

Executive Summary

of the “Feasibility Studies for Pipeline Projects, Providing for Alternatives for Upgrading/Improving Services in Cairo Governorate”



Ain-Shams (Cairo Governorate)

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Submitted by:



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1. Background/ Mission Objective:

The PDP, Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas, aims to upgrade informal areas in the Greater Cairo Region with the target of improving the living conditions of its inhabitants. Within this scope, four informal areas have been chosen, two from Cairo Governorate, namely Ain-Shams and Ezbet El-Nasr and two from Giza Governorate, namely El-Warraq and Masaken Geziret El Dahab.

The objective of this consultancy work is to produce a pipeline of projects for each of the four informal areas, in order to assist PDP in the selection of projects for the award of funding.

Feasibilities of projects in the pipeline have been assessed based on the pre-defined and agreed criteria with PDP. Projects in the pipeline have been designed to address the needs identified by the approved Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) Report for the four informal areas. The PNA identified needs within the following thematic areas:

- Health
- Education
- Waste management
- Improved environmental conditions including open spaces (with potential reference to climate change adaptation)
- Transportation
- Provision of recreation centres including youth centres

However, major infrastructure projects (projects whose estimated cost is in excess of 300,000 Euros) are excluded from the identification and selection process as the programme can only finance small-scale projects.

2. Methodology:

The consultant understands that one of the most challenging tasks of urban planners and developers is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complex characteristics of informal growth and livelihoods in informal areas in order to develop integrated and sustainable solutions. Towards portraying an “*Area Profile*”, the Feasibility Study Technical Team (FSTT) began its activities with data collection and analysis to develop detailed knowledge of each informal area. FSTT were familiarized with each target area through desktop study using the Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA) reports and Atlas Maps provided by the PDP and other sources. Moreover, site visits were conducted to each target area, including meetings with the Local Authorities, Urban Upgrading Unit (UUU)¹ staff and Local Area Dialogue Committee (LADC)² to discuss priority needs and issues based on PNA’s results.

Above-mentioned activities should permit a holistic understanding of each informal area and the priority needs of its inhabitants and local authorities with regard to proposed potential solutions that have been recommended in the PNA. Reviewing the PNA report revealed that PNA focuses

1 Through its work in Egypt, the GIZ managed to establish Urban Upgrading Units (UUUs) within Cairo and Giza governorates. The UUUs are now governmental units within the official administrative system responsible for addressing urban upgrading issues in their respective governorates.

2 LADC is one of PDP’s tools, which helps in understanding the communities, create civil entities that are able to lead communities and mobilize communities’ self-management and monitoring. Four Local Area Dialogue Committees (LADCs) have been created following community elections in Ain-Shams and Ezbet el-Nasr in Cairo, Markaz El-Abhath/ Warraq and Masaken Geziret El-Dahab in Giza. The LADC comprises of 20 members, representing Non-Governmental Organizations, community services such as (schools, youth centres and hospitals), private sector, elected local councils, community leaders (Men, women, youth) beside those who are interested in developing the community. They represent the community when it comes to interactions with development programmes.

mainly on issues and needs but indicates only a very limited number of proper potential solutions in the form of project ideas that meet PDP criteria.

Community Recommendations in PNA:

The residents from Ain-Shams suggested the following solutions for the challenges they face in their daily lives:

- Establish a neighborhood security or police station nearby
- Provide technical and vocational training opportunities for youth
- Improve the garbage collection system
- Conduct awareness raising campaigns on the importance of continuous education;
- Increase the number of classrooms to reduce density in existing schools and construct public schools at all educational levels
- Provide access to affordable health services through a local hospital/clinic
- Improve uneven/open street sewers
- Organise transportation flow and control informal transportation (microbuses and tok toks) for better traffic

Taking these community recommendations into consideration FSTT identified more appropriate potential solutions (project ideas) by applying the so called “problem tree analysis” in order to investigate possible interventions as well as relevant potential solutions within each thematic area. This analysis has led to an extended list of project ideas.

Against the background of PDP’s participatory approach this extended list of project ideas was discussed with and re-prioritized by different groups of local stakeholders (e.g. Local Authorities, Local UUU, LADCs, Women, and Youth). Subsequently, FSTT invited governmental authorities (on regional and national level) to evaluate co-financing possibilities and to assess whether the proposed projects are feasible and eligible³.

Project ideas were then subject to an internal assessment and an economic feasibility study based on several tailored criteria. For each feasible project idea listed in the pipeline of projects, a summary sheet has been produced to indicate important information such as project assets and activities, risks, potential partners, costs and timeline.

