

Representation, Relevance and Interest
An assessment of the SSSR Programme's Community Problem Solving Groups

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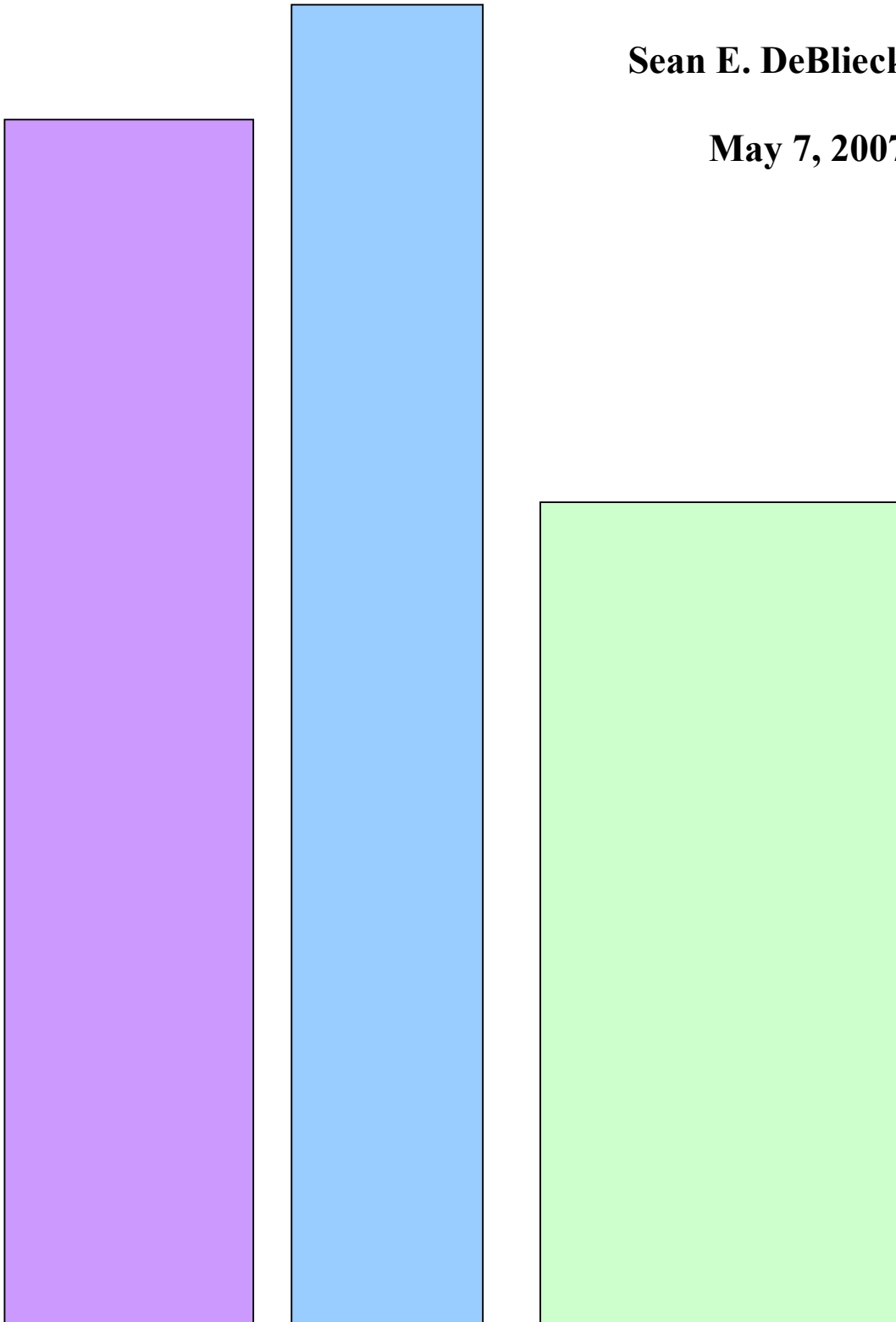


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Acronyms

CPSG	Community Problem Solving Group
SSSR Programme	Support to Security Sector Reform Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Map of CPSG Pilot Sites



I. Introduction

This is an assessment of the Support to Security Sector Reform (SSSR) Programme's Community Problem Solving Groups (CPSG). It was conducted to assist in forming actions which will enhance the capacity and sustainability of the CPSGs, and promote their interaction and functioning under local governance public services. Over the course of two weeks (April 4th-18th) interviews were conducted with over fifty people, covering each of the ten sites where the SSSR Programme is active. These interviews were done with key individuals and focus groups, and included CPSG members, local government officials, and members of the Albanian State Police.

