

Draft Report

Final evaluation of the Capacity Development Support for Public Institutions project

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Disclaimer

The evaluation report is prepared by Krenar Loshi, an independent consultant, with the review and oversight of the UNDP in Kosovo. The content, analysis and recommendation of this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the UNDP or the United Nations member states.

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List of abbreviations

CDF	Capacity Development Facility
ERA	Economic Reform Agenda
ERP	Economic Reform Programme
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoK	Government of Kosovo
IPA	Instrument of Pre- Accession Assistance
KCFR	Kosovo Council for Financial Reporting
KBRA	Kosovo Business Registration Agency
KIPA	Kosovo Institute for Public Administration
MAFRD	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
MEI	Ministry of European Integration
MF	Ministry of Finance
MLGA	Ministry of Local Government Administration
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Ministry of Public Administration
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
NPISAA	National Programme for the Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement
OPM	Office of Prime Minister
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PFM	Public Finance Management
PMU	Project Management Unit
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1 [Introduction](#)

1.1 [Background information](#)

UNDP in Kosovo¹ has been actively involved in working towards the development of individual and institutional government capacities through its flagship programme - the Capacity Development Facility (CDF), since its establishment in 2004. CDF is characterised by its on-demand and on-the-job coaching and mentoring to mid- and senior level management civil servants through experienced and skilled coaches and advisors from within Kosovo, as well as from the wider region and from the Kosovar Diaspora. Key strengths of the CDF have been its demand-driven nature, its results-oriented focus and its practical, on-the-job knowledge and skill transfer approach.

During 2013-2017 period, CDF served as one of the key mechanisms in assisting the Kosovo government through negotiation and implementation phases of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between Kosovo and the European Union, which was signed on 27 October 2015 in Strasbourg. The SAA is the first contractual agreement between Kosovo and the European Union and it represents a new phase of political relations between the two parties.

The SAA implementation phase, which entered into force on 1 April 2016, will test the government's capabilities in the coming years far more significantly than during the negotiation phase, which requires to have more robust and international-standards public administration processes and capabilities in place. During this period, CDF's overall focus has been on improving Kosovo institution's capacities in policy planning, implementation, and administration, for effective and gender-responsive governance in the context of EU integration and Public Administration Reform, which is also the main objective of this project.

In this regard, although Kosovo in recent years has noted progress in public administration reform both administratively and in terms of the legal framework, the civil service is facing challenges in attracting and retaining highly qualified individuals, mainly due to low wages and an inability to stimulate the high performances. In this regard, the project contributed to the implementation of the specific objectives of the SAA in several dimensions. UNDP advisors and consultants have supported MEI as the main responsible institution for the implementation of the SAA, MF, MPA, MLGA, MTI and other responsible bodies through the provision of high-level expertise and technical assistance on the accurate implementation of SAA related activities, report and analysis drafting, monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation, resource mobilization, as well as guidance on strategic processes and partnerships.

1.2 [Methodology of the evaluation](#)

The evaluation process consisted of the following steps:

Clarification of the mandate: Discussions with the responsible staff of UNDP in order to clarify the understanding of the mandate, the approach, the expectations and possibly already the report structure.

Desk review of relevant documents: The core documents provided by UNDP were studied and additional necessary documents were identified and reviewed in order to better understand the context, the legal framework, the role of different stakeholders, the support rendered through UNDP in general and by other donors, as well as the lessons learnt and good practices.

Elaboration of interviews and questions to be used during the mission: Based on the clarified mandate and reviewed documents, a list of interviews and questionnaires was developed to be

¹ Under UNSCR 1244

applied during the evaluation in order to find answers to the given questions and develop strategic elements for decision making for potential similar future undertakings.

Inception report: An inception report was elaborated based on the review of the documents and meetings on clarification of the mandate by UNDP. The report specified the methodological approach, deliverables and timelines. The report was shared with UNDP and validated on 28 April 2017.

Field visits/interviews: Based on the list of suggested stakeholder meetings, a series of meetings with different stakeholders were arranged and conducted, in close cooperation with the UNDP, involving representatives from different institutions: UNDP project team, projectsq partners, advisors and beneficiaries. The interviews took place during 5 . 30 May 2017 period.

Preparation of the draft final report: This draft report was elaborated based on the review of documents, the interview findings, the debriefing meetings with UNDP team conducted during the interview process.

2 Context Analysis

2.1 Overall context

The completion of negotiation on a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union (EU) and Kosovo in July 2014 and subsequent entry into force on 1 April 2016 marked a milestone in Kosovo's European integration path, representing the first comprehensive agreement between the EU and Kosovo, anchoring Kosovo into the mainstream of EU relations with Western Balkan countries and confirming Kosovo's European perspective in the context of the 1993 Copenhagen criteria.