In addition and for the benefit of each target area, produced projects in the pipeline with their available details have been included in the informal area’s GIS Data-Base.

The feasibility study ends with a comprehensive risk mitigation plan and general recommendations to facilitate PDP’s design of a tailor-made grant scheme and selection process.

3. Area Profile of Ain-Shams and Analysis of Six Thematic Areas:

Profiling an informal area involves data collection and data analysis of internal and external issues. Level of details in each area profile depends mainly on availability and quality of information in the documents provided to the consultant by PDP/GIZ such as Participatory Needs Assessment (PNA), GIS, Atlas Maps, physical surveys etc. The main objective of the profile of the informal area is to identify assets and issues as well as uncover trends of those thematic areas identified in the PNA and describe their properties individually and collectively.

³ Whenever appropriate, new project ideas, which have been proposed by different groups of stakeholders during the prioritization process as well as those proposed by the higher level of governmental authorities, have been added to the extended project list to ensure a high level of comprehensiveness.

- **Background**

The exponential growth of Cairo influenced the district expansion as so many other districts in Cairo to the extent in which a visitor can barely notice these military properties in the arms of existing fabric of urbanism. During the recent years, the increase in population density in the areas, the ever-growing influx of newcomers of different origins to the area, and the unlicensed construction of residential buildings after the revolution of 25th January 2011 have all increased the pressure on local infrastructure.

Ain-Shams District is under the Cairo Governorate Deputy for the Eastern Zone and has its own functioning office with civil servants in different departments. The administrative borders of Ain-Shams are: 'Gesr Al-Suez' Street and '6-October' Street to the East, 'Ibn Al-Hakam' Street to the South, Metro Subway to the West and '6-October' Street and the Train Railway to the North. Particular population data for the study area are not available, while Ain-Shams district houses more than 1 million inhabitants upon local stakeholders' estimation. 'Kafr Farouk' inside Ain-Shams is noticeably deteriorated in terms of urban fabric. This can be contributed to its old age as it was constructed 70 years ago.

- **Private Sector:**

There isn't a specific private economic activity that makes the area a hub for a certain commodity. However, the area is accessible to most of the basic life goods in addition to street cafes that are mainly occupied by men. The area is well-known also to have shopping streets for garment products. Food and vegetables market is open in the morning and women from nearby neighborhoods come to buy for these markets. Most of wider streets are occupied by illegal street vendors blocking great parts of streets especially pedestrians.

A chocolate private factory "*Covertina*" helps in the local economy of the area. It offers mostly female workforce and sometimes short term job opportunities for teenagers. Also females work in the vegetable and gourmet market. Some sewing workshops were noticed in the area that usually female residents are running.

Small scale "service and trade" business such as supermarkets, small shops of different commodities, print stores, kiosks, cafe-shops and restaurants seem to be profitable and attractive, as they exist almost in each street in the area. These private activities occupy usually ground floors of residential buildings. Regardless of their impact on life quality of the residential quarters, these activities have a considerable share of internal job pool in the area.

Local professional bureaus such as private clinics, dentists, pharmacies, engineering offices and lawyers are spread in the area too and usually occupy flats in upper stories of residential buildings. Improving those professional activities, in terms of training, capacity building and technical and financial support, should deliver high potential towards improving relevant social services in the area.

Investing in means of transportation such as taxis, minibuses or even tok-toks, regardless of their quality, safety or legality, is another attractive field for private business and investment in the area. Thus, some residents, usually men, open workshops for car mending. However, this is

considered kind of illegal as the Government has moved those workshops to 'Al Herafyeen' area couple of years ago.

A parallel community of informal "private" garbage collectors exists and they use the door-to-door garbage collection. They separate recyclables from waste to sell them, leaving the organics and rejects in the streets. Improving this community in terms of training, building capacity and technical and financial support might be a potential opportunity to support improving SWM system in the area.

- **NGOs & Civil Society:**

Local NGOs are registered and licensed by local authorities of Ministry of Social Affairs. "For all 4 areas": Local NGOs depend on financial aid and donations acting as charities, while their previous experiences in urban 'physical' upgrading are very limited.

- Some NGOs provide medical services at nominal prices using old equipment and methods, which do not serve acute/serious health issues.
- Some NGOs provide afternoon private lessons to children at low cost facing the problem of expensive private lessons that is prevailing.