There is a lot of potential in the CPSGs, and the SSSR Programme can craft activities so that this potential can be realized. A positive finding is that, in general, the local governments display a genuine interest in supporting the work of the CPSGs. Furthermore, there are active CPSG members, and the local police officers—as well as their commanders—are dedicated to the philosophy and practice of community-based policing. There are certainly areas which hold room for improvement, and efforts to increase the sustainability of these groups would do well to not only reform their composition, and also improve their capacity address local issues, such as domestic violence and property disputes.

This document begins with a description of the methods used in this study and the three concepts addressed in the analysis: representation, relevance, and interest. These three concepts are used as the framework for analyzing the data in the next three sections. Finally, the paper concludes with concrete proposals for improving the SSSR Programme's CPSGs.

II. Methodology

Research for this study was conducted at all ten of the sites where the SSSR Programme has created and supported CPSGs since 2003, ranging from Sarande in the south to Tropoja in the north. Over the course of two weeks, each site was visited, and meetings were arranged with the three principle groups involved in the project: the CPSGs, municipal government officials, and Albanian State Police. The meetings were semi-structured interviews, with individuals and small groups of up to ten persons. A sample questionnaire is included in Annex I of this document, and a list of those interviewed is included in Annex II. Annex III summarizes the recommendations of this study.

The concepts measured in this study were representation, relevance, and interest. In particular, this assessment determined:

- **Representation:** *The degree to which the CPSG's membership and its activities reflect and impact the local community*
- **Relevance:** *the degree to which the CPSG, in partnership with the local government, is addressing the human security and safety issues of the local community.*
- **Interest:** *the degree to which local governments are interested in using these community groups as civil society tools for enhancing human security and safety at the local level.*

III. Representation

Representation is a critical element in creating accountable institutions working to resolve meaningful issues. This is because the membership of the group influences the problems which are identified, the means to address them, and the beneficiaries of the intervention. In general, the CPSGs do not reflect a wide range of persons or the diversity of their communities, except in the sense of profession. They

are largely dominated by men who are long-term residents of the quarter, and some, exclusively so.

CPSG members were asked about the membership of their respective bodies, and how they represented the local community. In general, they saw themselves as representing everyone in the community, and no CPSG could identify a group left unrepresented in their composition. As they felt they represented everyone, they did not offer any ideas about changing their dynamic. Some, such as the CPSG members in Vlora, expressed their concern that the composition could be changed, and expressed their conviction that no changes occur—it was functioning properly already. Details about the composition of the groups, as documented by the SSSR Programme, are provided in the table below.

Location:	Kameza	Kukes	Lac	Lezha	Puka	Saranda	Shkodra	Tirana	Tropoja	Vlora
Total members:	11	12	13	11	9	10	12	11	13	10
Total female:	2	5	2	2	3	4	2	2	1	3
Other details:	Mix professions, geographic mix	1 youth all intellectuals	Mix professions	mix professions	mainly intellectuals	mainly intellectuals, average age 50 years	mix professions	mainly retired	50% retired, 50% intellectuals	mix professions, average age 50 years

Membership of each CPSG was determined at a public meeting organized in the target quarter. During these meetings, the community-based policing strategy and the role of the CPSG were explained. It is during this time that the CPSG members are nominated and selected from the participants in these meetings. The SSSR Programme strongly recommended that women be included in each CPSG, though over time the gender balance may have changed. In Tropoja, for example, the Public Order Inspector said that initially a woman was involved, but because of traditional gender roles, the current participants in the CPSG are now all male.

Women are included in these civil society groups, yet the low numbers suggest that they have a limited impact in the functioning of the CPSG. Indeed, the leadership positions in all ten of the CPSGs are occupied by men, and very few women attended the interviews during this research. This gender dynamic reflects the traditional gender roles in Albanian society, with women relegated to less powerful roles in government and society. At best, when gender is unbalanced the CPSGs are a forum which sustains this inequality, and at worst, they are institutionalizing it, creating a civil society group which acts for the interests of males rather than females, further strengthening traditional, unequal roles in society.

Aside from gender, when asked about representation in their respective groups, the CPSG members cited the professions of their members. These include intellectuals, business owners, farmers, teachers, state employees, municipal employees, and pensioners. In Tropoja and Tirana, the CPSG has a high percentage of retired people. In other places, such as Lac, Lezha, and Sarande, there is a mix of both working and retired participants. The fact that these two groups are interested in bettering their communities through unpaid position in the CPSG is certainly a positive one. In Kameza, the diversity of the group comes from inclusion of people from across professions and across the different geographic areas of the quarter.