In order to successfully implement the SAA and to develop the necessary reforms, Kosovo government approved in March 2016 the National Program for Implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (NPISAA), which is the main national policy document for the European Integration process and for the preparation of the EU membership. The NPISAA shall remain also in the future the main national strategic document for planning, implementing and monitoring of implementation of all the reforms needed for implementation of the SAA and the further phases of EU accession. It is a short to medium term framework that shall be annually updated and that shall include measures for:

- fulfillment of SAA commitments;
- accomplish measures deriving from political mechanism, including the Stabilisation and Association Process Dialogue (SAPD);
- follow the findings and recommendations from the European Commission Progress Reports;
- accomplish the actions under other EU related documents such as the European Reform Agenda (ERA) and the Economic Reform Program (ERP).

During this period, Kosovo has achieved some progress on the priorities set out in the feasibility study for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement, in particular in the areas of the electoral process and on requirements of the visa liberalisation dialogue. The role of the Assembly and the government's capacity to coordinate complex negotiations, such as on the SAA and on trade issues, have also been strengthened. Some progress has also been made on Kosovo's commitment to the EU-facilitated dialogue, and the normalisation of relations with Belgrade has been key for the advancement of its European ambitions.

On the first anniversary of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, Kosovo and the EU launched another dialogue – the European Reform Agenda (ERA), which started on 11 November 2016. The document contains 22 priorities and 130 actions, in the areas of governance, rule of law, economic growth, competitiveness, and education and job creation. If implemented fully, these actions will support SAA implementation, improve governance and the business environment, and consolidate the state. In essence, ERA targets the areas in which the Kosovo government needs to make major improvements. Implementation requires commitment, inter-institutional coordination and political consensus. The main idea of ERA aims to help in the prioritisation of actions to be carried out in the short-term, ensuring the commitment of the Kosovo government through the necessary allocation of resources, as well as buy-in by other domestic and international stakeholders. The European Reform Agenda aims to fully seize the opportunities of the SAA as the main instrument for advancing Kosovo's EU integration process. SAA and ERA implementation will succeed only if it includes other important actors including business, civil society, media and the donor community.

2.2 Main challenges related to implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)

2.2.1 General situation

Kosovo's infrastructure for developing staff and human resource levels within the public administration, which is a key pre-condition to a successful implementation of the SAA, still remains weak and largely under-resourced. As noted by the EC progress report of 2016 (and previous reports), the implementation of the public administration reform package is hampered by considerable delays and there are also serious concerns about the financial sustainability of the reforms. Some progress was made with the adoption of a comprehensive public financial management strategy and of the law on general administrative procedures, but there is still lack of progress in other areas. The 2015 annual monitoring reports indicated either over-ambitious targets or lack of appropriate indicators, which explain delays in implementation.

As part of the reform package, in order to ensure a more accountable and depoliticised public administration, the government has committed itself to developing a new package of laws, including the law on organisation of state administration, the law on civil service and the law on salaries. The three laws have yet to be passed, and are expected to be adopted as a package in late 2017.

The state administration is organised in a fragmented way which does not ensure effective lines of accountability. The current law on state administration has allowed 46 government agencies to be set up, some of which have overlapping responsibilities. Furthermore, over 30 independent institutions report directly to the assembly, which lacks the powers and capacity to effectively supervise them. Many of these institutions and government agencies do not comply with the civil service law, therefore contributing to further fragmentation of the administration. Lines of accountability within many institutions are weak and there is no clear delegation of responsibilities to middle management.

The current law on the civil service establishes a single, unitary system of public service at central government and municipal levels. The law formally provides for merit-based recruitment, promotions and dismissals based on objective criteria but loopholes in the law allow contradictory practices, notably on the conversion of temporary staff into permanent civil servants without public competition. Progress has been made in extending the human resource management information system to all institutions, but the system is not up-to-date and does not perform all the mandatory tasks set out in the legislation. Political influence over appointments and dismissals continues to

be a serious concern, especially on the selection of senior management. Women and non-majority communities are still not adequately represented in public institutions.

Furthermore, the 2017 early elections and subsequent delayed formation of the government, as in 2014 elections, has brought an institutional vacuum, during which the public administration work is largely ineffective.

While facing these challenges, at the same time, Kosovo's government needs to tackle the huge socio-economic issues, in addition to tackling the high unemployment in general, and in particular the chronically high youth unemployment. Achieving real progress and results in both of these areas constitutes a formidable challenge for Kosovo's government, and continued support will be critical in helping the government to meet its SAA commitments and secure the European future that it aspires to.

3 Assessment of Progress

The assessment of progress as per evaluation ToR focuses on the Output 2 of the Capacity Development Support for Public Institutions project, namely the Capacities of public institutions to implement short and long-term structural and regulatory policies of Stabilization and Association Agreement strengthened which took place during 2013 - 2017 period.

