geographic dimension in order to improve the coherence and efficiency of EU cooperation”.

Supported by the 2013 EU Communication on “Empowering local authorities in partner countries for enhanced governance and more effective development outcomes,” this project aims at preparing national associations and local governments sphere to participate effectively in the programming phase and ensure that they benefit from EU funding to strengthen decentralization. It is at the programming phase that stakeholders of the partner countries are consulted, and that a dialogue is established with the EU delegation to define the specific priorities and programs of the EU cooperation aligned with the political objectives identified during the pre-programming phase for each country.

Local authorities through their national association should therefore be integral part in the programming process alongside the representatives of the national government, in the dialogue with the EU delegations. The project, therefore, seeks to support the national associations to better represent their members effectively engaging in the EU programming process in order to benefit their members through creating an enabling environment to better deliver on their mandates as devolved from the centre.

The Roadmap has been preceded by two important documents (1) a Compendium of key reference documents with a summary reader note on three issues – National Development Policy and Strategies; National decentralization Policy; Status of EU Cooperation; (2) an Analytical Report appraising the political economy on decentralization; a rapid SWOT analysis of the national association (GALGA); and the extent to which territorial approach to local development (TALD) has been recognized and applied in the country.

The roadmap aims to strengthening the national association (GALGA) within the framework of the EU country programming for the 2021-2017 period. The Roadmap explores ways in which the Local Authorities can be involved in the programming process. It should be noted that in the upcoming process Local Authorities are for the first time accorded state actors status alongside central governments which have hitherto been the only state actors associated with the definition of priorities for EU cooperation.

## 2 The Gambia Decentralization Policy

### 2.1 Strategic goal: promoting Participatory Governance for inclusive Development

Since 1994 the Government of the Gambia has been implementing a program of decentralization and local government reform designed to strengthen democratic governance through much broader and active participation with a view to strengthening accountability at all levels.

In spite of these noble intentions of government, the process of decentralization has been challenged by: (1) incoherence or even contradictions in sectoral approaches to decentralization; (2) a lack of adequate capacity at both the central and local government levels respectively; (3) inability to adequately articulate and disseminate information on

decentralization for the greater understanding and deeper engagement of the general public; (4) the apparent weaknesses in the efficiency and effectiveness of local government administrations was not helpful in carrying the process forward; (5) inability to stimulate popular participation in local governance and streamlining relationships with traditional authorities; (6) weaknesses in local planning and development capacity with the result that local communities have not yet begun to see the expected benefits of increased autonomy; and (7) in spite of the legislative provisions, central government seems reluctant and over cautious in transferring the required functions, competencies and finances to set the process of decentralization by devolution in full motion. These issues have been well articulated in the Analytical Report. The roadmap has therefore been designed to look at these issues with a view to ameliorating them through a consultative process with stakeholders (particularly the EU and Government of the Gambia) culminating in the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan for the implementation of the decentralization program.

The Roadmap has therefore been designed to address these challenges. The focus of the Roadmap aims at integrating all of the aforesaid issues into a planning framework designed as a tracking tool to monitor the performance of implementation, by articulating the strategic outcomes, and expected results, interventions, performance indicators, means of verifying the results of the interventions, responsibility for implementation, indicative budget for the interventions (to follow later), timing for the interventions and an analysis of the risks and assumptions. This will be ongoing throughout the programming cycle 2021-2027.

## **2.2 Rationale for Decentralization**

Decentralization through devolution, if properly implemented can enhance popular participation and thereby ensure technical efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. While decentralization through devolution is firmly entrenched in the policy and legislative instruments of the country, the reality however is growing concentration and centralization of power and resources in key ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that continue to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate key essential services to the local communities through deconcentrated structures, without the partnership of the local government structures. The Compendium has highlighted some of the shortcomings where the role of

local authorities are defined in policy documents but only to pay lip service to their involvement in policy implementation.

In spite of this situation, the ultimate objective of Gambia's decentralization policy is devolution and not concentration or delegation as enshrined in "Directive Principles of State Policy" stipulated under section 214 (3) of the 1997 Constitution, section 4.6 of the National Governance Policy (1999) and section 49 of the Local Government Act (2002).

### 2.2.1 Opportunities

The Government of the Gambia has in place the enabling policy and legal context that can facilitate the progression of the decentralization process. Decentralization and the developmental role of the local authorities are enshrined in numerous national documents. These have been entrenched in key legal and policy instruments and developmental strategies as highlighted in the Compendium.