“Communication and connections between CPSG members have been strong points. The CPSG would be more stimulated to work, though, with financial rewards. Women are more likely than men to work without such rewards.”
--CPSG Member, Sarande

Yet there is no evidence to suggest that a professionally or geographically-diverse CPSG leads to a more effective or sustainable one. Rather than residence or, job title, or employment status, a more important consideration for membership should be *the strength of the relationships that the individual has with other institutions*. This “social capital” can be tapped into by the CPSG, and lead to a more

sustainable and active institution that reaches more people in the community. Persons with social capital could be the head of an NGO, the leadership of a local business association, or a religious authority. In some cases, the CPSG have attracted people with this resource: in Kameza, the head of a public school serves on the CPSG, the former head of the CPSG in Puka also heads a local NGO, the head of the Vlora CPSG is the headman of his quarter, and one of the members in Lac has extensive contacts in the local government. Specifically recruiting this type of member should be a priority.

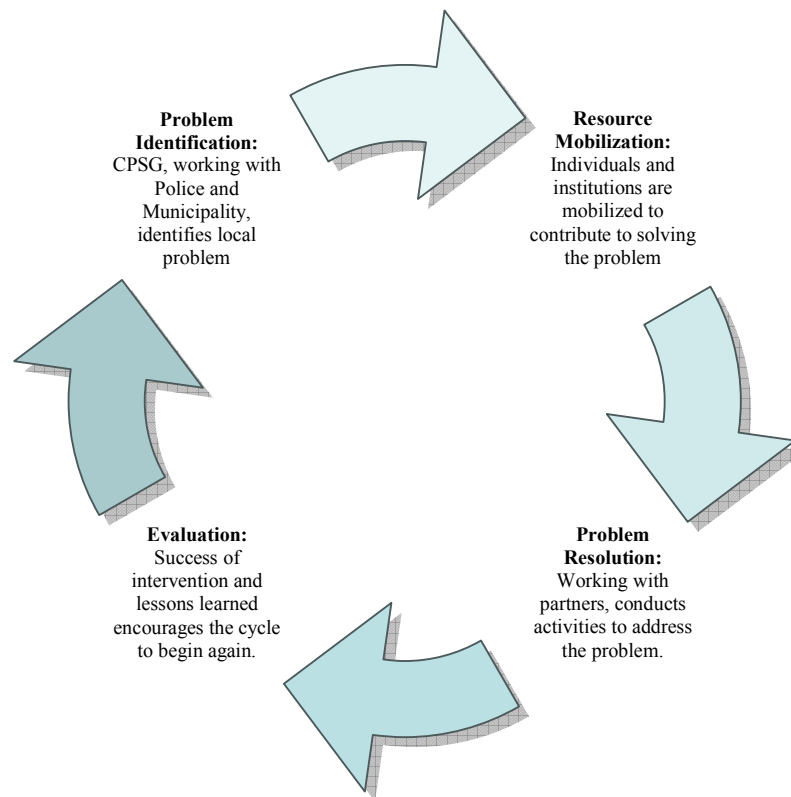
Population movements lead to conflicts over property and resources. Internal migration in Albania has brought many newcomers from rural to urban areas, and many Albanians are now returning from long sojourns abroad. With the exception of the northern villages (Kukes, Puka, Shkodra, and Tropoja), the rest of the CPSGs operate in areas where newcomers have arrived *en masse* and are competing for spaces to live and work. Time and time again, these CPSGs mentioned their roles in addressing these issues. In Vlora, the CPSG intervened to prevent a man building a structure illegally; in Lac, the CPSG mediated a property dispute between two brothers; and in Sarande one respondent said it was like the “Wild American West” with people staking claims to property all over the quarter. While CPSGs have an important role to play in these issues (and more attention is given to the topic in the next section), their ability to do so in an impartial and just matter will be jeopardized if their membership does not include newcomers as well as long-term residents.

In sum, the degree to which the CPSGs represent their communities is generally low. Though the means utilized by the SSSR Programme in selecting members are sound, they did not result in ideal composition of these groups. Membership in these groups should be improved by giving specific attention to

gender equity rather than equality; social capital rather than profession or employment status; and the length of residence in the quarter.

IV. Relevance

The second concept measured in this study is relevance, and the degree to which the CPSG is addressing the human security and safety issues of the local community. In theory, the groups are to be in drivers of a simple project cycle of problem identification, resource mobilization, implementation, and evaluation, as shown in the figure below. However, there were few instances where CPSGs followed this project cycle.



To assess relevance, the CPSG members, police, and municipal issues were asked to discuss the achievements of the CPSGs, and about issues that they had

resolved with their own initiative. Based on their responses, the CPSGs could be placed into three basic groups of high, medium, and low. These levels of relevance are illustrated in the figure below.