Based on the findings, the project has been ranked according to the UNDP Scoring Scale², with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

3.1 Relevance

Based on the findings, relevance of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

3.1.1 Overall relevance of the project's output and activities

The overall objective of UNDP's capacity development support project is to improve Kosovo institutions' capacities in policy planning, implementation, and administration, for effective and gender-responsive governance in the context of EU Integration and Public Administration Reform. As such, the following output and activities were planned towards achievement of the project objective linked to the EU Integration:

Output 2: Capacities of public institutions to implement short and long-term structural and regulatory policies of Stabilization and Association Agreement strengthened:

² The UNDP Scoring Scale is as follows:

6 = Highly satisfactory (HS): no shortcomings

5 = Satisfactory (S): minor shortcomings

4 = Moderately satisfactory (MS): Moderate shortcomings

3 = Moderately unsatisfactory (MU): Significant shortcomings

2 = Unsatisfactory (U): Major problems

1 = Highly unsatisfactory (HU): Severe problems.

Activity 2.1: Targeted senior officials capacities to develop, implement, and monitor policies for EU integration strengthened;

Activity 2.2: Institutional capacities to address sectoral challenges in the context of EU integration developed;

Activity 2.3: Capacities of civil servants for core capacities and technical and functional issues of Kosovo institutions strengthened.

The project as such has been designed to function as a rapid deployment mechanism to provide expert support, based on a system of receiving and reviewing requests for support from the Government institutions, and deploying experts in the requested areas as quickly as possible. Upon receipt of requests for assistance, the CDF project team reviews all requests to ensure their alignment with the specific objectives of the project, whereas the government ensured that the project builds upon (rather than duplicates) existing capacity development initiatives and coordinate achievement of objectives, as specified in the initial request for support and based on a detailed capacity development work plan. The capacity development milestones are identified jointly with the expert deployed and the beneficiary at the outset of assistance, and at the end of each assignment the project assess the progress made against these milestones.

The project has adhered to UNDP's Capacity Development approach aiming to address capacity development needs by advancing core capacity issues (institutional arrangements, leadership, knowledge and accountability) as well as technical and functional issues (stakeholder engagement, capacity to develop a vision and mandate, formulate strategies and policies, budget management and implementation of policies and evaluation) in a gender balanced manner.

Furthermore, the CDF provides a highly relevant and valuable offer of assistance to Kosovo government in achieving its key objectives, implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) and the Public Administration Reform, which has ensured that the CDF remains highly relevant to national policy objectives and capacity development needs.

As such, the project design and implementation has been highly relevant to the Kosovo context and institutional needs negotiate and implement the SAA.

3.2 [Effectiveness and Impact](#)

Based on the findings, relevance of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

3.2.1 [Main results achieved](#)

Summary of key achievements during 2013 -2015:

To support capacities of the Government of Kosovo institutions to efficiently engage in the process of SAA negotiation, the project under the guidance and leadership of the Ministry for European Integration provided a series of general and specific seminars to government officials, held throughout 2013-2015 period (see Annex 4 and 5), covering 16 Chapters and 8 Titles of aquis. The seminars were structured to allow for interactive discussion and provide practical information on blocs and doncs+ during the negotiation process.

Experts from Croatia were recruited to provide advice on making optimal use of IPA funds, the importance of developing close cooperation with the European Commission as well as individual EU member states and ensuring full transparency of negotiations process; and preparing the institutions from the local to national level for the absorption of EU funds, strategic planning and efficient use of EU funds to support the EU accession process. As such, over 300 government officials representing SAA negotiation structures, legal officers of line ministries, customs, tax administration, Central Bank, select government representatives (deputy ministers, Secretary General), independent agencies, etc. attended the seminars.

On demand basis, UNDP assigned three high level Croatian advisors (former EU accession negotiators) to the Ministry for European Integration and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Experts provided technical and policy advice/guidance on:

- the necessary steps to be taken by government institutions in light of the initiation of the negotiations of the SAA;
- the drafting of and content of the Action Plan for the SAA;
- analytical briefings on the development of EU policies which may affect Kosovo and how those might be overcome;
- how to address issues which will be raised during the SAA process;
- review of the ministry's organisational set up and proposal for its re-alignment in view of the SAA;
- preparing policy documents before and during SAA negotiations, and on the stages through which Kosovo is expected to go through in the process of preparation for an efficient use of Cohesion Policy instruments.

The support was also extended to the Kosovo Parliamentary Committee for European Integration, who met with the Committee on European Integration of the Croatian Assembly, and representatives from Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and members of the EU Parliament.

At the end of the year, a two-day policy discussion conference titled Stabilisation and Association Agreement: What can Kosovo benefit from the Croatian Experience? was organized with the UNDP support by the Ministry of European Integration and the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in Pristina, aimed to exchange the experiences with Croatian counterparts and experts on EU accession.

Summary of key achievements during 2016 - 2017:

Capacity development and trainings on SAA:

Ministry of Local Governance Administration: Delivered a five (5) day seminar for EU Integration officials at the level on EU Integration process, in close cooperation with MLGA (over 35 EU Integration officials and representatives from ministries participated). These trainings aim enhance the institutional capacities (EU Integration officials) to better translate issues of EU Integration and their impact on local level governance in the following areas: agriculture, rural development, regional development, state aid and local investment promotion incentives, tourism and SME project promotion (over 30 participants).

