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Final Evaluation of CSDA Project

“Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania”

Project No: UNDP-00115506; ADA-8345-00/2020

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CSDA PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania (CSDA)	
Project No.:	UNDP no. 00115506; ADA-8345-00/2020	
Corporate outcome and output:	GoA - UN Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2022-2026, Outcome C1: By 2026, governance is more transparent and accountable, enabling people to enjoy quality, inclusive services, enhanced rule of law and access to justice in line with Albania's human rights commitments. UNDP Country Programme Document for Albania 2022-2026, Output 3. Public sector accountability and quality services: Institutions at national and municipal level enhanced capacities and systems to deliver quality, responsive, efficient, transparent, inclusive and accessible services that meet the increasing social demand and perception of corruption in the public sector	
Country& Region:	Albania, Europe	
Date Project Document Signed:	Revision 1 signed on 27 September 2022	
Project Dates:	Start	Planned end
	1 June 2020	30 November 2024
Project Budget:	USD 1,191,265 (actual, 36% of estimated resources)	
Project Expenditure at the Time of Evaluation:	USD 975,743	
Funding Source:	Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), UNDP	
Implementing Party:	UNDP	
Government Counterpart:	Deputy Prime Minister/ADISA Director during June 2020 – September 2021 Minister of State for Service Standards (MS3) during October 2021-September 2023, Minister of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption since February 2024 Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), Partner from June 2020	

1 EVALUATION INFORMATION

Evaluation Type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.):	Project Evaluation	
Final/midterm review/ other:	Final Evaluation	
Period under Evaluation:	Start	End
	1 June 2020	30 November 2024
Evaluators:	Elvana Gadeshi	
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While every effort has been made to faithfully capture and reflect the information and viewpoints shared, the evaluator takes full responsibility for any inadvertent errors or omissions that may remain. These are solely her own, and do not in any way reflect the contributions of others.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADC -	Austrian Development Cooperation
ADISA -	Integrated Public Services Delivery Agency
ASPA -	Albanian School of Public Administration
ATD -	Agency for Territory Development
CO –	Cascade objectives
CSDA -	Consolidation of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania
DAC -	Development Assistance Committee
DPA -	Department of Public Administration
EU-	European Union
FGD -	Focus group discussion
GoA –	Government of Albania
GDCR -	General Directorate of Civil Registry
GGIP -	General Directorate of Industrial Property
ICT -	Information Communication Technology
IDM -	Institute for Democracy and Mediation
ISDA-	Support for Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania
KII -	Key informant interview
KRA-	Key Results Area
MARD -	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MAPA -	Minister of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption
MI –	Ministry of Interior
MIE -	Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy
M&E -	Monitoring and Evaluation
NBC -	National Business Center
NGO-	Non – Governmental Organizations
OECD -	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA -	Performance appraisal
QMS -	Quality Management System
SCQAA -	Social Care Quality Assurance Agency

SDG -	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP -	Standard Operating Procedures
UNDP –	United Nations Development Program
TiG -	Trust in Governance Opinion Poll
ToR -	Terms of Reference

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Public service:** is the product that is offered by the institutions of state administration, independent and local government, within their jurisdiction, to natural and legal persons, based on their request and that results in a response of various forms, such as a certificate, license, permit, certification, etc., from the responsible institution, provided for in the law.
- B. **Quality assessment:** is the process of assessing the quality of public service provision, according to the provisions of this law.
- C. **Leave No One Behind (LNOB):** Commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals.
- D. **Human Based Rights Approach (HRBA):** Framework to promote and protect human rights development based on international human rights standards.
- E. **Stakeholder:** An individual, group or entity with an interest in the evaluation or the object of the evaluation.
- F. **Rights Holder:** In the context of public service delivery or development projects, right holders are the citizens or communities who have the legitimate expectation that their rights will be respected and fulfilled by those in positions of authority
- G. **Duty Bearer:** State or non-state actors, that have the obligation to respect, protect, promote, and fulfil human rights of rights holders, e.g. teachers, professionals, government agencies and employees.
- H. **Vulnerability:** Physical, social, economic and environmental factors that increase the susceptibility of a community or individuals to difficulties and hazards and that put them at risk as a result of loss, damage, insecurity, suffering and death.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Consolidation of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania" (CSDA) project, funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and implemented by UNDP, aims to enhance access to quality public services in Albania through citizen-centric innovation and digitalization. It focuses on improving public administration reform, emphasizing good governance, inclusivity, and leaving no one behind.

The CSDA project, officially launched on June 1, 2020, was designed to support Albania's public administration reform efforts, particularly in improving public service delivery and governance. Initially planned to end on February 28, 2024, the project underwent several revisions and extensions. A key milestone occurred on September 27, 2022, when the project was revised to better align with shifting government priorities. Throughout its duration, the project faced significant political changes, including the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards in September 2023, which required the reassignment of responsibilities to new ministries in January 2024. Despite these challenges, a six-month no-cost extension was approved in December 2023, followed by another three-month extension in June 2024, pushing the final project end date to November 30, 2024.

With a total budget of USD 1,191,265, representing 36% of its estimated resources, the project had expended USD 975,743 by August 30, 2024. Funding for the project was provided by the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and UNDP. Key developments include the appointment of the Minister of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption as the new government counterpart in March 2024, following a cabinet reshuffle. The project's adaptability to these changes and its sustained efforts to promote public service reform demonstrate its significance in strengthening good governance in Albania, particularly through its focus on digital transformation, transparency, and accessibility in public services.

The project operates across four key result areas: Policy and Oversight, Institutional Capacity Development, Service Standard Application, and Innovation and Digital Agenda. These activities aim to strengthen institutional capacities, apply public service standards nationwide, and promote innovation in service delivery.

Evaluation Objective and Methodological Approach

The primary objective of this evaluation was to assess the progress and sustainability of the CSDA Project in citizen-centric service delivery in Albania. Specifically, it aimed to identify factors influencing project implementation, highlight lessons learned, and provide insights to guide future UNDP and partner interventions. The methodology involved a phased approach—Inception, Inquiry, and Analysis—beginning with a thorough review of documents, consultations with stakeholders, and the development of tools such as an evaluation matrix and evidence grid. This matrix aligned the evaluation with OECD DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability) and outlined data collection methods, indicators, and analytical frameworks.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining qualitative and quantitative data from project reports, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), surveys, and secondary literature. Inclusivity was prioritized with balanced gender and diverse age representation, ensuring a demographic reflection of the community served. Specific tools, such as moderator guides and survey forms, tailored to duty bearers and right holders, enabled detailed data collection, while strict data confidentiality safeguarded participant information. Triangulation methods allowed for verification of findings, and stakeholder

insights informed locally relevant priority issues, ensuring that the evaluation captured a comprehensive view of the project's effectiveness and areas for improvement.

A total of 86 individuals (49 in local level including Mayor/Deputy Mayor and duty bearers; 16 in central level; 4 project experts; 1 NGO, 1 UNDP staff, 1 ADA staff, 14 right holders) including 33 Male and 53 Female were interviewed through KIIs and FGDs. A total of 49 duty bearers (8 male and 41 female) at the local level were surveyed anonymously, along with 23 right holders (12 male and 11 female) who also participated in anonymous surveys.

Key findings

Below, the evaluation's 12 key findings are summarized. They are structured around four main OECD/DAC criterion: i) relevance; ii) coherence; iii) effectiveness and iv) sustainability.

Relevance:

Finding 1. The CSDA project has proven to be relevant in addressing critical needs in Albania's public administration reform, particularly in improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility.