### 2.2.2 Inhibiting Factors

The view held by many local government practitioners is that central actors use the lack of capacity of local governments as an excuse to stall the decentralization process in order to hold on to power. The Council actors view is that with support, improvements will be made. However, despite the noble intentions of government to deepen decentralisation, certain difficulties are however challenging, the results of which the main ones include the following:

- The inadequacy of government budget allocations to facilitate decentralised governance;
- The weak capacity of local decentralised structures to plan and implement their own development initiatives

To address these challenges, within the framework of the National Development Plan, the government intends to:

- Accelerate decentralization
- Strengthen local government autonomy
- Increase the resource base available to local government authorities; and
- Find ways and means to make local governments more financially able to act with more autonomy and better respond to community needs.

Decentralization Policy – Guiding Principles and Core Values

The basis of the policy is enshrined in the provisions of the 1997 Constitution of the Gambia which prescribes a system of governance that is participatory at all levels of society, especially at local level. According to Section 193(1) of the Constitution, “Local government administration in the Gambia shall be based on a system of democratically elected councils with a high degree of local autonomy.” The Directive Principles of State Policy stipulated under section 214 (3) of the Constitution reiterates that “the State shall be guided by the principles of decentralization and devolution of government functions and powers to the people at appropriate levels of control to facilitate democratic governance.”

Therefore, in order to ensure progress in the decentralization process, the implementation of the policy shall be guided by the following principles and core values:

- i. The right of all persons to be afforded opportunities to participate in decision making in every facet and level of government;
- ii. Central government transferring relevant competences, powers, responsibilities and resources to local government units in a coordinated manner; and in turn, local governments transferring required resources to sub-structures;
- iii. Enhancing capacity of local government authorities to plan, initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in respect of all matters affecting the people in their areas;
- iv. Ensuring local government accountability through an effective citizen participation; and
- v. Enduring effective integration of governmental agencies at the regional and local levels into one administrative unit, through the process of institutional integration, manpower absorption, composite budgeting and provision of funds for the decentralized services.

These are the guiding principles of the Roadmap and they have been fully captured therein.

### 2.3 The Vision

To achieve a fully decentralised and democratically elected system of governance with a high degree of local autonomy characterised by open, predictable, transparent and accountable policy making and implementation processes; and effective community participation, in

planning, decision-making, development and administration of their local affairs, while maintaining sufficient linkages between the central and local governments.

## 2.4 The Mission Statement

To promote democratic and participatory governance through the equitable distribution of resources.

### 2.4.1 Broad Policy Objectives

In order to achieve the government's vision, the following policy objectives will be pursued:

- i. Empower local communities by devolving decision making, competences and resources from the centre to the lowest level with matching resources in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services;
- ii. Design and implement a mechanism to ensure a "bottom-up" flow of integrated development planning and budgeting from the local level to the central government;
- iii. Enhance local political and administrative authority in order to effectively and efficiently deliver services;
- iv. Promote accountability and transparency in the management and utilization of resources;
- v. Develop the capacity of Local Authorities and communities in development planning, financing, coordinating and managing the delivery of services in their area;
- vi. Build capacity for the development and maintenance infrastructure at local level;
- vii. Introduce an integrated budget for local-level development and management;
- viii. Develop capacity and competence in central government to effectively enhance the coordination, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the decentralization process; and
- ix. Provide a legal and institutional framework to promote autonomy in decision making

## 2.5 Components and objectives of the Action Plan

The purpose of the Decentralization Action Plan is to provide a roadmap that will guide the efforts of the stakeholders through the articulation of their roles in the implementation of the Decentralization Policy. Specifically it entails the following:

- a. To clearly articulate components of the action plan;
- b. To define the steps, prioritisation, and sequencing of the components and activities;
- c. To provide a guide for the preparation of detailed annual work plans for each component;
- d. To provide the background and rationale for the proposed interventions and their timing;
- e. To indicate linkages between the major activities
- f. To estimate the resource requirement of the action plan for its effective implementation;
- g. To outline the institutional framework for implementing the policy and how the process and inputs from the stakeholders will be coordinated; and
- h. To indicate the financing mechanisms for the plan

### 2.5.1 Components

The key components of the Action Plan have been derived from the review of the decentralization process and an assessment of the objectives of the National Decentralization Policy. The plan present the challenges, objectives, expected results and interventions for the following eleven components:

1. Sensitization and civic education
2. Legal and regulatory frame work
3. Institutional and Human Resource capacity Development
4. Local Development Planning and Budgeting
5. Financial Management and Accounting
6. Fiscal Decentralization and Revenue mobilisation
7. Sector Devolution
8. Infrastructure Development and Service Provision
9. Involvement of the Private Sector and Non-State Actors
10. Monitoring and evaluation
11. Program coordination and management

These are guiding principles of the Roadmap and have been fully captured therein, with consideration to the gaps highlighted in the Compendium and the Analytical Report.