Ministry of Trade and Industry: organized 5 workshops on how to explain the SAA agreements and the EU market requirements Kosovar Businesses on 5 sectors: wood processing, metal processing, textile, ICT and construction production (a total number of 128 businesses and 32 official attended these workshops /out of which 32 women and 128 men).

High level advisory and technical support:

CDF experts a) provided inputs to the Action Plan for the SAA; b) prepared analytical briefs on the development of EU policies which may affect Kosovo and how those might be overcome; c) provided policy advice on how to address issues which were raised during the SAA process; d) provided explanations of outstanding issues arising from the negotiations of the SAA; e) provided input on designing and using a Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) Mechanism on implementation of the National Programme for Implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement (NPISAA), as part of the setup that will serve for monitoring of fulfilment of SAA obligations.

Policy development support:

CDF experts finalised concept paper on **Management of EU Funds in Kosovo for Stabilization and Association Agreement to EU Membership . Opportunities and Obligations** with an aim to explain the process ahead of the institutions of Kosovo for organizing the management of programs funded by the EU budget.

Improvement of legal framework and harmonization with EU directives/ CDF legal support to:

Ministry of Finance (MoF) – in drafting the draft-law *on Accounting, Financial Reporting and Audit* which aims to regulate the accounting and financial reporting system of business organizations, competences and responsibilities of KCFR, audit requirements, qualifications for professional accountant, licensing of auditors, as well as foreign and local audit firms.

Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI)/Kosovo Business Registration Agency (KBRA) . in developing the analytical paper on the EU compliance and modernization of Kosovo Company Law - Law on Business Organizations, which proposed a structure of the analysis on the EU legislation requirements, which should contributed to further amendments of the draft-law on Business Organisation.

Office of Prime Minister (OPM) . in reviewing the existing draft-law on Personal Data Protection as per EU legislation and provided recommendation and comments with respect to this draft-law. The legal assessment was prepared and divided in five areas so that it presents a transparent comparative analysis.

Ministry of Finance (MoF)/Department of European Integration and Policy Coordination (DEIPC) . in developing a number of processes which are key for better coordination of addressing qualitatively requirements deriving from the SAA in particular and European Reform Agenda (ERA) in general. To ensure compatibility and interaction of strategic documents and policies between relevant departments in the ministry and with a large number of stakeholders, the project provided high level expertise in drafting strategic documents and policies, as well as technical assistance to improve the coordination and address qualitatively the requirements of SAA. The CDF expert held consultation meeting with relevant departments and structures in the MoF, analysed all relevant documentation in order to identify challenges and in close cooperation with the Director of DEIPC developed and delivered the following strategic documents:

- Concept Paper on addressing Public Finance Management (PFM) measures in Economic Reform Programme (ERP) 2017-2019, according to Guidance for ERP and EC evaluation of last ERP 2016-2018;
- Concept Paper on addressing Economic Reform Agenda (ERA);
- Concept paper on the challenges of the Ministry of Finance raised during the implementation of NPISAA 2016.

Joint cooperation between UNDP and MEI:

Research and analysis on the EU agenda and the benefits for Kosovo: CDF expert helped prepare a research paper on how countries in the region have dealt with post-visa liberalization process and an analysis on how to better involve citizens and civil society organizations in the EU integration process and SAA implementation process was conducted. The research was focused on (i) identification of the perception of the public opinion on the European Integration process; (ii) identification of the perception of the public opinion on SAA; (iii) Identification of the perception of the public opinion on visa liberalization.

Key deliverables of the research, include:

- Analysis on how to better involve citizens and civil society organizations in the EU integration process and SAA implementation process;
- Public Opinion Perception on European Integration;
- An Assessment of post-visa liberalization challenges in the Western Balkans: Lessons for Kosovo;
- Analysis on how to better involve citizens and CSOs in the EU integration process and SAA implementation process;
- Outreach activities/round tables were organised in seven main regions of Kosovo on visa liberalization obligations and SAA (Peja/Pec; Gjilan/Gnjilane; Prizren; Gjakove/Djakovica; Ferizaj/Urosevac; Mitrovica North and Pristina);
- Final report which provides a summary of the overall implementation and outcomes of activities, key outputs, general observations and conclusions of the research.

Design and launched a Multimedia Campaign on Communication of SAA: The project designed and developed all the promotional material, which consists of: i) overall strategic concept; ii) main communication messages; iii) campaign logo; iv) concept and design of storyboards for 5 video clips (1 TV spot and 4 infographics), and a detailed copy of the video clips narration; v) concept for 5 audio messages; vi) social media concept: design of 5 dynamic pop-up ads, concept of the web-portal, and mobile advertisement; vii) design and visual proposal of billboards and the plan for distribution of billboards in municipalities; ix) design of the brochure; and x) media planning and buying.