High	Medium	Low
Lac Kukes	Lezhe Tropoja Shkodra Vlora	Kameza Sarande Tirana
	Puka	

The two CPSGs with the highest rating for relevance are Lac and Kukes. In each case, the CPSGs not only provided specific examples of identifying and resolving local issues, but also had notes on hand documenting their achievements. An example from Lac, concerns how the CPSG worked to resolve the issues of dangerous drivers. Noting the danger that fast, reckless driving had for their community, the CPSG worked with the local public order inspector to identify people driving in this manner, who were mainly youth. Once identified, the CPSG members and the inspector visited the homes of the youth and discussed the issue with the parents and perpetrator, and since this time the behavior has not been repeated. In Kukes, the CPSG has been active in partnering with local institutions, such as schools, to raise awareness about human trafficking and drug cultivation. They also responded to a case of domestic violence, identifying an abusive husband and warning him that the police would be involved if he continued to harm his wife. According to the public order inspector of that quarter, he has not harmed her since the intervention.

The medium-ranked CPSGs address some local issues, but are much less active than their counterparts in Lac and Kukes. In Lezhe, the CPSG was involved in identifying a car thief, catching him in the act. In Tropoja, the group’s work has led to

increased crime reporting, and one activity undertaken by the group was to identify a potential criminal and warn him that transgressions of the law would not be tolerated. They were also successful in getting the police to conduct more patrols in some trouble spots of the neighborhood. In Shkodra, the CPSG meets weekly and has worked to resolve some property disputes. It is currently being used to recruit young men for service in the Army. In Vlora, the CPSG members meet on a “case by case basis,” have identified a needed infrastructure project, and are urging the UNDP to fund them.

There are two areas of concern from this group of CPSGs. First, without significant financial backing some of these CPSGs will not continue to function in their present form. This is especially true for Vlora, Shkodra and Lezha, where it was noted by the head of one of these CPSGs that continuation of his group’s activities depends entirely on outside financial support. Second, in some cases the primary activity of the CPSG appears to be reporting criminal acts to the police, rather than being active agents of change in resolving issues of crime and security in their neighborhoods. Though reporting crime is a positive activity, this is not the only one that the CPSGs were intended to do.

One interesting development is the case of Puka. In Puka, the CPSG does not appear to meet on a regular basis or to be active on its own accord. Like elsewhere, the lack of funding for major infrastructure projects sapped the motivation of the group. However, despite this, the public order inspector utilizes the CPSG to solve issues that come to his attention. According to him, he divides his work into two types: those that need to be solved by the police, and those that can be solved by the CPSG. After identifying these cases, he gathers the CPSG and asks for their support in resolving the issues. Usually, the CPSG has been convened to resolve cases of

domestic violence and conflicts between neighbors. In this instance, the CPSG is part of the cycle, but no longer driving it. Though this is a positive innovation—with a proactive officer utilizing an inactive CPSG—it is not the ideal state envisioned by the SSSR Programme.

The lowest category includes the three newest CPSGs. These are Kameza, Saranda, and Tirana. In Kameza, neither the CPSG member nor the public order inspector could identify a problem solved by their group, and there was little evidence to show that they actually met on a regular basis. This is not to say that they are not agents of change in their quarter; the public order inspector works with religious leaders on issues that arise. The CPSG member is active in resolving the security and safety issues of his students, meeting with parents on a monthly basis. Though there are issues that could be addressed by the CPSG in Kameza, its members are currently utilizing other means to do so.

“Success depends on the degree to which the public is involved in the CPSG, and this success will be improved security. In some cases, people identified problems and solved them themselves, without involving the police. Since people know their own problems the best, they can resolve some issues, and this helps the police in their work.”
-- Police Commissar, Tropoja

In Sarande, the CPSG members are still waiting for a common premises, and time and time again, the CPSG members insisted that without this space, no work can be done. They have identified some issues that they could resolve, such as making street names for the quarter, and also some pavement problems. Nonetheless, they are not focused entirely on infrastructure issues, as one member spoke of the pressing concerns of women in the community, such as domestic violence and human trafficking.

In Tirana, the CPSG members were also adept at identifying problems. During the meeting, the issues they spoke about included: loud music, anarchic parking, domestic violence, and building safety. The members are bringing their

problems to the government authorities, hoping that these outsiders will solve them, but have not had much success. Unfortunately, they are increasingly frustrated with their government, complaining that “no one listens to us.”

The relevance of the CPSGs varies from place to place. In Lac and Kukes, they are, to great extent, addressing the human security and safety issues of the local community. The reason for this is two-fold. First, the CPSG understands the simple project cycle underpinning the program: identification, resource mobilization, resolution, and evaluation. They understand that the CPSG is not only tasked with identifying problems, it is also the main force driving the resolution of those issues. In other CPSGs, this is not fully understood. In some cases, the CPSG primarily functions as a crime reporting body. In others, it is a forum for raising issues that will (hopefully) be resolved by other institutions. Unfortunately, neither of these latter forms empowers the people of the community.