Finding 2. CSDA project adaptability to emerging challenges and shifting priorities in Albania's public service landscape is evidenced by proactive realignments and project document revision to meet evolving needs addressing implementation challenges and taking advantage of opportunities created to advance outcome achievement and result sustainability.

Finding 3. There is a need for future engagement to enhance the relevance and inclusivity of CSDA project interventions, particularly for vulnerable groups, by adopting key strategies. These include strengthening digital inclusion and literacy programs as well as well-targeted interventions in terms of higher accessibility and assistive solutions, especially for vulnerable communities, ensuring a smooth transitional period towards the full shift to online services also at the local level, expanding capacity-building efforts, and improving monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

Finding 4. Regional cooperation, gender-sensitive service delivery, and better data collection on vulnerable populations will help address specific challenges and promote equitable access to public services in Albania.

Coherence

Finding 5. The project maintained its internal coherence even after a significant revision in 2022, which was necessitated by changing government priorities. The revision ensured that the project's outputs remained relevant while reflecting the government's focus on online service delivery and digital innovation.

Finding 6. CSDA project demonstrated strong external coherence by aligning effectively with national and international frameworks and coordinating closely with other development partner initiative in the good governance area. It supported Albania's public administration reform and good governance priorities, contributed to SDG 16 as well as SDG 5 and SDG 9, and reinforced the country's EU integration efforts through assistance for digital agenda implementation and service standardization.

Finding 7. CSDA project has maintained strong coherence both within its own structure and in relation to external goals and frameworks. Its added value is evident in its contributions to institutional reform, service delivery, digital transformation, and policy development in Albania.

Effectiveness:

Finding 8. The project has made significant strides in public administration reform in Albania. Key accomplishments include the formulation of a Public Service Standards policy in 2023 and conducting annual Trust in Government Opinion Polls from 2020-2023, offering valuable insights on citizen perceptions. It supported ISO 9001:2015 certification for multiple service providers and delivered leadership and capacity-building programs to enhance institutional efficiency. Citizen-centric services were expanded to benefit over 378,000 residents, improving accessibility for vulnerable groups. The project also advanced Albania's digital transformation, improved the business inspection system, and piloted performance management reforms to enhance accountability across public institutions

Finding 9. CSDA project has successfully achieved core outputs, as per the focused scope in line with funding available, particularly in the areas of policy support and standards, institutional capacity building and digital agenda. Its efforts to strengthen policy frameworks and quality management systems were also met. The provision of public services based on customer care principles reached underserved populations, helping fulfill the project's goal of citizen-centric service delivery. The ADISAs offices have introduced an exemplary model for delivering citizen services, recognized as a best practice standard. In terms of outcomes, the project has made substantial contributions to improving public administration in Albania. It has positively impacted public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls. The support for Albania's National Broadband Plan implementation furthered the country's digital transformation efforts. These contributions provide an essential impetus in the context of Albania's EU integration. However, some outcomes, such as fully embedding a culture of customer service across all institutions, are still in progress and may require additional time for full realization.

Finding 10. Key facilitating factors for the project's success included strong partnerships between UNDP, the Government of Albania, and the Austrian Development Agency, alignment with national priorities, flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances, and a strong focus on capacity-building for public officials. These factors enabled the project to achieve high-quality results and foster long-term sustainability. On the other hand, hindering factors such as government restructuring, limited budget, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the absence of a centralized authority for national standards slowed progress and limited the project's reach.

Sustainability:

Finding 11. Local leadership is committed to upholding the service standards previously established by ADISA's, despite the institution's dissolution. In the near future, several ADISA employees in the municipalities of Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake and Përmet will transition to roles as municipal employees. Funded by municipal budgets, these positions will be dedicated to delivering citizen services.

Finding 12. The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level, capacity-building initiatives, digital transformation efforts, and the institutionalization of reforms. However, several factors, such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, financial constraints, and institutional capacity challenges may pose risks to the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Continued international support, sustained government ownership, and efforts to address the digital divide and capacity gaps are crucial for ensuring that the project's achievements are maintained and built upon in the future.

Conclusions

Presented below are the nine conclusions drawn from the evaluation's key findings.

Conclusion 1: Relevance of the CSDA Project: The CSDA project successfully addressed Albania’s key needs in public administration reform, particularly improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility. This highlights its alignment with Albania’s critical priorities and the necessity of continued support for administrative modernization.

Conclusion 2: Adaptability and Responsiveness: The project’s adaptability, demonstrated by its proactive adjustments to emerging challenges, ensured sustained progress toward its goals. This ability to realign with evolving government priorities reinforced its relevance and effectiveness, setting a benchmark for handling dynamic administrative landscapes.

Conclusion 3: Need for Inclusive Digital Solutions: Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups has been essential in enhancing the impact of CSDA interventions. Strengthened digital literacy and inclusion programs, combined with improved accessibility during Albania’s transition to online services, have contributed to fostering equitable access to public services and effectively supporting underserved populations.

Conclusion 4: Internal Coherence: Even after a significant revision in 2022 to accommodate shifting government priorities, the CSDA project maintained internal coherence. This reflects the project’s strong foundation, ensuring continued alignment with Albania’s digital transformation and online service delivery goals.

Conclusion 5: External Coherence and Alignment with International Frameworks: The CSDA project effectively aligned with Albania’s public administration reform and international frameworks, including SDGs 16, 5, and 9. By reinforcing Albania’s EU integration efforts and promoting good governance, the project enhanced its global and national relevance

Conclusion 6: Added Value in Reform and Service Delivery: The CSDA project’s contributions to institutional reform, digital transformation, and service delivery reforms highlight its added value. By fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and digital innovation, the project played a pivotal role in Albania’s public administration improvement.

Conclusion 7: Significant Strides in Public Administration: The project made substantial advances in public administration reform, including policy development, public service standardization, and digital transformation. The increased public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls, signals the project’s positive impact on citizen perceptions. However, some goals, like embedding a full culture of customer service across institutions, will require further time to fully realize.

Conclusion 8: Facilitating and Hindering Factors: Strong partnerships, flexibility, alignment with national priorities, and capacity-building were key facilitators of the project’s success. However, challenges like government restructuring, limited budget, the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the lack of a centralized standards authority slowed progress. Addressing these barriers is essential to extending the project’s reach.

Conclusion 9: Sustainability of Project Outcomes: The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level and institutionalized reforms. However, risks such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, and financial constraints must be addressed. Continued international support and efforts to close the digital divide are essential to sustaining and building on the project’s achievements in the long term. Local leadership is committed to upholding ADISA’s high standards of citizen services, even after the institution’s closure, by integrating former ADISA employees as dedicated municipal staff in Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake, and Përmet. Funded by municipal

budgets, these roles will ensure the continued provision of efficient, accessible public services at the local level.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings and conclusions, the evaluator developed four recommendations. They are presented below (more details in main report).

Recommendation 1: A comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted for all vulnerable groups to evaluate their usage of online public services and identify barriers to access them.

Recommendation 2: Proposed amendments to the performance evaluation process in public administration should be finalized through comprehensive consultations with key stakeholders. The pilot intervention on cascade objectives and performance appraisal should be institutionalized within the framework of promoting meritocracy.

Recommendation 3: Future interventions should provide technical assistance to ensure the adoption of EU and international best practices, including certified quality management systems for both central and local public service providers. The appointment of a lead institution in Quality Management should be prioritized to oversee the development, implementation, and updating of national standards.