As for civil society, it is worth mentioning that most of Mosques and churches in Ain Shams play a social role in the community by offering:

- social and medical fund for poor patients
- low cost private lessons for school students
- medicines for poor inhabitants
- children care oriented activities
- orphan shelters

- **Health**

Residents are not aware of dominant epidemic diseases in Ain-Shams except for some seasonal diseases, which spread among school students (i.e. Mumps) due to the high density of pupils in classrooms. Ain-Shams area has one public medical centre and few private health units (Private medical clinics and Laboratories). The district lacks an ambulance car. The available health services in Ain-Shams and the level of performance of each centre are listed as follows:

Ain-Shams Hospital: A newly constructed hospital that is not fully operating yet. However, some of the external clinics have started working and for three months period the examination is for free as there are Jordanian doctors volunteering for this period.

The *Family Health Centre* has a good basic medical service for nominal fees; however, the centre lacks a sufficient number of doctors and has no maternity ward.

Al Zahraa Health Centre has a good basic medical service for nominal fees (1.25 EGP before 12:00 midday and 3 EGP after 12:00 midday). The turnout rate at this centre is high due to availability and efficiency of maternity ward services. Not all the specialties exist but the most important and common specialties are there.

There are three more small health centres, which provide maternity services, pre-marital consultations, and vaccinations; however, these are poorly equipped and significantly remote from the area. Charity NGOs and mosques provide medical services at nominal prices using old equipment and methods, which do not serve acute/serious health issues.

- **Education**

The target area of Ain-Shams has several educational facilities that serve the local community. School type varies from public, experimental to private as well as vocational schools. Ain-Shams comprises two commercial (business) schools and one industrial school, serving both boys and girls. Attendance and absence regulations in such schools are quite loose compared to the General Secondary Education schools. Moreover, students work in parallel to studying.

People do prefer vocational education as it is more suitable to their economic standards, in which they cannot afford the expenses of university. Moreover, vocational learning can prepare them faster for job market.

Accessibility to '*Al-Zahraa*' Secondary School for girls is insecure because the school is overlooking the cemetery land, where activities of thugs and probabilities of harassment are high.

Education level is below average in public elementary schools in Ain-Shams. Children drop out of schools to work. It is very rare that a student could combine education and work. Thus, students eventually drop out. In general, all schools in Ain Sham suffer from deteriorated level of teaching, closed classes and absence of school attendance. The problem of private lessons is prevailing.

- **Transportation: Accessibility, Mobility, and Physical Conditions**

Ain-Shams is well accessible through a Grid-Street Network. This could refer to the fact that historically Ain-Shams was planned and orderly constructed. Main streets are paved in asphalt; however most of them are deteriorated. On the other hand, side streets as well as '*Kafr Faruk*' streets are narrow and unpaved. During FSTT visits to the area, sidewalks of most streets in Ain-Shams were facing upgrading process operated by the district, in which currently used pavement tiles were being replaced by layers of concrete.

Underground subway is only serving particular destinations, while the minibuses are connected to most parts of Cairo. Nearby minibus stops are '*Alf-Maskan*' and '*Garage*'. Residents prefer to use underground subway to access downtown.

There is a public bus station nearby serving the residents of Ain-Shams. However, residents prefer using minibuses as they deem to be faster and serve many places. Residents complain from the high speed of minibuses as the minibus drivers rent the minibus by hour so they want to maximize their profit.

Sidewalks are occupied with stores' expansions, street vendors and cafes. This makes it inconvenient for women and their kids to walk. The district received many requests by youth to officially have the street lanes attached to the sidewalk to be used as paid parking spaces run by the youth themselves.

There is a clear lack of official parking spaces. However, vacant lots, owned by the state, are informally occupied by families that run it as parking lots with some makeshifts attached to the fence used as small workshops.

- **Solid Waste Management (SWM)**

Solid waste management (SWM) is considered one of the most critical issues in Ain-Shams district. There is a predominant garbage problem in Ain-Shams. Many areas suffer from the absence of regular garbage collection system run by the government and a shortage in the number of garbage dumpsters. The contracted garbage collection company is inefficient and garbage is spreading in streets. On the other hand, there are no regulations or penalties that can be applied against the contracted company in case of dereliction. As mentioned by Ain-Shams UUU staff that this problem becomes more complicated in light of the long term contract that continues to 2025, while the contracted company takes no action to improve its performance. In addition, lack of proper allocation of dumpsters also helps the poor waste management in Ain-Shams.