The second reason that Lac and Kukes stand out from this group is that *they have been able to identify human security and safety issues which can be solved with the resources of this type of grassroots civil society organization.* Two issues which they have addressed are property issues and domestic violence. In nearly every other quarter, these were illustrated as issues of concern (see table below), yet the CPSGs there were not as active in addressing them as in Lac and Kukes.

Identified Domestic Violence	Identified Property Disputes	Intervened/Resolved utilizing CPSG?
Kukes Lezhe Puka Sarande Tirana	Lac Lezhe Kameza Puka Sarande Shkodra Tirana Tropoja Vlora	Kukes Lezhe Lac Puka

Instead, outside of Lac and Kukes, focus of CPSG work was on community infrastructure; roads, sewerage, green spaces, and lighting. While these infrastructure concerns are real, they are very expensive to resolve, and require resources which are generally out of reach of these grassroots organizations, let alone the municipal authorities. In a sense, because of their orientation on these type of projects, some of the CPSGs are perpetually stuck the first stage of the project cycle. They can identify the big problems, but are unable to mobilize resources, act, or evaluate their actions. If nothing is done to reorient these groups to address issues that they can resolve with their own resources, the end result will be frustration and disaffection amongst the members, and eventually the disintegration of the CPSG itself. Focusing the groups on a common, locally-resolvable issue, should be a priority.

V. Interest

This section discusses the degree to which the local governments are interested in using these community groups as civil society tools for enhancing human security at their local level. In the small towns where CPSGs exist, the local government officials interviewed were at the municipal level, usually the Mayor or Vice Mayor. In the more urban areas of Shkodra, Tirana, and Vlora, they were at the mini-municipality (quarter) level, and here the head or representatives of the quarter were interviewed. In general, these local government officials expressed interest in utilizing the CPSGs, though their degree of interest varied. This seems to be linked to an understanding of the benefits of the initiative.

In their respective interviews, local authorities were asked about the security and safety issues in their quarter, town, or city. They were asked about their past

work with the CPSG, and in the case of a new administration, whether they were interested in utilizing it as a resource to address these issues. They were also asked about the priorities of their administration, and for examples of ways which the CPSG could be used. Assessing the degree of relevance was based on the degree to which they identified means for the CPSGs to address local human security issues. A summary of the findings is presented in the table below.

High	Medium	Low
Lac Kukes Tirana	Lezhe Puka Tropoja Vlora	Kameza Sarande Shkodra

In a third of the cases, interest in utilizing the CPSGs to enhance human security at the local level is quite high. Local governments in Lac, Kukes, and Tirana expressed keen interest in the CPSGs and the continuation of their work there. They also spoke about practical problems that have been addressed by these groups, as well as potential issues where they could be more involved. In Lac, the Deputy Mayor was quite familiar with not only the project, but also knew the theoretical and practical sides of community-base policing. In fact, he accompanied the local public order inspector on a training course in Kosovo, and on this basis is working toward a new initiative to introduce paid community problem solvers in each of the quarters of Lac. According to him, these individuals could work in partnership with the CPSGs or lead them. Issues that could be addressed are associated with the many new immigrants who arrive in the area each year.

In Kukes, both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor expressed a strong desire to build on the work of the CPSGs. Though new to their respective posts, they see that

the CPSG could be utilized in their initiative to “bring government services to the people.” They expect to have outposts of the municipal government in each quarter, and could create the conditions for CPSG-like groups to solve issues there.

In Tirana, the representative of the quarter spoke of the potential for the CPSG to solve more issues such as domestic violence and local property disputes, and gave examples of issues they had solved on their own. For example, one problem involved stolen student property, and the CPSG worked with the school to resolve this. On her own, she has taken the initiative in organizing women to talk about issues such as domestic violence (between couples, between mothers and daughters).

There are four places where interest was medium. In these cases, local government interest is tied to an expectation that the CPSG will continue to attract funds from the UNDP for expensive infrastructure projects, though they do see some role for the CPSGs in resolving issues of human security. In Lezhe, the Deputy Mayor spoke of his long involvement in the project and of the direct benefits the CPSG had on improving life there, especially in infrastructure. He expressed some interest in seeing the CPSG work on resolving property issues.