The campaign aimed to: a) stimulate active and informed participation of citizens, businesses and CSOs in the EU integration process; b) better inform businesses on the requirements and benefits of the SAA provisions related to trade and internal market; c) better inform public institutions, civil society, media and other stakeholders on requirements and benefits of SAA provisions in the area of EU standards/cooperation policies; d) better inform students, researchers, entrepreneurs, business associations, CSOs, media and other stakeholders on the requirements and benefits from EU accession instrument accessible under the SAA.

Capacity development and technical assistance to the Ministry of European Integration: to further strengthen the MEI's capacities on the implementing the visa liberalisation requirements and the SAA process, the project has provided technical assistance and advisory support to Minister's Cabinet, Deputy Minister's Cabinet, Secretary General's Office, and the Department for Development Assistance.

Study Visit to Croatia:

The project organized a two day study visit on EU Communications in the Republic of Croatia on exchange experiences and practical examples on how to: i) communicate the EU integration/SAA process to the relevant stakeholders (civil society, media and citizens), ii) valuable knowledge and lessons learned from Croatia with regard to the implementation of SAA communication strategy before and after the accession process, iii) as well the role of the institutions in the overall implementation of the Strategy.

As a conclusion, the abovementioned activities and sub-activities are relevant and aligned well towards addressing the output for strengthened capacities of public institutions to implement short and long-term structural and regulatory policies of Stabilization and Association Agreement, which in return contributes to the achievement of the overall objective to improvement of Kosovo institutions' capacities in policy planning, implementation, and administration, for effective and gender-responsive governance in the context of EU integration and Public Administration Reform.

3.2.2 Major factors influencing the achievement of results

The effectiveness of the project is largely attributed to its approach to provision of on-the-job and on-demand assistance. The interviewed actors, in particular the ones from the responsible Ministry of European Integration, highlighted that ministry/bodies made much progress because of the high quality tailor made, hands-on technical support these bodies could access with the support of the Project. What interviewed persons also highly valued was that the Project was very quick and responsive to their needs and in providing the respective experts, in particular the highly specialized experts from Croatia. They mentioned this as a unique feature of the Project compared to other donor projects, which often provide trainings or standard technical assistance, which is viewed by the interviewed persons as being less effective to enhance capacities, provide new concepts and ways of working and bring about change in government affairs.

3.2.3 Major factors hampering the achievement of results

Lack of funds to enable further expansion of the support was one of the key obstacles identified. In this regard, UNDP is in a process of lobbying jointly with MEI to secure additional donor funding. Nevertheless, considering the necessity of such support to implement the SAA, the MEI ought to leverage more government funding in closing the gap in the meantime, either by direct financing or through UNDP in covering the expertise costs, similar to cooperation with MPA in implementation of the Public Administration Modernisation Strategy project, which was made possible through government funding to UNDP.

3.3 Sustainability

Based on the findings, sustainability of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 4: Moderately Satisfactory, with moderate shortcomings.

Overall, during implementation of the project, UNDP has worked closely with the main responsible institutions MEI, MF and MPA and has ensured that project decisions and activities are conducted in full cooperation with the relevant departments who were the main bearers of the project outcomes, which has resulted in increased institutional capacities and capabilities to carry out similar activities in the future.

The project has enabled MEI, MF and MPA to build a network of externally available expertise, both locally and regionally with Croatia, which provides for enabling environment and greater sustainability of future actions in this area of work.

This approach ensures that ownership in terms of results achieved and experience gained is shared with respective institutions, equipping them with the necessary tools to ensure longer term inter-institutional knowledge transfer.

Furthermore, the increasing institutional rather than individual focus of the CDF interventions, working primarily at departmental level with groups, as well as written instructions for procedures,

guidelines, templates etc. left behind are now embedded in the institutional memory, which ensures high degree of sustainability.

Nevertheless, despite its success, CDF continues to suffer from financial uncertainty, which needs to be addressed in order to ensure long-term sustainability.

3.4 [Efficiency](#)

Based on the findings, efficiency of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

3.4.1 [Management structure](#)

The Project engaged a modest management structure, with one project manager and a project officer on board that relies heavily on support and guidance from UNDP's governance portfolio staff. While the structure allows for clear vertical information flow between UNDP management and the project manager, an improvement could be made in regard to projects' horizontal information flow and knowledge sharing amongst UNDP's other relevant thematic areas and projects. To achieve this, the CDF PMU needs to be enlarged to allow CDF to be adequately managed in order to realise its full potential.

3.4.2 [Monitoring](#)

The Annual Work Plan (AWP) has served as a basis for adequate and effective monitoring and evaluation processes of the implementation of project activities. All activities have been monitored during each stage of the project through the monthly reports submitted by consultants, specific deliverables during short-term consultancy, as well as data collection. In regards to the internal coordination, the project team met every month with the Governance and Peacebuilding Portfolio Manager/Deputy Governance Portfolio Manager to discuss the achievements, challenges, and future activities as per the AWP.

3.4.3 [Quality assurance](#)

To ensure adequate and effective implementation of project activities, UNDP's Governance and Peacebuilding Portfolio Manager/Deputy Programme Coordinator has provided a constant quality assurance and monitoring of activities, mostly those of strategic nature. Additionally, a continuous quality assurance and monitoring has been provided through monthly and quarterly reports submitted by each consultant engaged in the respective activity.