A parallel community of informal garbage collectors exists and they use the door-to-door garbage collection. They separate recyclables from waste to sell them, leaving the organics and rejects in the streets. Residents double pay for garbage collection. They are obliged to pay the informal garbage collector and the public garbage company (added to the electricity bill). Residents pay a monthly fee of 10 EGP for the informal garbage collectors (as they provide door-to-door garbage collection service). People who can't afford paying the informal collectors throw their trash in the street at night as they couldn't find nearby dumpsters. The capacity of the existing transfer station for waste handling and storage is very limited. The transfer station is located in-front of the school complex and next to an auditorium.

- **Environment & Climate Change Adaptation**

Unfortunately, no environmental initiatives were spotted in the area during the site visits of the FSTT. No green balconies or roofs were observed besides absence of vegetation activities. On the other hand, there exists an official plantation outlet '*Mashta*' and trees are planted in some streets. Pollution in the area is mainly described in terms of air, sewage and horse stable pollution. The air pollution problem in the area is mainly due to car exhaust and burning waste especially in the cemetery. Residents complain from the horse stable as a source of pollution.

The residents experience occasional sewage overflow, because of the informal/unlicensed buildings that have been spreading in the area recently and overload of the sewage network. When the residents experience sewage overflow, the district workers generally do not respond promptly. Some residents take the initiative and change some parts of the original infrastructure sewage connections to avoid regular sewage overflow. The new parts often do not meet of the technical standards of the sewage connections, which eventually lead to explosions of the main sewage pipes and worsening of the situation.

People in general relate to the issue of climate change by observation. The increase in the number of vehicles, the traffic congestion, the lack of green spaces in the area, and the high density of buildings eventually lead to an increase in temperature and blocking any fresh air. Residents stated that they experience high levels of humidity and heat inside their houses (especially during summer season). Residents also mentioned that the rise in temperature affects their economic condition since they sometimes cannot go out during hot summer days; so they stay home and consume more electricity (i.e. ACs), and end up paying higher electricity bills.

- **Recreation and Youth Centres**

In general, the area has a dynamic body of youth from the local community, while youth centres in the area are facing lack of equipment, facilities and activities.

Youth Centres: There are three youth centres in Ain-Shams area, namely; *Ahmed Essmat*, *Mansheyet El Tahrir* and *Al-Zahraa*. *Mansheit Al Tahrir* (having a football team participating in the 2nd level of National League), *Al-Tahrir* youth centre is in a good physical condition but the space capacity is very limited. *Ahmed Essmat* centre is in poor condition and not frequently used by residents. *Al-Zahraa* centre is built on an informal land and illegal occupation. Thus, it is still unofficial.

Libraries: There are some libraries in AinShams at the different schools, youth centres and the AinShams Public Library (run by the District); however, they are all regarded as ineffective due to lack of awareness of their presence by the community, lack of financial and physical contribution from the community, and bureaucracy lack of sufficient activities in terms of: theatres, cultural local events, open spaces and parks.

Open spaces: There are no parks and no existing vacant lots that can be used as parks (The state owns some empty lands that are informally occupied as parking areas). Military Land is not accessed. Vacant land at the new hospital (8 Feddans) is unused by public. There are some informal swings for children occupying the streets in front of schools for children entertainment.

4. Stakeholders Identification/ Capacity of applicants:

Identifying active stakeholders in the community is essential in project implementation and its success. In vulnerable communities like Ain-Shams, the largest stakeholder is the community itself, since it's undergoing the change.

Main stakeholders can be divided into local community, local civil society and the Local Authorities (LA). Throughout the Feasibility Study the local community is represented by different groups of stakeholders including representatives of Youth, Women and Local Area Dialogue Committee (LADC). As for civil society, local NGOs depend on financial aid & donations acting as charities, while their previous experiences in urban 'physical' upgrading are very limited. Local Authorities (LA) have been represented by the district's chief and relevant staff of particular directorates in reference with the six thematic areas in addition to the staff of Urban Upgrading Unit (UUU).

Upon EU/PDP rules, local authorities (LA) might be one an eligible grant applicants for projects implementation provided they fulfil all the requirements as set out in the Guidelines for Grant Applicants. LAs possess different strengths and powerful tools that might enable them to be strong competitors for other grant applicants. They have for examples the power of authority, wide knowledge of local community needs and priority issues, their own human resources, wide network with local contractors and community natural leaders, some implementation facilities and equipment, administration as well as legal and accounting departments, accessibility to needed permissions etc. On the other side LAs have obvious weaknesses that might reduce their capacity and eligibility such as bureaucracy, financial constrains especially in offering the 20% local contribution in cash, centralized decision making system, human resources lack skills and are in need of institutional strengthening/capacity building including training, transparency issue, local community mistrust etc. LAs mentioned to have problems writing professional proposals especially because of poor English skills. Thus, they have kindly asked PDP for support.