“People are important, and they have a particular use as part of government; this is a big departure from the past. The feedback loop between government and citizens is a good one, with the citizens pressuring the government to better the community. Yet the public is sometimes not in step with the concerns of government.”
--Government Official, Sarande

The Mayor of Puka likewise expressed his pleasure with the concrete results of the project, specifically the streetlights which are keeping the town safe. As for issues in the town, Puka suffers from being isolated from other parts of Albania and from being outside the spotlight of development organizations such as UNDP. Most security problems stem from the low level of development there. He stated that although the CPSG could be used to work on some grassroots issues, there are larger economic issues that need to be addressed there. Tropoja is an economically

depressed area with a host of security issues, though the latter are improving considerably. The Mayor of this northern town is new to his job, but sees any action to improve the well-being of the city as a positive one. To him, there are not only changes needed in the security realm, but also in the perceptions of security, so any work will lead to positive results. Though unfamiliar with the CPSG, he felt is a good development.

In Vlora, the head of the CPSG is also the head of the quarter. To him, the CPSG will continue to solve problems—building infrastructure—as long as UNDP funding continues. They have been successful in getting people to donate time to projects, and in getting the municipal authorities involved. In demonstration of this, he had an employee from the municipal public works department attend the interview, who spoke of a water issue that had been resolved. At City Hall, the Head of the Mayor’s Cabinet spoke highly of the CPSG and the project. The main concerns of the city right now linked to security involve the roads and road safety, but in most respects the security situation is stable, “like a normal European city.”

The lowest levels of interest were in Kameza, Saranda, and Shkodra. In Kameza, the municipal government official was not familiar with the CPSGs, had little knowledge of work that had been done. This is not surprising as he was new to the job and the CPSG has not been operational for very long. He did mention the fact that there are local issues which affect the security of the community, such as property and water and water disputes, though without a better understanding of the CPSG did not provide an example of their possible utility. Like Kameza, the CPSG in Saranda has only been operational for a short period, and as mentioned earlier, has not been very active. There, the Deputy Mayor was more familiar with the overall SSSR Programme, and expressed general thanks for the work of the UNDP there. He stated

that the CPSG operates at such a micro level that, even when operation, it is of little relevance to the city. From his view, there are no serious security issues in the city, so there seemed to be little use for the CPSG.

In Shkodra, the CPSG has been operating for over three years, yet relevance was low. There, the head of the quarter knew a lot about the operations of the CPSG and its work, yet in spite of its existence, is resolving issues of human security through his relationship with the public order inspector. He works closely with the local police to resolve issues of human security, and stated that their relationship could not be better. They often meet to discuss problems and to share ideas for methods to solve them, and feel that the fact that crime is low in the quarter is a direct consequence of their cooperation. While the CPSG meets on a weekly basis, the most important relationship is between the local government and the state police.

The local authorities interviewed in this assessment stated that the highest priority human security issues are economic ones. They are worried about their constituents, and are in positions where resolution will not come easy. They have few policy tools, but to improve lives they must create jobs, build infrastructure, and attract investment. In a sense, the SSSR Programme “bought” the interest of these local authorities by making a direct, concrete investment in a local infrastructure projects. These roads, lights, and green spaces are “public goods,” and potentially utilized by all members of the community. In rural places such as Puka, Kukes, and Tropoja, the lights are an impressive change in local infrastructure and undoubtedly increase safety perceptions there. Indeed, the Kukes residents say that these lights have reduced crime there. In the urban quarters of Tirana and Vlora, the CPSGs worked to on projects which revitalized public spaces, creating areas safe for children to play and residents to relax outside of their homes. CPSGs in Kameza, Lac, Lezha,

and Sarande chose to pave roads, creating safer places for automobiles and pedestrians.

Location:	Kameza	Kukes	Lac	Lezha	Puka	Saranda	Shkodra	Tirana	Tropoja	Vlora
Type of project:	Road	Lighting	road	road	lighting	road	Lighting	systematization & greenery	Lighting	systematization & greenery

Yet this type of involvement may have come at a price. As the mid and low range cases show, the local authorities now view the CPSGs as a magnet for funds that the city would otherwise be unable to mobilize. When this funding dries up, there seems to be little reason to continue working with them, and this was specifically expressed even by CPSG members in Vlora and Lezha. A possible future for these groups is illustrated by Shkodra, where the head of the quarter is working closely with the public order inspector, despite the existence of the CPSG. Instead of being an active agent of change, the CPSG was a conduit for major public works. With that finished, it no longer has a role to play in the human security issues of the quarter.

There is much to be learned from the most successful quarters. In these areas, the local authorities have a different view of the CPSGs—either in real issues resolved, or in their potential to bring benefits to these administrations. *Instead of providing concrete infrastructure, the benefit of the CPSGs is to create the conditions which make economic development possible.* Getting local authorities to buy into such a vague concept is understandably difficult. However, the authorities in Kukes, Lac and Tirana point to some quantifiable results from CPSG action. The two chief benefits that these governments see are:

- Increased satisfaction with government services
- Decreased reliance on government resources

Though not as dramatic (or photogenic) as a paved road or a light post, these are tangible benefits for local administrators, and will allow them to concentrate their limited resources on other issues.