Recommendation 4: Albanian Municipalities should invest in preserving the investment and standards of public service delivery established by ADISA following the closure of the institution.

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The evaluation was commissioned by UNDP Albania through an open competition procedure initiated in July 2024. The process began with the preparation of the ToRs (See Annex A) followed by recruitment of the local evaluator. The evaluation ends in October 2024. The CSDA Project team has provided support in the implementation of evaluation, when was necessary and without impacting the evaluation's impartiality and independence.

The evaluation covers the entire implementation period of the CSDA project, from its initiation in June 2020 to its completion in November 2024. It focuses on how the project responded to Albania's evolving public administration challenges, its alignment with national and international priorities, and its contribution to the digitalization of public services. The findings and recommendations from this evaluation will guide policymakers, development practitioners, and other stakeholders in enhancing public sector reforms in Albania and similar contexts.

Following the executive summary, the introduction (Section 1) includes background information. Section 2 includes the evaluation scope and objectives followed by the methodological approach (Section 3). The main part of the report begins in Section 4 with a presentation of data collection process and analyses. Section 5 includes limitations, Risks and Analyses. Section 6 includes findings focusing on the key questions. Lessons learned included in Section 7, Conclusions in Section 8 and Recommendations in Section 9. The evaluation tools, interview lists and other supporting documentation are included in the Annexes Section 10.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT ANALYSES

Ensuring citizen centric delivery of public services has been a priority undertaking as part of public administration reform under the principles of good governance for the Government of Albania (GoA) since 2014. It entails a path-breaking reform that reinvents the way public administration delivers services to its citizens.

Responding to further assistance requests from the Government of Albania, the CSDA project (June 2020-November 2024) builds upon the contribution of the ISDA Support Project (Support for Innovation Against Corruption: Building a Citizen Centric Service Delivery Model in Albania, August 2014-May 2020), a donor pool fund project with contributions from the Governments of Italy and Austria and UNDP, implemented by GoA in partnership with UNDP.

The UNDP-administered CSDA Project with Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) as a key contributor together with UNDP, continues support towards strengthening access to public services and the quality and efficiency in their delivery in Albania sustainably through citizen-centric innovation and utilization of information technology, based on shared standard requirements.

CSDA Project builds upon the proposition of addressing the need to proceed at a sustained pace in consolidating the achievement to date for citizens and businesses in the framework of the public services reform in Albania under the GoA's good governance priority.

The project asserts the concept of the right to quality public services for all citizens and business in 14 municipalities in Albania¹ mirrored by the obligation by the public administration to deliver. It emphasizes leaving no one behind, ensuring special attention to women and vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities – with specific reference to Roma and Egyptians, the economically disadvantaged, and the rural population in particular in remote locations.

Through its activities, CSDA is positioned to support the country's EU integration and regional cooperation agendas, help further comply with Sustainable Development Goals, and promote South-to-South cooperation, while ensuring synergy and complementarity with concurrent reform programs that impact service delivery activities, as well as partner assistance projects.

Project interventions take place in the key result areas (KRA) of:

1. **Policy and Oversight**, with activities that address the need to provide expertise geared towards support in terms of policy, change management and oversight with a strong emphasis on public service standards
2. **Institutional Capacity Development**, under which activities strive to provide the necessary support and expertise, in close coordination also with the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA), to develop institutional capabilities relative to understanding and implementing relevant standards, as well as effective and efficient performance, so that these institutions deliver sustainably benefits to citizens and businesses, fulfilling their mandate and ensuring ongoing improvement
3. **Service Standard Application**, under which activities support the application of customer service principles in public service delivery in Albania at the central and local level, as well as crosscutting stakeholder engagement and public outreach, and

¹ Maliq, Belsh, Patos, Librazhd, Divjakë, Burrel-Mat, Koplik-Malësi e Madhe, Kukës, Pogradec, Roskovec, Ersekë-Kolonjë, Tepelenë, Himarë, Përmet

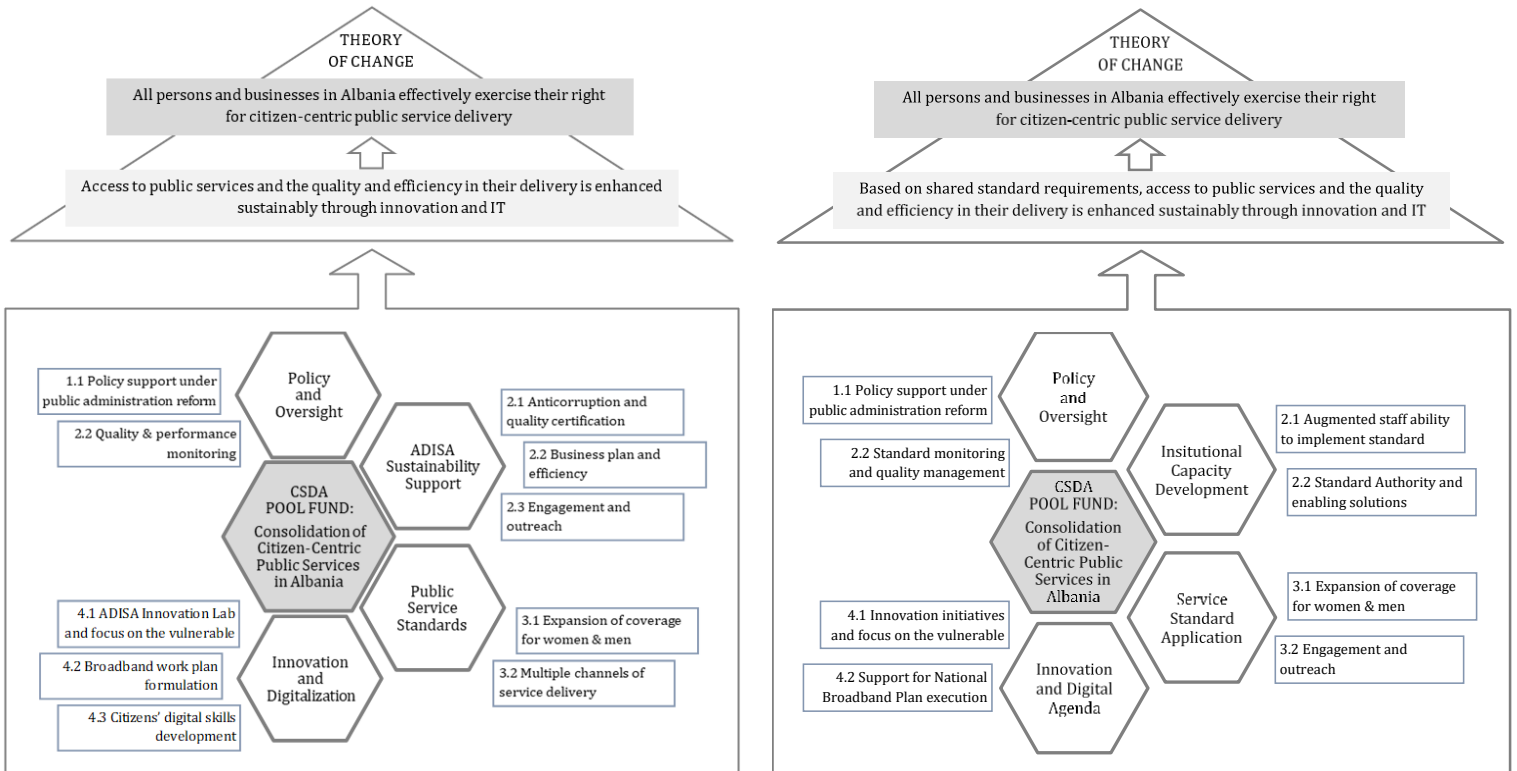
4. **Innovation and Digital Agenda**, with activities built upon the premise that innovation and digitalization remain key enabler of increased benefits to citizens and businesses in service delivery, with due regard to mitigating the digital divide and obstacles to internet access.