3.4.4 [Use of in- and out-sourcing](#)

For the majority of the technical assistance the Project relied on specialized roster of experts who were contracted through a competitive process to provide on-demand support to beneficiary institutions. This allows the Project not only to offer technical assistance in a more appropriate and cost-effective manner but also to strengthen the consultancy capacities within Kosovo. Furthermore, over longer-term this manner of working has the potential to instil a culture of in-sourcing professional specialized support by government institutions themselves.

3.5 Stakeholder and Partnership Strategy

Based on the findings, relevance of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 4: Moderately satisfactory, with moderate shortcomings.

The project's main beneficiary and partner of the project is the Ministry of European Integration, as well as MPA, MF, MLGA and MTI, with whom the project enjoyed a strong working relationship, trust and cooperation, albeit there's a need to further improve on internal communication and coordination aspects between ministries and respective department, which resulted in delayed responses and feedback on the materials submitted for review and approval. These continuous delays affected the adequate implementation of project activities as per the agreed timeframes.

On the other hand, the cooperation with SIGMA has been somewhat challenging. Although regular meetings were held and the project shared information on activities there is a general feeling that SIGMA is the owner of the EU related reform processes, and as such has been able to take over CDF's work (and credits) on some key issues such as Strategy on PAR, Law on Public Administration Organisation.

Similarly, there's a general feeling amongst experts that a stronger cooperation is also needed with GIZ and EU Twinning projects, to avoid any overlaps on actions undertaken.

Strengthening the coordination aspects is essential to a successful implementation of the CDF assistance and the senior UNDP management needs to play a more proactive role in this regard, especially when considering the moderate size of the CDF PMU, which is not equipped for high level coordination.

3.6 Theory of Change and Evaluability

Based on the findings, relevance of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

The overall objective of the project is to improve Kosovo institutions' capacities in policy planning, implementation, and administration, for effective and gender-responsive governance in the context of EU integration and Public Administration Reform.

The project is well designed to allow for greater national ownership of the results, which is the cornerstone of UNDP's approach to capacity development. Ownership is embedded strongly through alignment with the government strategy for SAA; involvement of government stakeholders in design of assistance required; and joint coordination and monitoring of achievement of results.

As such, the project's Theory of Change rightfully implies that institutions will have better chances to improve capacities and systems through a meaningful ownership, cooperation and partnership in defining the needs and necessary actions in improving effectiveness and efficiency of public administration, which will enable them to provide effective implementation of reform processes, and which in turn will positively contribute to the implementation of the SAA commitments.

3.7 Gender Mainstreaming

Based on the findings, efficiency of the project has been ranked with the overall score of 5: Satisfactory, with minor shortcomings.

On gender, the Project applied the principles UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and the UNDP 8 Point Agenda (SCR 1325). As such, the project aimed to introduce an inclusive and participatory environment to both genders across all activities, especially in the provision of trainings for equal capacity development and career-enhancement. Despite the fact that existing structure of civil service presents a disproportional inclusion of women and men, especially at senior management levels, the project ensured that all workshops and trainings are representative to gender diversity and provide an opportunity for both genders to express their opinion and enhance their capacities.

The project activities ensured and placed high importance on gender mainstreaming, which was used as a means to achieve the goal of gender equality and inclusiveness. All activities aimed to introduce an inclusive and participatory environment to both genders, with focus on policy development, planning, and advocacy. More concretely, the project ensured that all workshops and trainings are representative to gender diversity and provide an opportunity for both genders to express their opinions and enhance their capacities. During 2013-2017, the project reported a participation of both men and women in the ratio of 60% to 40% in all activities implemented.

4 Recommendations and Lessons Learned

4.1. Recommendations

Focus on implementation of the European Reform Agenda (ERA)

ERA has the potential to be a concrete plan of actions that would help bring about change in Kosovo. Kosovo's severe institutional and political crisis has shifted the focus elsewhere and leaders and party members have shown little will to undertake reforms or cooperate. ERA can improve the performance of institutions and the socio-economic situation. It can help keep the reforms focused and prioritise the changes needed most. Transparency and accountability should be a top priority. Clear requirements for independent audits, financial reporting and conflicts of interest should be pursued. Ensuring merit-based and free political appointments, increasing the accountability of independent agencies, and re-hiring board members may help secure buy-in of this important process by citizens and civil society. CDF on-the-job assistance through specialised expertise would bring the added value needed to such reform processes. A good entry point is at Civil Society level, which should mobilise to monitor, advise and advocate for meaningful ERA implementation.

Continue to contribute to institutional development by focusing on enhancing the institutional legitimacy

Kosovo has young, not fully consolidated and still partly fragile public institutions, which need to improve further its governance processes. It is therefore crucial that the Project keeps its ultimate focus on institutional development by improving the effectiveness of public institutions to fulfil their core functions and by anchoring of the government into the society so that citizens accept the government authority and trust in it, and in turn improve the institutional legitimacy and ultimately strengthen the government-society bonding.