As decentralisation is a sector-wide issue, its effective policy coordination and implementation requires multi-institutional participation. In addition to involvement in actual implementation, a wide range of stakeholders and partners will be expected to generate policy insights, provide policy advice and direction, thus the formulation of an Institutional framework as complementary to the Roadmap.

### 3 Roadmap 1:

INSTITUTION	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<p>1. Ministry of Lands and Regional Government(MLRG)</p>	<p>Motivating and preparing central government decision making on matters of decentralization which still require policy decision or clearance;</p> <p>To spearhead the policy process, initiate, develop, advocate for and assist the rest of government understand and adopt the policies, through among other things, obtain political consensus around the concept and objectives of decentralization;</p> <p>Involve councils in the policy process, to explain decentralization policy once made, changed or clarified, delineate the different roles between key players at that level, build the necessary institutions for the implementation of the policy, develop the capacity of the institutions to carry out their functions properly, resource them adequately and monitor the implementation of their functions; and</p> <p>Resource mobilization and allocation in accordance with policy priorities;</p>
<p>2. Office of the President</p>	<p>The President’s Office, in its role as the manager of government:</p> <p>Has the role to ensure that decentralization as Government policy, to the extent that it affects the Way Government operates, is implemented by all relevant parties.</p> <p>Has to use its supra-ministerial rank to facilitate and coordinate function of MLRG with other sectors</p> <p>Its organization and methods function as well as its personnel function are key to the capacity of</p>

	both MLRG and regional and local councils to carry out their functions.
3. Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs	<p>It finances the process at national level and therefore can influence the degree to which central agencies engage in decentralization activities; It has accounting rules which could help or hinder sectoral decentralization by ministries;</p> <p>It has taxation powers which it can devolve to the councils Develop and implement the fiscal decentralization system, mechanism and processes;</p> <p>Its fiscal management responsibility demands that it relates fiscal management, discipline and protocols at national level to the decentralization process as well, as one system.</p>
4. Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralisation (IMCC)	<p>To improve policy coordination and collaboration, the IMCC will provide the relevant mechanism as well as provide overall oversight for policy implementation;</p> <p>The IMCC will facilitate the relationship between MLRG, other sector ministries and agencies and the Presidency. It will be made up of the core decentralization Ministries and chaired by the President or his representative. The presence and functioning of the IMCC should facilitate cross-sectoral implementation of the decentralization policy and accelerate the envisaged processes;</p> <p>The IMCC will agree on the key issues of decentralization policy and their implementation before these are submitted to the Cabinet and the Presidency for final approvals. It will also oversee the effective dissemination of policy measures and coherent implementation of the arising programs on a multi-sectoral basis;</p>

	<p>The IMCC will advise on the harmonizing legislation on decentralization and harmonize sector policies to reflect devolution. It will oversee Ministerial re-alignment to reflect changing roles and responsibilities of different Ministries vis a vis decentralization and approve indicators to monitor decentralization implementation;</p> <p>The IMCC will be supported by a Technical Committee which will ensure the implementation of its decision; and</p> <p>IMCC will be the policy organ and supervisory body of the Decentralisation Secretariat</p>
5. Decentralisation Secretariat	<p>To implement an agreed nationwide policy, DS should develop implementation strategies with clear targets, action steps, resource mobilization objectives and approaches, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, to assist other agencies/ministries to understand and carry out their roles,</p> <p>to understand and facilitate the necessary coordination between all the key players, to sequence implementation stages between functions and within functions, to influence the channeling of resources for the implementation policy for the entire effort, not just for its part in the effort;</p> <p>Routine monitoring of policy implementation processes;</p> <p>Periodic data-gathering to provide evidence for policy review; Policy review, evaluation and impact assessment;</p> <p>Provide secretarial services to the Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee (IMCC) and supporting Technical Working Groups (TWGs)</p>
6. Council	

	<p>Since the policy is aimed at accelerating decentralization and improving local service delivery, Councils will be the primary agents in its implementation. Through the identified policy measures, capacities will be built as well as steps taken to enable them operate more efficient. They will also be required to take initiatives to promote local economic development (LED), develop and implement responsive social agenda and establish and maintain effective communication and collaborative relationships with local non-state-actors;</p> <p>Translating decentralized authority into service to the people they represent;</p> <p>Playing the role of political and technocratic leadership in constituency representation and policy making and in delivery of services respectively;</p> <p>Negotiating for functions decentralization or retention by the state, for resource transfer or mobilization authority as the case maybe;</p> <p>Developing the capacity of Councilors and Council staff to enhance their absorptive capacity;</p> <p>Managing an utilizing the interfaces between Councils and central government, and the people as electors and recipients of services, other agencies, other councils, and key role players and stakeholders in the local government areas.</p>
7. Sector Ministries	<p>Understanding decentralization and what it means for their functions;</p> <p>Participation in the determination of which functions should be decetralised, how and in what sequence, formulation of the sector devolution plans;</p>