5. Interviews with Governorate Authorities:

Discussions and interviews with Governmental Executives on different levels have been carried out. FSTT has held discussions with:

- a) representatives of Cairo Governorate;
- b) representatives of relevant authorities to the six thematic areas on Governorate's level;
- c) Urban Upgrading Units (UUU) staffs on both Governorate and region levels.

Main objective of these meetings was to identify running and planned projects relevant to identified issues, needs and options by local communities during the PNA processes (by Informal Area and Thematic Areas) as well as to learn about requirements, permits needed, availability of funding, and other conditions.

Outcomes and findings of these meetings were fruitful and informative in terms of the following confirmations:

- None of proposed projects in the pipeline contradicts with their running or planned projects in Ain-Shams informal area;
- List of prioritized project ideas by local authorities on district level has been re-confirmed by the higher Governorate's level;
- Facilitating requirements and securing needed permission to implement any of proposed projects have been committed;
- Confirming that the new hospital in Ain-Shams is not fully operating due to lack of equipment.
- Confirming that a new built youth center in Ain-Shams is almost ready and will be opened soon.
- Confirming the absence of legal framework for local authorities on governorate and district levels to reallocate any of their approved budgets to finance the 20% local contribution in cash. However, they can contribute in kind or services such as land and human resources instead.

6. Project Pipelines:

All proposed project ideas were subject to an assessment and an economic feasibility study based on the pre-defined and agreed criteria. The key objective of the evaluation process is to enable assessing feasibility of each proposed project.

A scoring system has been applied, in which the total score's percentage indicates the project's feasibility level. A percentage above 66% implies that the project is ready to be implemented "**Ready Project**", a score between 33% to 65% indicated that some actions are required in order to implement the project "**Conditional Project**", while score below 33% indicates that significant actions are required before implementing such a project that should be kept as "**Project Idea**" for the time being.

The number of proposed projects that target improving services in one thematic area is different than the numbers of proposed projects in other thematic areas. This depends mainly on the number and nature of identified needs in PNA (by thematic area) as well as identified possible interventions resulted from the problem tree analysis of each thematic area. None of the projects in the pipeline is related to mega infrastructure projects upon GIZ criteria. However, in the projects' pipeline "capital investment projects" (CI) dominate over "capacity building projects" (CB) in all thematic areas because of stakeholders' preferences and priorities.

A selection of "ready projects" are shown in the figure below:

Ain Shams - Projects' Pipeline for All Feasible Options

Thematic Area	P. Type	Project Title
Health	CI	Provision and updating the Health Centers
		Medical Analysis & Laboratories
		Mobile Ambulance Unit
	CB	Health Awareness for Local Community
Transportation	CI	Internal Transportation system (State or non-State)
		Geometric and Urban Design Solutions for traffic congestion
	CB	Revival of Good Driving Habits among toktok drivers
SWM	CI	Door-to-Door Garbage Collection
		Monitor and track the performance of the existing waste collection service
		Bartering Trash
	CB	Regular Awareness Campaigns on SWM
		Children Capacity Development on feasibility of source segregation and recycling
		Capacity Development for Calibers Working in the SW Sector
Environment	CI	Green Balconies
		Energy Conservation Awareness Campaigns
		Rooftop Planting
		Solar Energy Application
		Utilization of Bio-Waste
	CB	Climate Change Awareness & Environmental Education
		Capacity Development for Calibers Working in the Environmental Sector
Youth and Recreation	CI	Preparing and Equipping Periodic competitions and exhibitions
		Physical Upgrading & Equipping of Local Youth Center
	CB	Capacity development and Sponsorship Programs for youth Talents
		Awareness Programs for youth on role they can play to Develop their areas
		Capacity Development for YC Staff (Management and trainers)
Education	CI	School Beautification (Internal/ External surrounding context)
		Returning School Dropouts to Mainstream Education
		Upgrading School Toilets
		Provide Advanced Educational Media & Laboratories
		Curriculum Support Classes
		Provision of Developed Illiteracy Programs