Continue with providing on-the-job and on-demand technical assistance and mentoring – and strengthen performance criteria

On-the-job technical assistance through external expertise continues to play a central role in improving institutional performance. The Project should thus continue providing such assistance based on a systematic and comprehensive performance monitoring criteria, which needs to be strengthened further. This means that all current criteria will have to be revisited and linked better thematically, in order to ensure systematic deployment of assistance and avoid filling capacity gaps in ad-hoc basis. Furthermore, named experts should be avoided and assistance should be linked to a change rather than a problem, which requires longer term engagement, with minimum one year contracts. However, while designing and providing on-the-job technical assistance, the Project has to make sure this support does not create dependency on the Project due to capacity substitution.

Trainings and follow-up actions

The Project should continue to focus on provision of specialized trainings, aimed at limited number of civil servants designated to supervise certain implementation aspects of the SAA and ERA. Similarly, study visits should only be conducted with a prior research and communication with institutions to be visited, whereby a comprehensive list of issues to be discussed is developed and pursued during the study visit, and a set of concrete follow-up actions agreed after each visit.

4.2. Lessons Learned

Strengthen project management structure

Considering the moderate project management size, the project could benefit more by mandating key experts deployed to also coordinate the work of other experts in specific activity/result areas of the project. The areas covered could be at the department or result level, and this approach would ensure greater project oversight and also coordination amongst different departments and experts in achieving project goals.

Expand at local government level

In cooperation with MLGA and MEI, the project should explore the possibilities for further expansion at local government level in strengthening municipal capacities to implement IPA funds, which is currently performing very low. The SAA and IPA are the two main tools that the EU uses to engage economically with Kosovo. Whereas the SAA provides a framework for a political dialogue between Kosovo and the EU, on the reforms that Kosovo needs to undertake for potential EU accession, the IPA is a financial tool that the EU uses to assist with such reforms. One part of this financial assistance is dedicated to economic reforms, while the rest is dedicated to reforms in other areas such as the rule of law or public administration reform.

Annexes

Annex 1 . TOR of Evaluation

Annex 2 . Schedule of interviews

Date	Time	Institution	Person
Friday 05.05.17	09:00-10:00	KIPA	Refike Sulcevsj
	10:00-11:30	KIPA	Enver haxhijaj
Wednesday 10.05.17	10:00-12:00	MEI	Artan Qollaku, Lorik Jakupi, Jeton Karaqica, Valon Gashi
	13:30-15:00	MPA	Bardha Rrustemi
Monday 15.05.17	09:00-10:30	MF	Rexhep Vasolli
	13:30-15:00	MLGA	Avni Sahiti
	15:00-16:30	MLGA	Yll Vala
Tuesday 16.05.17	09:00-10:30	MPA	Julia Mager
	10:30-12:00	MPA	Rado Bohinc
	12:00-13:30	MEI	Tamara Mazal
Wednesday 17.05.17	09:00-10:30	MPA	Milena Minkova
	11:00-12:30	MF	Kaloyan Simeonov
Friday 19.05.17	09:00-10:30	MLGA	Rozafa Ukimeraj
	11:00-12:30	MTI	Agron Maxhuni
Thursday 25.05.17	10:30-12:00	MEI	Flamur Salihu
Tuesday 30.05.17	13:00-14:30	MEI	Demush Shasha

Annex 3 . List of stakeholders interviewed

	Institution	Person
1.	UNDP	Marta Gazideda, Governance Portfolio Manager/ Deputy Programme Coordinator
2.	UNDP	Eleonora Kelmendi, CDF Project Officer
3.	KIPA	Refike Sulcevsj, CEO
4.	KIPA	Enver Haxhijaj, Director
5.	MEI	Artan Qollaku, Director of SAA Coordination Department
6.	MEI	Lorik Jakupi, Head Political and Administrative Criteria Division
7.	MEI	Jeton Karaqica, Director of Economic Criteria Department
8.	MEI	Valon Gashi, Director of Political Criteria Department
9.	MPA	Bardha Rrustemi, CDF Expert
10.	MF	Rexhep Vasolli, Director of European Integrations Department
11.	MLGA	Avni Sahiti, Director of Municipal Transparency and Performance Department

12.	MLGA	Yli Vala, Head of Communication Division
13.	MPA	Julia Mager, CDF Expert
14.	MPA	Rado Bohinc, CDF Expert
15.	MEI	Tamara Mazal, CDF Expert
16.	MPA	Milena Minkova, CDF Expert
17.	MF	Kaloyan Simeonov, CDF Expert
18.	MLGA	Rozafa Ukimeraj, General Secretary
19.	MTI	Agron Maxhuni, General Secretary a.i.
20.	MEI	Falmur Salihu, Head of Communication Office
21.	MEI	Demush Shasha, General Secretary