	<p>Capacity building for the councils in respect of carrying out the specific sectoral functions;</p> <p>Designing the necessary inspectorate and monitoring mechanisms to ensure uniformity of delivery standards across the country</p> <p>Making national sectoral policies and assisting with its implementation at the council levels</p>
<p>8. Sector Devolution Task Forces</p>	<p>Formulation of sector devolution plans and associated guidelines</p> <p>Conduct any assessments as necessary to inform the development of the plans</p> <p>Coordinate the negotiation process with the councils on the devolution of recommended competencies</p> <p>Coordinate relevant training activities for the Councils to enhance their absorptive capacity for the effective management of the anticipated devolved competence</p>
<p>9. Non-State Actors</p>	<p>Non-state actors will play critical roles in all aspects of policy implementation and review. The Gambia Association of Local Authorities (GALGA) is expected to play a leadership role in getting its members to buy into the policy and take action on the policy measures. GALGA will be pivotal in all the implementing stages, starting with the programming process of EU Cooperation for the 2021-2027 cycle.</p> <p>Other local governance-related bodies including development NGOs and membership organizations like organized labour, market associations, occupational and commodity groupings</p>

	<p>and faith-based organisations will periodically conduct alternative reviews and assessments of policy implementation to guide policy review;</p> <p>There are key policy measures relating to the involvement of traditional authorities in local governance. Therefore, the National Council of Chiefs under the leadership of the Paramount Chief will partner with the MLRG and the Councils in their implementation.</p>
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INSTITUTION	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
10. Private Sector	<p>As local governance is a multi-stakeholder undertaking, the involvement of the private sector is key in mobilizing resources and delivering services as well as collaborating with local authorities in infrastructural development will be called upon;</p> <p>In relation to fiscal decentralization, the perspective of the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) and other private sector operators, small business associations, occupational groups and local trade associations will be required.</p>
11. Development Partners	<p>In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (2009), and the EU Cooperation for the 2021-2027 cycle, development partners will assist in strengthening capacities to deliver on the identified policy objectives. They will be expected to work within the policy guidelines and harmonize their interventions and work transparently for effectiveness. Development partners will also be obliged to work towards collaborating amongst themselves and with MLRG on systems of budgeting, monitoring, reporting and information sharing; and</p>

	<p>Partners will be expected to commit to various aspects of the decentralization policy in line with their country strategy positions, in continuation of their already-initiated assistance programs and as shall be mutually agreed upon between them and the Gambia Government.</p>
<p>12. Technical Working Groups (TWGs)</p>	<p>Facilitate the preparation of Annual Action Plans for specific components;</p> <p>Develop and agree on the strategies for undertaking the tasks under each component;</p> <p>Provide a platform for sharing information resources in the implementation of the component area; and</p> <p>Generate information from monitoring the implementation of the agreed Annual Action Plans.</p>




## 4 Roadmap 2:

### GAMBIA ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES (GALGA) ROADMAP FOR THE 2021-2027 CYCLE OF THE EU COOPERATION– PRELIMINARY ( COMPLIMENTARY TO THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

NO	NEED IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROPOSED INTERVENTION MODE	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCE
1	<b>Preliminary engagement</b> What is the new EU programming?	Webinar: Dissemination of information on the new NDICI and programming process	UCLG Africa GALGA	UCLG Africa
2	Engage Local Authorities	National seminar to formulate strategies and prepare position paper	GALGA	UCLG Africa GALGA
3	Engaging Central Government	Communicate to national government department responsible for coordinating EU cooperation to define modalities for engagement with LAs	GALGA	GALGA Local Authorities
4	Engaging EU Delegation	Communicate to EU Delegation to define modalities for engagement with LAs	Responsible Ministry & GALGA	GALGA Local Authorities
	<b>Devolution and Decentralisation Dialogues</b>			
5		Operationalization of the devolution and decentralization policy	Office of the President Ministry of Lands and Regional Government (MLRG) GALGA	National Government Local Authorities EU Delegation