7. Impacts / Risks and risk mitigation plan:

Expected “Impacts” of the proposed pipeline projects have been considered and weighted in the evaluation matrixes (by Project) having its reflection on each project’s feasibility rank. Moreover, it has been discussed by thematic area in the logical framework. In addition, the study has discussed impacts on other specific areas such as impacts on needs and on disadvantaged groups. Implementation of projects pipeline is highly expected to have its positive impact on real needs by covering a considerable need-share of local community in each of the targeted six thematic areas. On disadvantaged groups, expected “positive” impact is one of the most important goals of the projects’ pipeline. With reference to particular proposed projects in the pipeline, following impacts of projects pipeline’s implementation on disadvantaged groups of local community are expected:

- Mobilized women contributing effectively to economic, social and cultural development and integration in their local community;
- Increased number of served women and youth by better facilitated social services with reference to particular proposed projects in the pipeline such as woman & child club and upgraded youth centers;
- Encouraged young people’s initiatives, enterprises and creativity;
- Reduced “gender-specific” youth discriminations;
- Encouraged sporting and cultural activities in the local community;
- Enabled and/or financially supported poor families of the community to receive affordable and accessible better quality social services especially those related to GIZ targeted six thematic areas.

With regard to risks and risk mitigation plans, in addition to those risks identified for each project’s idea in its summary sheet, the Feasibility Study has identified general risks as well as risks by thematic area that might face the implementation of projects pipeline. For each identified risk, a risk mitigation plan has been recommended. Above mentioned sets of identified “*general risks*” and their mitigation plans are illustrated in the following table:

General Risks and their Mitigation Plans

Potential Risk	Mitigation Plan
Difficulties in offering local eligible grant applicants of local financial means (20% of total project cost) as an approval condition	Local contribution in cash should be committed particularly for this EU/PDP project from higher governmental level (such as ministry of planning as EU/PDP partner)
Low capacity of some eligible local grant applicants	a) Providing PDP “application guidelines/manuals” as well as organizing collective info sessions for potential applicants are highly recommended; b) It is highly recommended, too, to evaluate capacities of grant applicants by PDP based on their submitted applications (e.g. in terms of human resources, technicality, management, previous experiences etc.
Legal issues in terms of Public Private Partnership PPP in Egypt	Cooperation and coordination with Governorate’s legal department to identify potential legal solutions that might have been attempted elsewhere in Egypt
Bureaucracy and delay in receiving needed permissions	Following up the district’s chief commitments shared in his meeting, as he has assured facilitating and securing any needed permission for any of projects.

Sustainability of improved services (solutions)	Establishing effective independent monitoring and evaluation system based on set of transparent criteria and quality indicators (could be run e.g. by PDP and/or LADC in cooperation with UUU).
Financial sustainability	Identifying and/or developing additional financial resources (e.g. commitments from relevant Ministry/ies, Governorate, Social Development Fund "SDF", National Banks, NGOs, Donations etc.)
Funds misallocations	a) All projects in the pipeline have targeted area's priority needs and have been assured of being out of local authorities running projects and/or their future plans; b) It is highly recommended to apply control & monitoring system to ring-fence or guarantee that (funds for particular purpose) will not be spent on anything else. PDP, UUU and/or LADC might be eligible candidates for this role.

8. Recommendations:

Development umbrella for all social services: It has been identified that responsibility of developing social services on district level is scattered among different service departments and directorates, along with lack of communication between them. By reviewing and modifying functions and responsibilities of the newly added urban upgrading unit (UUU) to the district's departments, the UUU might play such a coordination role.

Capacity of Grant Applicants: Upon EU/PDP rules, there are different groups of eligible grant applicants i.e. Local Authorities, NGOs and Educational & Research Institutions. We highly recommend identifying applicants' capacities, their ability to design implement and projects (e.g. in terms of human resources, technicality, management, previous experiences etc.) by PDP based on evaluation results of their applications received after calling for proposals.

Grant Applications: While grant applications should be submitted to PDP in English, some eligible grant applicants (e.g. LA & local NGOs) face difficulties in writing their grant applications in English. Moreover, competency in writing proposals in a professional way is a considerable issue facing local applicants. Thus, PDP is recommended to offer proper support in this regard. Moreover, PDP providing "application guidelines/manuals" as well as organizing collective info sessions for potential applicants are highly recommended.

Fund allocation and ring-fence: All projects in the pipeline have targeted area's priority needs and have been assured of being out of local authorities running projects and/or their future plans. It is highly recommended to apply control & monitoring system to ring-fence or guarantee that funds for particular purpose will not be spent on anything else. PDP, UUU and/or LADC might be eligible candidates for this role.