The project, which began in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, underwent a revision in 2022, which also reflected a focusing of its activities in line with the available funds (36% of the estimated budget).

The revision was necessitated by significant changes in the project’s operating environment due to shifting government priorities with exclusive adoption of online public service applications (closure of physical service windows at the central level mandated as of 1 May 2022), along with a strengthened focus on service standards accompanied with a dedicated new ministerial appointment. The process resulted in a validation of CSDA Project’s goal and positioning in support of the common vision for citizen centric public service delivery in Albania. The overall objective was reconfirmed with an increased focus on shared public service standard requirements applicable across providers, channels, and services. The required degree of realignment took place primarily at the project activity level, harmonized with priority interventions identified by the government. It was reflected in the consolidation of certain outputs due to refocusing, but also recalibration due to an appropriate expansion of scope, which originally targeted specific institutional beneficiaries and delivery channels. This is clearly reflected in the following revised Theory of Change.

CSDA Theory of Change

Original ProDoc:



Specifically, the project retained its 4 KRA structure with the following revisions:

- **KRA 1** kept the same focus and formulation, i.e., no change at the output level, with an added reference to standard development.
The revised ProDoc KRA 1 activities take place **under Output 1.1 Policy support under the public administration reform provided, and Output 1.2: Quality management and performance monitoring enhanced.**
- Under **KRA 2**, the scope was expanded from one institutional beneficiary, whose role was evolving, to targeting key institutional public service providers on standardized Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) preparation, process re-engineering (re-location from Key Result 4), training, as well as support for international certification preparation and tools to facilitate standard compliance work. Hence, two outputs were reformulated to reflect the expanded scope, while the third on stakeholder engagement and outreach was relocated as was under KRA 3 in line with the latter’s revision.
The revised ProDoc KRA 2 activities take place under **Output 2.1: Assistance provided towards obtaining relevant certification and establishing core processes aligned with national standards, and Output 2.2: Sustainable institutional capacities at the governance level enabled.**
- **KRA 3** retained the general focus on the implementation of customer care principles in public service delivery in Albania reflected in the Citizen Charter, October 2018, formulated with assistance from the predecessor project, especially outside the capital, removing references to the physical service delivery channel and channel development and emphasizing support for standard implementation to reflect GoA priorities. This resulted in the consolidation of the two existing outputs into one.
The revised ProDoc KRA 3 activities take place under **Output 3.1 Adaptation and application of public service standards expanded nationwide for women and men, and Output 3.2 Engagement and outreach conducted.**
- Under **KRA 4**, the focus on promoting innovation in public service delivery and supporting the advancement of Albania’s digital agenda was maintained reflecting on the role of new stakeholders and the progress of GoA efforts such as with the approval of the National Broadband Plan. Given the latter, two of the three original outputs were consolidated in one.
The revised ProDoc KRA 4 activities take place under **Output 4.1 Innovation in public service delivery with focus on women and vulnerable advanced, and Output 4.2: Implementation of the National Broadband Plan advanced.**

At the start of September 2023, the project’s progress was punctuated by external developments, namely the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards, appointed as the key government interlocutor for the project from October 2021. In the absence of an appointed successor to the dissolved Ministry, project activities in three out of its four key result areas requiring the government primary interlocutor’s approval, were put on hold. On 12 December, a six-month no-cost extension of project duration until 31 August 2024 was approved.

In January 2024, with the creation of two new ministries, the former CSDA key counterpart’s mandate was fully taken over as part of areas of responsibilities assigned to three ministers. On 7 March, the Deputy Prime Minister informed about the appointment of the Minister of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption (MAPA) as the key government interlocutor for the CSDA Project.

In the meantime, based on joint agreement, the project had completed interventions, which were in their final phase and/or had technical interlocutors in place, and it resumed new activity implementation in close collaboration with MAPA. In June 2024, the project was granted a further three-month extension until

30 November 2024 as necessary to guarantee its realistic and successful implementation and to achieve the desired results.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The primary objective of this evaluation is learning. Specifically, the evaluation aims to:

1. Assess the progress achieved by the CSDA Project to date
2. Examine the prospects for sustainability of the project's outcomes
3. Identify facilitating and hindering factors that have influenced the project's implementation and results
4. Highlight good practices and lessons learned from the project's execution

Furthermore, the evaluation seeks to provide evidence-based insights to inform future programming, implementation, and monitoring of similar interventions by UNDP Albania, Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and other key stakeholders.

The evaluation covered the project implementation from its start until the date of the start of this assignment.

CSDA interventions take place in the key result areas (KRA) of:

1. Policy and Oversight
2. Institutional Capacity Development
3. Service Standard Application and Innovation and Digital Agenda.

It assessed specific aspects of the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability. These evaluation criteria were selected among the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria based on strategic knowledge interests from UNDP and ADC. The criteria of Efficiency and Impact were not assessed as part of this evaluation, due to considerations of feasibility in terms of available resources, time, and expected access to evidence. Field visits were planned for a minimum of seven (7) citizen service centers supported by the project, selected from a total of 14 locations across Albania, including Maliq, Belsh, Patos, Librazhd, Divjakë, Burrel-Mat, Koplik-Malësi e Madhe, Kukës, Pogradec, Roskovec, Ersekë-Kolonjë, Tepelenë, Himarë, and Përmet. The selection of field visit locations was finalized during the inception phase, guided by criteria identified through initial document review, stakeholder interviews, and considerations of geographic coverage and logistical feasibility. However, the evaluator conducted field visits in a total of 10 municipalities, exceeding the original scope, including municipalities of : Maliq, Librazhd, Divjakë, Malësi e Madhe, Kukës, Roskovec, Ersekë-Kolonjë, Përmet, Tepelenë and Belsh.

The evaluation was guided by the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016), Evaluation Policy of the Austrian Development Cooperation (2019), ADA's Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020), and the evaluation criteria of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

The evaluation focuses on four specific criteria, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability selected from the OECD/DAC evaluation framework

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The evaluation was structured in line with the ToR's indications, which outlined three phases: i. Inception phase; ii. Inquiry (Data collection and analysis) phase; iii. Analysis, synthesis, and reporting, as mentioned

further in the Work Plan section. The evaluation methodology was approved by UNDP during the inception phase.

The inception phase commenced on 9 August 2024 and concluded on 22 August 2024. It involved a thorough review of relevant documents, virtual consultations with UNDP staff, and the submission of the Inception Report to UNDP. During the inception phase, the evaluator reviewed the narrative to assess the causal relationships between activities, outputs, and outcomes, as well as the associated risks and assumptions. Additionally, the evaluator completed a stakeholder mapping (See Annex B: Stakeholder Mapping), refined the evaluation questions, drafted the evaluation matrix (See Annex C: Evaluation Matrix), finalized the methodology, and developed the evaluation tools (See Annex D: Data Collection Tools).