Annex 4 . List of Seminars on Stabilization Association Agreement (SAA)

No.	Selected SAA Chapters	Dates held:
1	SAA explained - General issues and approximation of legislation and introduction: Title I- General principles, Title II-Political dialogue, Title III-Regional cooperation, Title VIII-Cooperation policies; Title IX-Financial Cooperation; Title X-Institutional, General and Final Provisions	25 th . 26 th April 2013
2	Croatia's accession negotiations with the EU for all high level officials in the government	05 th . 06 th June 2013
3	Selected chapters of EU accession negotiations Chapters 23 - Judiciary and Fundamental Rights Chapter 24 - Justice, Freedom and Security	27 th . 28 th June 2013
4	Alignment of national legal system with the EU acquis . experiences from Croatia Croatia's accession negotiations with the EU . legal aspects and stages of the accession negotiations	02 nd . 03 rd October 2013
5	Selected chapters of negotiations on the EU internal market . Chapter 1 Free Movement of Goods	09 th . 10 th October 2013
6	Selected chapters of EU accession negotiations Chapters 11 - Agriculture and Rural Development Chapter 12 - Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy	19 th . 20 th December 2013
7	Stabilization and Association Agreement and Local Development . Kosovo	30 th and 31 st January 2014
8	Follow up seminar on Chapters 11 Agriculture and Rural Development and 12 Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy	13 th and 14 th March 2014
9	Chapter 22 Regional policy and the co-ordination of structural instruments	30 th April 2014
10	Chapter 3 Right of establishment and freedom to provide services Chapter 5 Public Procurement	19 th and 20 th May 2014
11	Chapter 7 Intellectual Property Law	13 th November 2014

12	Chapter 14 Transport policy	19 th November 2014
13	Chapter 15 Energy	20 th November 2014
14	Chapter 29 Customs Union	24 th November 2014
15	Chapter 29 Taxation	27 th November 2014

Annex 5 . List of workshops, conferences and meetings

No.	Workshops	Dates held:
1	Workshop on discussion of the draft law (working group): - amending and supplement draft Law on Administrative Inspection	19 th . 20 th March 2013
2	Workshop on discussion of the draft laws (working group): - amending and supplementing Law on Declaration, Origin and Control pf Property of Senior Official and Declaration, Origin and Control of Gifts of all Public Officials - amending and supplementing Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Discharge of Public Function	29 th . 30 th April 2013
3	Workshop on discussion of the draft laws (working group): - amending and supplementing draft Law for Civil Service in the Republic of Kosovo	29 th . 31 st May 2013
4	Workshop on discussion of the draft law (working group): - further amending and supplement Law on Administrative Inspection - amending and supplement Law State Administration - amending and supplementing the draft Regulation Internal Organization and Systematization of Workplace in the Public Administration	27 th . 29 th June 2013
5	Workshop on drafting the: - Functional Analysis of Local Self-governance in Kosovo (Department of European Integration and Policy Coordination/MLGA)	11 th . 13 th July 2013
6	Workshop on drafting: - Code of Ethics for Civil Servant (Office of Good Governance/Prime Minister's Office)	15 th . 16 th October 2013
7.	Workshop on discussion of the draft laws (working group): - amending and supplement draft Law on Administrative Procedure	30 th and 31 st October . 01 November 2013
8.	Workshop on discussion/revision and finalization of:	12 th . 14 th December 2013

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revision of the of Instructions for drafting and Monitoring the Annual Work Plan - <i>Revision of the of Instructions for Monitoring of the Implementation of Government Decisions</i> - Revision of instruction for the System of E-Cabinet 	
9.	Meeting/half day workshop on presentation National Quality Management Programme and Common Assessment Framework	25 th April 2013
10.	<p>Representatives from: MAP, KIPA, MED, MTI, MoJ, UNDP</p> <p>National Conference on Quality Management in Kosovo (jointly supported and programed by UNDP and GIZ)</p> <p>National Quality Management Programme and Common Assessment Framework</p>	22 nd . 23 rd October 2013
11.	<p>Donor Meeting in Kosovo on the PAR developments and donor support in 2013</p> <p>Representatives from: embassies, MAP, other donors and UNDP</p>	20 th January 2013
12.	<p>Study visit . Ljubljana, Slovenia - Kosovo Government delegation to the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Slovenia (delegation of 10 participants including the Minister of MAP)</p> <p>The comprehensive program of study visit was oriented in the field of Public Administration Reform.</p> <p>Agenda of the study visit: Reduction of administrative burdens, Standard Cost Models (SCM) and Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), System of training for civil servants, public sector inspectorate, legal regulation and recent developments in the public sector salary</p>	09 th . 10 th September 2014
13.	<p>Study visit . Turkey – Kosovo Government delegation to the TODAIE institute (Delegation of 10 participants including the Minister of MAP)</p> <p>Agenda of the study visit regarded the following: a) State structure and functioning of TODAIE including human resource management, and b) acquaint with the employment system in a municipality, and enforcement procedures in the administration.</p>	05 th -10 th May 2013