VI. Recommendations

The SSSR Programme is currently in a position to make real, long-term changes to human security in Albania. Certainly, its work so far has been substantial, but perhaps its most lasting contribution will come through the CPSGs. From this exercise, there are seven interrelated recommendations. With proper implementation, they will certainly have a positive impact, and ensure that the groups continue to function long after the SSSR Programme completes its own project cycle.

A. Representation:

The SSSR Programme has focused on the grassroots level of society, and this is commendable. However, the project should look to reformat the groups with individuals who demonstrate strong linkages with other institutions, and a history of identifying and resolving issues with limited financial resources. For example: local government officials, business leaders, religious figures, heads of NGOs, and the like. By engaging people with demonstrated social capital, the CPSG will be able to make real and positive change.

Women have not been equal participants in any of the CPSGs, despite suffering unequally in certain security issues such as domestic violence and sex crimes. The CPSGs should have an equitable gender balance, and the SSSR Programme should encourage women to not only lead the groups, but to identify and resolve issues—such as domestic violence—which affect them disproportionately.

Recommendation 1.1: Ensure that representation in CPSGs is not based on profession, and that it has a mix of local and long-term residents.

Recommendation 1.2: Identify local individuals who have high levels of social capital and encourage them to join the CPSG, attend its meetings, and take an active role in CPSG projects.

Recommendation 1.3: Reformat CPSGs to include an equitable proportion of women, especially women who have been active in other civil society organizations.

Recommendation 1.4: Encourage the CPSGs to address human security issues which disproportionately affect women, such as domestic violence, and provide expertise when needed.

B. Relevance:

The CPSGs demonstrate an uncanny ability to identify the serious issues of their communities. However, there is work to do to ensure that they follow through with the other elements of the project cycle. In the worst instances, the CPSGs are focusing exclusively this component of the project cycle and expecting their local governments, police, or UNDP to do the rest. As the CPSGs have already received training in the project cycle, the SSSR Programme can take a more active role in making sure that these skills are put into practice. Assisting them through the other stages of the project cycle—by attending CPSG meetings and offering advice in methods for addressing those problems—are ways in which the SSSR Programme should be involved.

The evaluation phase should not be overlooked. In order to be effective and sustainable, the CPSGs must document their activities, celebrate success, and learn from mistakes. They should also be encouraged to learn from each other, either in

attending CPSG meetings or nearby quarters, or through information exchanges. Another avenue to explore is the creation of a national monthly newsletter of CPSG success stories. This can be shared between CPSGs—and with the State Police and local authorities.

Recommendation 2.1: A liaison from the SSSR Programme should be available to attend CPSG meetings, and actively provide advice and guidance to the CPSGs when they encounter challenges.

Recommendation 2.2: The SSSR Programme should facilitate CPSG to CPSG exchanges, encouraging successful, proactive groups to visit others and share their success stories.

Recommendation 2.3: The SSSR Programme should facilitate the creation of a CPSG newsletter which documents the work of the various CPSGs and is shared between them (as well as local authorities, the Albanian State Police, and the general public).

C. Interest

In nearly every interview—and in most police and government conversations—participants pointed to the existence of domestic violence and property disputes as concerns of their communities. Nevertheless, very few CPSGs intervened or resolved these issues, and instead concentrate on expensive infrastructure projects. While not denying the importance of infrastructure, these grass-roots CPSGs are better placed to resolve these two serious local issues. Encouraging the CPSGs to address domestic violence and property disputes would be a positive change in the initiative. Lessons learned from such problem-defined CPSGs could be utilized in crafting future UNDP initiatives.

In order to be interested in the CPSGs, local governments need proof that they offer tangible results for themselves and their constituents. The two quantifiable benefits to local governments are increased satisfaction with government services and decreased reliance on government resources. The SSSR Programme should publicize the real achievements that have been made in this regard so far.

With their orientation at the grassroots level, very few local governments have had direct involvement in the CPSG. Those that have, as in Lac and Tirana, seem to have a better understanding of the potential and practical utility of these groups. Involving local government officials in community-based policing trainings is a good first step. Having the local governments participate in CPSG meetings, with a full understanding of what they are (and are not), and with an eye on clearly identified outputs that match their interests (i.e., increase public satisfaction with government services and reduce demand on government resources) is the second.

Recommendation 3.1: The SSSR Programme should be proactive in identifying issues which can bring local authorities and the CPSGs together, such as domestic violence and property disputes.