	<b>Strengthening GALGA for effective support of local governance</b>	<b>Institutional and organizational set up &amp; strengthening</b>		
6		GALGA Strategic Plan	GALGA & Local Authorities	
7		Build GALGA Headquarters (Land already allocated)	GALGA & Local Authorities	EU Delegation National Government (Gamworks)
8		Organizational Structure and Human Resources establishment and Development study	GALGA & Local Authorities	EU Delegation National Government
9		Office Operationalization – Staffing Office operationalization - Equipment	GALGA & Local Authorities	EU Delegation National Government
	<b>Enhance LAs meaningful involvement in development and cooperation policy</b>			
10	State Architecture for Decentralization implementation	The State infrastructure to support devolution	Office of the President and Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCC) & GALGA	EU Delegation National Government
11	Policy Implementation Strategies and Actions	Program of Action for implementing Constitutional Provisions on Decentralization	Office of the President and IMCC & GALGA	National Government EU Delegation

		Reversing Re-centralisation	National Government GALGA	National Government
		Partnership with independent Commissions that support democracy	GALGA	EU Delegation
		Intergovernmental Relations definition Implementation of Devolution Matrix Local Authorities and National Government;		
		Local Authorities and Regional Governors	National Government GALGA	National Government

NO	NEED IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROPOSED INTERVENTION MODE	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCE
	<b>Building Resilience, Inclusion and Sustainability</b>			
12		Citizen Participation Enhancement	GALGA	EU Delegation Local Authorities
		Operationalising National Policy and Laws at the local level	National Government GALGA	EU Delegation National Government
		Women Enhanced Participation	GALGA Local Authorities UCLG Africa REFELA	Local Authorities EU Delegation
		Youth Participation	GALGA Local Authorities	Local Authorities EU Delegation
		Disabled Participation	GALGA Local Authorities UCLG Africa	EU Delegation Local Authorities National Government

		Response to Climate Change	GALGA Local Authorities UCLG Africa	EU Delegation Local Authorities National Government
13	<b>Local Government Finance</b>	a. Strengthening Spatial Planning: Local and Master Plans	GALGA National Government	National Government EU Delegation
		a. Sharing of Finances scheme	National Government GALGA (Expert Support Study)	National Government EU Delegation
	<b>Organizing a meaningful and competent voice of Local Authorities</b>			
14		GALGA Research Capacity Strengthening	GALGA Local Authorities	EU Delegation Local Authorities
15		GALGA National Conference	GALGA	EU Delegation Local Authorities
16		GALGA Engagement Platform - Sector Ministries - Civil Society	GALGA Local Authorities	EU Delegation Local Authorities

		- Private Sector		
17		GALGA Technical Engagement Forums <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engaging central government-technical level</li> <li>- Engaging other stakeholders at technical level</li> </ul>	GALGA	EU Delegation Local Authorities
18		Strengthening GALGA International Linkages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Membership Affiliation to international organs</li> <li>- Participation at international events</li> </ul>	GALGA UCLG Africa	EU Delegation Local Authorities

## 5 Roadmap 3:

NO	NEED IDENTIFIED STRATEGIC PRIORITY	PROPOSED INTERVENTION MODE	RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTION	PROPOSED FUNDING SOURCE
	<b>Capacity Building</b>			
19	<b>Formal Institutions to support capacity building for local governments: National Framework and Strategy</b>			
		a. Introduce an Institute for Local Government Training in support of devolution and decentralization	National Government GALGA	National Government GALGA
		b. Projects and Program Management	Training Institutions UCLG Africa – Africa Local Government Academy (ALGA)	EU Delegation National Government
		c. Training on TALD	National Government GALGA UCLG Africa – Africa Local Government Academy (ALGA)	National Government EU Delegation
20	Leadership capacity	a. Political Leadership capacity development programmes	GALGA UCLG Africa – Africa Local Government Academy (ALGA)	EU Delegation Local Authorities
		b. GALGA Annual Conference	GALGA	Local Authorities GALGA

		c. International Peer Exchange	UCLG Africa	EU Delegation
		d. Advocacy and negotiating skills training	GALGA UCLG Africa – Africa Local Government Academy (ALGA)	Eu Delegation
21	Management capacity	Information & communication	GALGA	EU Delegation
22	Technical Capacity	a. Strengthening of existing technical forums (CEOs, Treasurers, Engineers, etc)	GALGA UCLG Africa Programmes	Local Authorities
		b. Strengthening Local Economic Development (LED) knowledge & skills capacity	GALGA UCLG Programmes	Local Authorities EU Delegation
	<b>Framework Partnership with EU</b>			
23		Develop a Framework Partnership Proposal for support over the period 2021-2027	GALGA	EU Delegation