The evaluator used the Project Log Frame and the theory of change as starting points. The evaluation matrix, which formed the main analytical framework for the evaluation, was developed during the inception phase. The matrix set out how the evaluation questions and evaluation criteria have been addressed during the data collection and report writing phases and included the four OECD DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness and impact); key questions; indicators and judgment criteria; data collection methods and sources of information; and the data analysis methods used during the report writing phase. During the data analysis phase, an evidence grid, which complement Evaluation Matrix, was developed to systematically detail each finding and the corresponding evidence on which it is based (see Annex E: Triangulation of findings).

The evaluation matrix includes the information found in Table 1 below

Table 1. Description of evaluation matrix

Column	Title	Description
1	Evaluation Criteria	OECD DAC Criteria
2	Key Questions	Primary questions
4	Indicators and Judgment Criteria	Indicators that can measure the objectives or judgment criteria that specifies an aspect of the evaluated intervention that will allow its merits or success to be assessed
5	Data Collection Method/Main Sources of Information	The primary and secondary sources of information that will be reviewed to gather the indicators or judgment criteria
6	Data Analysis Method	Data analysis will include three steps: gather and consolidate information, organize findings and analyse data. Data were analysed using one or more of the following techniques: quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, thematic analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis and triangulation (see Methodology section for detailed definitions)

At the conclusion of the inception phase, the evaluator completed the inception report and delivered it to UNDP for quality review. The report was accepted by UNDP on August 22 2024. The quality assurance and ethical consideration were also prepared.

The evaluator followed a participatory and consultative approach that ensured close engagement with the evaluation manager, project partners, and direct beneficiaries. A mixed-methods approach was used to consolidate findings from qualitative and quantitative evidence gathered from multiple sources, including project documents, government documents, public reports, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and questionnaires. The evaluation questions were addressed by collecting primary qualitative and quantitative data, complemented by an analysis of secondary quantitative data and existing documents. The secondary data analysis included an extensive literature review, which informed the

development of the Inception Report and was supplemented by on-site observations. The literature review involved an examination of project documentation, such as annual workplans, activity designs, annual project reports, monitoring data, and existing evaluative evidence, as well as third-party data and documents (published by government, civil society, donors, academia, etc.).

The methods adopted for data collection were tailored to specific respondents or groups. For instance, FGDs were utilized for municipal-level duty bearers and right holders (citizens) to understand multiple viewpoints, capture differential experiences and perceptions, increase research coverage, and allow for internal verification of information. Multiple FGDs were conducted to enable triangulation of the results. During the selection process for right holders in the survey, efforts were made to ensure balanced gender representation, with a distribution of approximately 52% male and 48% female participants. This approach was intended to capture a broad range of perspectives on the municipality’s services and their varied impacts across genders. Inclusivity was also prioritized, with right holders selected from diverse age groups to ensure the sample accurately reflected the community’s demographic composition.

In the analysis phase, factors such as age were carefully examined to understand how these characteristics might influence experiences and outcomes across different community groups. The evaluator conducted initial consultations with right holders to identify priority issues, ensuring the evaluation addressed locally relevant challenges. Additionally, data confidentiality was strictly maintained, with all right holders de-identified in reporting to protect sensitive information.

KIIs were conducted with central and local stakeholders, NGO members, CSDA Project experts, and UNDP and ADA personnel. These interviews frequently included high-level governmental officials, such as former Minister, General Directors in the Line Ministries, Chiefs of Cabinet, and Mayors/Deputy Mayors. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were chosen for these individuals, as they allowed the scheduling flexibility needed and facilitated more in-depth insights through direct, personal engagement.

Five moderator guides were developed for use during the data collection phase that contained moderator instructions and interviewee questions. Two data collection sheets (hereinafter ‘survey’) were also developed for duty bearers and right holders to collect additional quantitative data. Questions were tailored to each group. Surveys were provided to FGD participants to capture quantitative data, with questionnaires being distributed either before or after the FGDs. The surveys were anonymized to remove personal identifiers and originally designed in Albanian before being translated into English to ensure accuracy.

The table below summarizes the evaluation methods that was used for different types of respondents, along with their particular contribution to this research.

Table 2 Summary of the evaluation methods

Method	Purpose
Desk Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To rapidly synthesize existing literature on relevant context • To explore data from existing documents and previous research — secondary data — to gather information that will help elaborate ideas presented in reports • To look for trends, gaps and new findings

Method	Purpose
KIIs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth interviews with national and local government personnel involved in project • UNDP • ADA • NGO • CSDA Project experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To obtain in-depth information from individual respondents • To provide respondents with privacy and freedom to respond openly without the presence of other group or professional members • To collect qualitative data • To collect data for triangulation
FGDs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty bearers • Right holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand multiple viewpoints and capture differential experiences and perceptions • To increase research coverage • To allow for internal verification of information through the participation of multiple respondents • To gauge degree of agreement and disagreement on key themes\ • To collect qualitative data • To collect data for triangulation
Written Questionnaires/surveys (data Collection form) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty bearers • Right holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To obtain in-depth information from individual respondents • To collect quantitative and qualitative data • To collect data for triangulation

Data Availability: There was sufficient information available in order to answer key evaluation questions such as: Project ProDoc; CSDA Project Program Monitoring Data; Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll (TiG); Annual Progress reports; Collaborative agreements; logical framework.

Feasibility of the Final Evaluation

- **Data Collection:** Sufficient data has been collected throughout the CSDA Project 's implementation, enabling a comprehensive final evaluation.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Stakeholders, including government agencies, and partners, are engaged and supportive of the final evaluation. Their involvement is crucial for ensuring the evaluation's relevance and utility.
- **Resource Availability:** The necessary financial and human resources are in place to conduct the final evaluation, including access to external evaluator.

Key Considerations

- **Attribution:** Attributing the observed changes to the CSDA Project was straightforward, even in areas where outcomes were additionally influenced by other government initiatives or external factors.
- Equity:** The evaluation assessed whether the benefits of the program were equitably distributed, particularly among marginalized or rural populations.
- **Long-term Impact:** While the final evaluation measured immediate outcomes, assessing long-term impacts may require follow-up studies.

The main intended users of the evaluation results are UNDP program units, including headquarters departments and bureaux, regional bureaux, and UNDP country office, project and program staff and managers involved in the evaluation process, UNDP senior management, who oversee and assure the quality of the planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes and products, and use monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for decision-making, including resident representative, deputy resident representative, and outcome, sector or program managers; ADC staff locally and at Headquarters (HQ); stakeholders and partners, such as MAPA, civil society organizations, United Nations and development partners.

Intervention logic: CSDA Project builds upon a clear proposition of addressing the need to proceed at a sustained pace in consolidating the achievement to date for citizens and businesses in the framework of the public services reform in Albania. Based also on the ISDA Support Project experience, the ten identified outputs in four key result areas represent proven paths in achieving the overall impact. The project’s logic model links resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts as per its Theory of change.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The data collection phase began 23 August 2024 and ended on 24 September 2024². During this phase, the evaluator conducted key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) based on the evaluation matrix. The majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face in the field, while some took place via Zoom. The CSDA Project team facilitated the process by directly contacting respondents (excluding right holders). UNDP provided a supporting letter to accompany the invitation, along with all respondent contact details. The email invitations included background information, an invitation to participate in a KII or FGD, and a consent form.