Recommendation 3.2: The SSSR Programme should encourage local authorities to be part of the CPSGs (attend meetings, trainings, and initiatives), and to utilize them in tackling these grassroots issues.

Recommendation 3.3: The SSSR Programme should carefully document the lessons learned from such problem-defined CPSGs, and utilize these findings to shape future UNDP initiatives.

Recommendation 3.4: The SSSR Programme must collect and publicize the benefits made by the CPSGs for local governments, such as improving public perceptions and reducing demand for local government services.

VII. Conclusion:

Ensuring the sustainability of the CPSGs will require a concerted and well-directed effort by the SSSR Programme. From these interviews, it became clear that the project has made some real changes in the lives of ordinary people, and that it has a number of resources to engage at the grassroots level. The public order inspectors were perhaps the most encouraged by the project, and are first to see the potential benefits of better-functioning CPSGs. The CPSGs and the local authorities did not always demonstrate this level of understanding, yet there are cases of where all parties are living up to the expectations of the programme. As the SSSR Programme moves closer to the end of its project cycle, it should undertake every effort to encourage the CPSGs to take initiative and to be more independent. As a participant in Kukes said: “To teach a baby to walk, you must let go of its hand.”

Appendix I: Questionnaire

Membership:

- 1) Which members of the community are represented in the CPSG?
- 2) Which members of the community are not represented in the CPSG?
- 3) How could the CPSG better represent this group?

Activities:

- 1) Describe a recent CPSG activity.
- 2) Who has been impacted the most by the CPSG activities?
- 3) Who has been impacted the least by the CPSG activities?
- 4) What could the CPSG do to better reach this group?

Issues:

- 1) What are the human security and safety issues of this community?
- 2) Which issues are the CPSG capable of solving?
- 3) Which issues are the CPSG incapable of solving?
- 4) What could improve the CPSG's ability to do so?

Impact

- 1) Has the CPSG enhanced human security and safety at the local level?
- 2) How?
- 3) Are there ways in which the CPSG could be better utilized in enhancing human security and safety at the local level?
- 4) How?

Future:

- 1) What suggestions do you have for other communities considering a CPSG?
- 2) What is necessary for a CPSG to be sustainable?

Appendix II: Interview Subjects

Kameza:

Public Order Inspector, CPSG Member (1), Mayor

Kukes:

Public Order Inspector, Head of Kukes Regional Police, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CPSG Members (2)

Lehze

Public Order Inspector, CPSG Member (1), Deputy Mayor

Lac

Public Order Inspector, Deputy Mayor, CPSG Members (2)

Puka

Public Order Inspector, Mayor, CPSG Members (2)

Sarande

Police Commissar, Deputy Mayor, CPSG Members (8)

Shkodra

Public Order Inspector, Head of Quarter

Tirana

Public Order Inspector, Police Officers (2), Representative of Quarter, CPSG Members (3), community members (2)

Tropoja

Public Order Inspector, Police Commissar, Mayor, CPSG Members (1)

Vlora

Public Order Inspector, Head of Mayor's Cabinet, CPSG Members (3), city hall employee (1)

Appendix III: Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 1.1: Ensure that representation in CPSGs is not based on profession, and that it has a mix of local and long-term residents.

Recommendation 1.2: Identify local individuals who have high levels of social capital and encourage them to join the CPSG, attend its meetings, and take an active role in CPSG projects.

Recommendation 1.3: Reformat CPSGs to include an equitable proportion of women, especially women who have been active in other civil society organizations.

Recommendation 1.4: Encourage the CPSGs to address human security issues which disproportionately affect women, such as domestic violence, and provide expertise when needed.

Recommendation 2.1: A liaison from the SSSR Programme should be available to attend CPSG meetings, and actively provide advice and guidance to the CPSGs when they encounter challenges.

Recommendation 2.2: The SSSR Programme should facilitate CPSG to CPSG exchanges, encouraging successful, proactive groups to visit others and share their success stories.

Recommendation 2.3: The SSSR Programme should facilitate the creation of a CPSG newsletter which documents the work of the various CPSGs and is shared between them (as well as local authorities, the Albanian State Police, and the general public).

Recommendation 3.1: The SSSR Programme should be proactive in identifying issues which can bring local authorities and the CPSGs together, such as domestic violence and property disputes.

Recommendation 3.2: The SSSR Programme should encourage local authorities to be part of the CPSGs (attend meetings, trainings, and initiatives), and to utilize them in tackling these grassroots issues.

Recommendation 3.3: The SSSR Programme should carefully document the lessons learned from such problem-defined CPSGs, and utilize these findings to shape future UNDP initiatives.

Recommendation 3.4: The SSSR Programme must collect and publicize the benefits made by the CPSGs for local governments, such as improving public perceptions and reducing demand for local government services.