According to the Terms of Reference, the locations for field visits were finalized during the inception phase, based on two criteria identified through preliminary document review and interviews, as well as considerations of coverage and feasibility. The process of sampling municipalities for evaluating citizen-centric public services involves selecting a representative subset of the target municipalities to collect data from both duty bearers and right holders about their experiences with citizen centric public service delivery. The two criteria identified are: 1) Geographical coverage (North, Center, South, East, and West), and 2) Category: Size of population (as per 2011 Census) within the geographic position of the municipality. The following table includes the relevant data for the eight municipalities selected for the evaluation:

Table 3: Municipalities selected for evaluation purpose

No	Municipality	Number of population	Geographic position	Category
1	Malesi e Madhe	30,823	North	2nd smallest population
2	Kukes	47,985	North	Largest population
3	Roskovec	21,742	West	2nd smallest population
4	Divjake	34,254	West	Largest population
5	Permet	10,614	South	Largest population
6	Kolonje	11,070	East	Smallest population
7	Librazhd	31,892	East	2nd smallest population
8	Maliq	41757	East	2nd largest population

However, the evaluator conducted field visits in a total of 10 municipalities, exceeding the original scope, by also including Tepelenë and Belsh. There were two reasons for this addition: first, both municipalities

² Only one individual was interviewed after the data collection deadline, on October 29, 2024.

were geographically convenient, being located along the return route to Tirana from the field visits; second, their specific circumstances added value to the sustainability criteria of the assessment. Belsh had established its citizen-centric public services center prior to the start of the CSDA project, while Tepelene's center relocated during the project's timeline and is now in the process of moving to municipal-owned premises. Details of stakeholders, along with potential key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs), are provided in Stakeholder Mapping document.

A total of 86 individuals (49 in local level including Mayor/Deputy Mayor and duty bearers; 16 in central level; 4 project experts; 1 NGO, 1 UNDP staff, 1 ADA staff, 14 right holders) including 33 Male and 53 Female were interviewed through KIIs and FGDs (See Annex F, Interviewees List). Three out of the four planned FGDs with right holders were conducted in the municipalities of Roskovec, Maliq, and Permet³. Nine FGDs with duty bearers were conducted in the municipalities of Kukes, Malesi e Madhe, Divjake, Roskovec, Permet, Librazhd, Erseke, Maliq, and Belsh.

A breakdown of the individuals interviewed by the Institutions of their primary job, disaggregated by sex, is included in Table 4.

Type	F	% of Female	M	% of Male	Total
Central Government Institutions including Former Key Government Interlocutors	11	69%	5	31%	16
Municipalities	32	65%	17	35%	49
Local NGO	1	100%		0%	1
Experts	1	25%	3	75%	4
Donor & Implementer	2	100%		0%	2
Right Holders	6	43%	8	57%	14
Total	53	62%	33	38%	86

A total of 49⁴ duty bearers (8 male and 41 female) at the local level were surveyed anonymously.

A total of 23⁵ right holders (12 male and 11 female) at the local level were anonymously surveyed

The survey was distributed to duty bearers and right holders at the local level as per the following design:

Survey design targeted rights holders

This survey targeted a small number of right holders (max 6) in the four municipal public service delivery centers: Maliq, Permet, Kukes and Roskovec

Sampling Strategy: Given that the target population is small (10-15 right holders use daily the citizen-centric public services center), convenience sampling was the approach used. This involved selecting

³ In the municipality of Kukes, organizing a focus group discussion with rights holders was not feasible, as they accessed services at different times rather than simultaneously during the evaluator's visit to the center. However, the evaluator conducted individual surveys with each rights holder and collected statistical data using data collection form.

⁴ Participation in the FGDs was limited, as not all surveyed duty bearers took part.

⁵ Not all surveyed right holders participated in the FGD.

respondents based on their availability or willingness to participate in the survey. The evaluator approached citizens as they complete their visit to the citizen-centric public services center and invited them to participate in the survey during a given time the evaluator was in the citizen-centric public services center.

Sampling Size Justification: A sample of 6 out of 10-15 daily users represents approximately 40-60% of the daily population, is sufficient for exploratory surveys in small groups.

Survey Content: A mix of closed-ended questions for quantitative analysis (e.g., satisfaction ratings) was used.

Response Rate: Since the target sample is only 6 citizens out of 10-15 daily users, achieving a high response rate is critical. To reach 6 responses, the evaluator needed to approach 8-10 citizens.

Data Collection Method: Given the small sample size, in-person survey was the most efficient way to collect data. Self-administered paper-based surveys were used. Citizens were provided with a paper survey to fill out immediately after their service interaction/ 3 minutes in length.

In the Table 5 below, the total number of surveyed right holders disaggregated by sex and location is elaborated

Table 5: End Beneficiaries (right holders) surveyed

No	Municipalities	Right holders	M	F
1.	Maliq	5	3	2
2.	Kukes	7	3	4
3.	Permet	5	2	3
4.	Roskovec	6	4	2
	Total	23	12	11

Survey design targeted duty bearers

Survey Target Group: This survey was aimed at duty bearers across nine municipalities: Belsh, Maliq, Librazhd, Ersekë, Kukës, Përmet, Roskovec, Divjakë, and Malësia e Madhe.

Sampling Strategy: The sampling strategy focused on selecting all frontline counter staff providing services within municipal citizen-centric public services centers where the evaluation took place.

Survey content: The survey employed a combination of closed-ended questions for quantitative assessment (e.g., satisfaction ratings) and open-ended questions to capture qualitative insights (e.g., suggestions for service improvements).

Response Rate: All counter employees who were on duty during the evaluation period were invited to participate. The survey achieved a 100% response rate, with all contacted employees completing the survey.

Data Collection Methodology: Due to the small sample size, an in-person, self-administered paper survey was deemed the most efficient data collection method. Duty bearers were provided with paper questionnaires to complete at their respective workstations.

In the Table 4, the total number of surveyed duty bearers disaggregated by sex and location is elaborated

Table 6: Duty bearers surveyed

No.	Municipalities	Duty Bearers	M	F
1	Belsh	4	1	3
2	Maliq	6	0	6
3	Librazhd	6	3	3
4	Erseke	3	1	2
5	Kukes	2	0	2
6	Permet	7	2	5
7	Roskovec	10	0	10
8	Divjake	5	0	5
9	Malesi Madhe	6	1	5
Total		49	8	41

The evaluator adhered to all obligations of evaluation, including independence, impartiality, credibility, conflicts of interest and accountability in accordance with UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation⁶. The evaluator signed UNDP's Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evidence Generation (See Annex G). In addition, informed consent was obtained for senior level of participants during the KIIs involved in the evaluation and ethical safeguards for participants were observed including respect for dignity and diversity, right to self-determination, fair representation, confidentiality, and avoidance of harm. Signing sheets for focus group discussions were collected from all duty bearers who participated in the FGDs at the local level.

After an initial analysis of the data, the evaluator presented preliminary findings to UNDP virtually on September 26, 2024. The presentation included key findings for each of the criteria, key questions and sub-questions and a timeline of next steps.

The report writing phase began on 27 September 2024 and concluded upon the final submission date of this report. During this phase, the evaluator transcribed and analyzed data, drafted the final report, presented key findings and recommendations to UNDP and ADA on October 18 2024, and delivered the final report to UNDP on October 30, 2024.

The evaluation covered the project implementation from its start until the date the evaluation assignment began. As agreed, the evaluation analyzed four OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability. In addition to the DAC criteria, the evaluation also focused on gender, human rights, and equity, with particular attention to rights holders' rights and the Leave No-one Behind principle. These criteria provided a normative framework to determine the merit or worth of the Project and served as the basis for making evaluative judgments. Data collection tools could be found in Annex.

Data analysis included three steps: Information was gathered and consolidated, findings were organized and data was analyzed using one or more of the following techniques: quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, thematic analysis, and triangulation.

⁶ UNEG [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#), June 2020.

- **Qualitative Analysis, Thematic Analysis and Triangulation of Key Informant Interviews:** The first step of this manual analysis process involved reading the full transcripts, becoming familiar with the data, and noting the themes and concepts that emerged. This was followed by compiling information by theme and exploring similarities and differences across interviews and between ministries, municipalities and other groups or organizations. Information was validated through triangulation ensuring that the results reported in the final report were based on input from multiple KIIs.
- **Qualitative Analysis, Thematic Analysis and Triangulation of Focus Group Discussions:** FGDs were structured to ensure that participants responded mostly to the moderators and not to one another. Similarities and differences were explored comparing the FGDs held in each municipality. Information was validated through triangulation.
- **Quantitative Analysis and Triangulation of Survey Data:** Survey data was entered into a Microsoft Excel spread sheet and data was aggregated in pivot tables for each question. Data was reviewed as a whole and compared by municipality to determine if differences or themes existed. The data is reported in the final report graphically supported by appropriate explanation.

The evaluator avoided collecting any personally identifying data, and if it was necessary to collect such information, the evaluation protected individuals by storing the data on encrypted hardware and anonymizing it at the earliest opportunity.

The evaluation ensured the following:

- **Confidentiality:** Participants' anonymity was protected, and all participants were assured of the confidentiality of any information they shared.
- **Preventing disclosure of identity:** Appropriate measures were taken to prevent the release or publication of an individual's data in any form that could disclose or infer their identity.
- **Informed consent:** Informed consent was collected from all participants.
- **Data security:** Data was secured on Google cloud servers, and once analyzed, all data was anonymized. Only the evaluator had access to password-protected folders containing participant data for the duration of the evaluation. Raw data (such as interview transcripts) was stored in a protected folder on the secure server, accessible only by the evaluator.

After reviewing and processing the data, the evaluator prepared a draft final report and delivered it to UNDP on October 11, 2024 for internal and external review.

LIMITATIONS, RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The evaluator encountered a number of challenges during fieldwork and, although she sought to address them through an iterative research process, some limitations remained. Here were the key limitations, and mitigation measures:

Space and timing of KIIs and FGDs

- The timing of the interactions encountered some problems. Government officials were busy, and the evaluator had to schedule (and sometimes reschedule) her conversations with them to fit their needs. Interviews and conversations were interrupted by other officials as well as people visiting the offices, and the evaluator acknowledged that work was a priority. In this way, access to key informants and stakeholders was hindered by their unavailability during the planned data collection phase. The evaluator mitigated this by keeping interviews short and focused.

Turnover and recall problems

- The evaluator encountered changes in staffing because government officials and service providers had moved or left office, making it difficult to identify and track specific individuals who had been involved in implementing the Project. When individuals were available, they had limited recollection about the intervention, how it was formulated, or their experiences with implementing the Project. The proper approach in the selection of respondents by the evaluator helped mitigate this issue.

Field visit issues

- Given the level of coordination required for a successful field trip, last-minute agenda changes by local beneficiaries and stakeholders were not possible to accommodate. The evaluator relied on preliminary notifications on the CSDA Project final evaluation and followed closely with the stakeholders via email, phone, or online prior to the anticipated trips

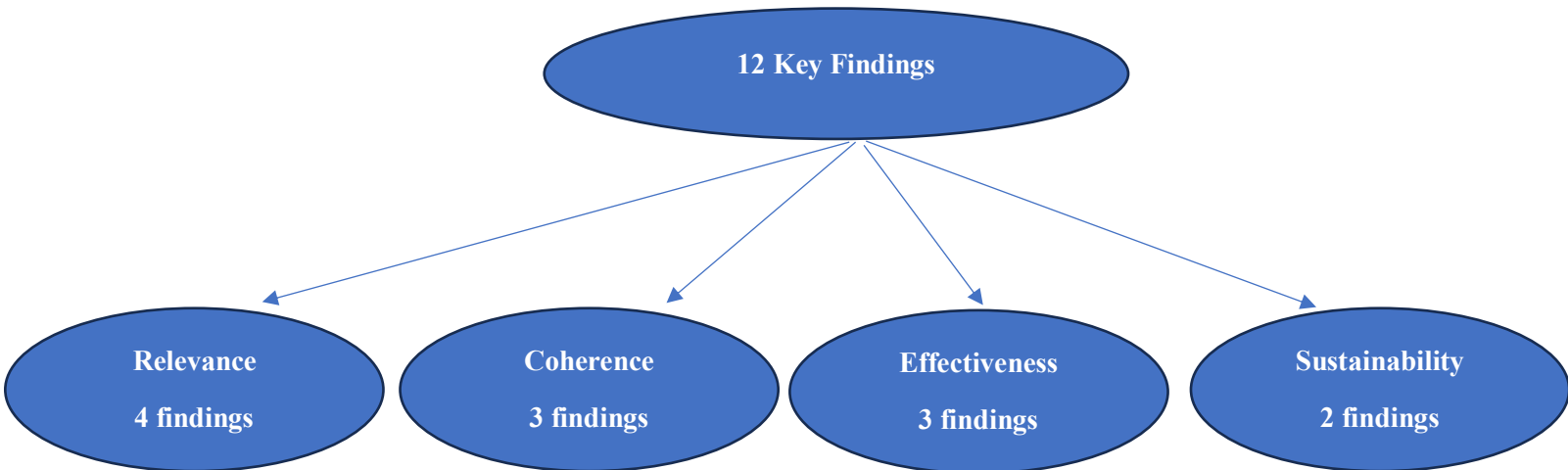
Assessing equity

- The evaluation's approach to assessing equity encountered limitations, particularly in representing vulnerable and marginalized groups during the survey of rights holders. While the survey aimed to assess the equitable distribution of program benefits—especially among rural and marginalized populations—the methodology restricted broader inclusion, as it engaged only citizens physically present at the citizen-centric public services center during the evaluator's designated on-site timeframe. This approach excluded individuals unable to visit the center due to barriers such as physical disabilities, limited mobility, geographical distance, or lack of transportation, potentially leading to findings that reflect the perspectives of those with the means and opportunity to access the center while underrepresenting the experiences and needs of other vulnerable populations. To mitigate this limitation, the evaluator supplemented the survey findings with data collected through focus group discussions (FGDs) with rights holders and duty bearers, as well as key informant interviews (KIIs) with municipal leadership staff.

FINDINGS

This section presents the key findings from the evaluation. The evaluation findings are presented under the OCDE/DAC criteria headings. Each of the key questions are presented. Significant findings for each criterion are summarized at the beginning of each section and are supported by detailed findings in the information that follows. As illustrated in Figure 1, the findings section is structured into four main criteria: Relevance; Coherence; Effectiveness and Sustainability

Figure 1: Overview of findings



Relevance

EQ1. How relevant has the project been in addressing the needs in the country?

Finding 1: The CSDA project has proven to be relevant in addressing critical needs in Albania's public administration reform, particularly in improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility.

The project's focus on the following areas demonstrates its alignment with Albania's evolving needs:

1. **Public Administration Reform:** By emphasizing citizen-centric services and the application of public service standards, on one hand, and quality management and performance monitoring on the other, the project supports Albania's broader public administration reform agenda. This reform is crucial for ensuring that public services are transparent, efficient, and responsive to citizens' needs as well as businesses', which is also a priority for Albania's EU integration process.
2. **Digitalization and Innovation:** The project was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, which accelerated the digital transformation of public services in Albania. **The exclusive adoption of online public service applications by the government** as of May 2022 highlighted the need for further digitalization efforts. CSDA's focus on innovation and IT solutions as key enablers for efficient and effective public service delivery as part of its design was prioritized to support interventions, such as in increasing access and addressing the digital divide.
3. **Inclusivity and Vulnerable Groups:** The project has placed a significant emphasis on inclusivity, ensuring access to quality public services for women and vulnerable populations such as, the

elderly, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities (particularly Roma and Egyptians). It seeks to leave no one behind, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supporting Albania's EU integration agenda.

EQ2. Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how did the project address them?

Finding 2: CSDA project adaptability to emerging challenges and shifting priorities in Albania's public service landscape is evidenced by proactive realignments and project document revision to meet evolving needs addressing implementation challenges and taking advantage of opportunities created to advance outcome achievement and result sustainability.

As the CSDA project progressed, a shift of priorities took place in Albania's public service landscape. The project demonstrated flexibility by adjusting to the evolving needs through realignment and project document revision:

1. **Shifting Government Priorities:** The government's shift towards the exclusive use of online public service applications required the CSDA project to recalibrate its activities. It strengthened its focus on service standards and the digital agenda, promoting the National Broadband Plan and supporting digital innovation. This adaptation ensured that the project remained aligned with government priorities while mitigating the risks posed by the digital divide.
2. **Cabinet Reshuffling and Institutional Changes:** The project experienced several changes in appointed key government interlocutors due to new post-elections cabinet appointments or following cabinet reshuffling. These caused disruptions, such as was the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards in September 2023. Despite these setbacks, the project engaged closely with key government stakeholders and development partners, ensuring continuity in its activities based on strategic alignment. By March 2024, a new key counterpart, Ministry of Anticorruption and Public Administration was identified, and the project resumed full implementation. Overall, the project managed to capitalize on opportunities created with the appointment of new key counterparts as well as navigate the challenges by maintaining adherence to its objective and responding with agility to the need for realignment at the activity level.
3. **Focus on Institutional Capacity Building:** The expansion of the project's scope in Key Result Area 2 (KRA 2) to include multiple institutional beneficiaries underscored the need to standardize processes across public service providers and strengthen sustainability. This included training and support for adoption of ISO-compliant quality management systems by public institutions, ensuring that they are equipped to deliver high-quality services sustainably, piloting cascade objectives for goal alignment across all administrative levels accompanied by revised performance evaluation templates and processes, as well as leadership development in terms of skills, knowledge and behavior to sustain successful change management towards EU standards.
4. **Increased Focus on Performance Monitoring:** Under KRA 1, the project expanded its role in policy formulation, including support for the formulation of the Policy Document on Public Service Standards (approved in April 2023), promotion of quality management policy discussions among decision-makers, and the drafting of a Council of Ministers' decision to establish national service standards and improve performance monitoring through a proposed Barometer of Public Services. This contribution reinforced the commitment of public administration to maintain high service standards and transparent oversight mechanisms.

EQ3: How could possible future engagement be made even more relevant in particular with respect to the most vulnerable groups / to leave no one behind?

Finding 3: There is a need for future engagement to enhance the relevance and inclusivity of CSDA project interventions, particularly for vulnerable groups, by adopting key strategies. These include strengthening digital inclusion and literacy programs as well as well-targeted interventions in terms of higher accessibility and assistive solutions, especially for vulnerable communities, ensuring a smooth transitional period towards the full shift to online services also at the local level, expanding capacity-building efforts, and improving monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

Finding 4 : Regional cooperation, gender-sensitive service delivery, and better data collection on vulnerable populations will help address specific challenges and promote equitable access to public services in Albania.

To ensure that future engagement building on the CSDA project interventions becomes even more relevant, especially for vulnerable groups, and aligns with the *Leave No One Behind (LNOB)* principle, several strategies can be adopted. These following measures can enhance inclusivity and help address the specific challenges faced by marginalized communities throughout Albania.

1. **Strengthening Digital Inclusion:** Given the shift toward online public services, **focusing on mitigating the digital divide is crucial.** Future efforts could intensify support for enhanced accessibility solutions and addressing issues of limited access to technology (internet and devices), targeting especially women and vulnerable groups, such as those affected by disability, living in remote areas, and ethnic minorities.
2. **Targeted Digital Literacy Programs for Vulnerable Groups:** While digital services offer great potential for improved access, women and vulnerable groups—such as the elderly, rural populations, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities (e.g., the Roma community)—face barriers in utilizing these services due to low digital literacy. Customized targeted offerings and a community-based approach can help ensure equitable access to online services.
3. **Essential transitional period before fully shifting to 100% online services at the local level,** ensuring that individuals, particularly those from marginalized groups, as well as others, have the opportunity to access public services at physical windows in their municipalities, where they can continue to obtain assistance for central government services now offered exclusively online.
4. **Expanding Capacity Building Programs:** Offering tailored, continuing training programs, particularly in customer service and innovation, would ensure that public institutions continue to meet evolving service standards and needs of citizens in general and women and vulnerable groups in particular.
5. **Monitoring and Feedback Mechanisms:** Implementing continuous feedback loops from rights holders regarding service delivery can make the project more responsive. Regular satisfaction surveys and focus groups can track progress and identify areas for improvement.
6. **Leveraging Regional Cooperation:** As the project aligns with Albania’s EU integration agenda, further collaboration with regional bodies and South-to-South cooperation initiatives could bolster best practices sharing, fostering innovation in public service delivery.
7. **Focusing on Gender-Sensitive Service Delivery in order to address Gender-Specific Barriers:** Women, particularly in rural areas, often face unique challenges such as lower economic autonomy, limited access to digital devices, and restricted mobility due to cultural norms. This can inhibit their ability to access public services.
8. **Improving Data Collection and Disaggregation:** Vulnerable groups still remain rather invisible in existing public service data systems, making it difficult to design targeted interventions

Coherence

EQ4: How coherent has the project been internally and externally?

Finding 5: The project maintained its internal coherence even after a significant revision in 2022, which was necessitated by changing government priorities. The revision ensured that the project's outputs remained relevant while reflecting the government's focus on online service delivery and digital innovation.

Finding 6: CSDA project demonstrated strong external coherence by aligning effectively with national and international frameworks and coordinating closely with other development partner initiative in the good governance area. It supported Albania's public administration reform and good governance priorities, contributed to SDG 16 as well as SDG 5 and SDG 9, and reinforced the country's EU integration efforts through assistance for digital agenda implementation and service standardization.

Internal Coherence: The project demonstrates strong internal coherence, built on clear governance frameworks and shared principles between UNDP, ADC, and the Government of Albania. It follows a logical progression from the ISDA Support Project, maintaining a similar structure while expanding in areas such as public service standards and capacity building. The UNDP's national implementation modality provides consistent management and oversight, ensuring adherence to set objectives and alignment with national priorities.

The project's adaptability to changes in the external environment, such as government reshuffles and shifting priorities like the **exclusive adoption of online public services** reflects its internal flexibility in adherence to its overall objectives and positioning. The decision to recalibrate certain outputs without changing its fundamental structure (4 KRAs) underscores a well-aligned and coherent internal approach. Even during periods of disruption, such as the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards, the project maintained its focus and continued specific activities with well-established stakeholders.

External Coherence: Externally, the CSDA project has effectively aligned with various national and international frameworks, ensuring synergy with other initiatives:

1. **Government of Albania Priorities:** The project is well-aligned with the Government of Albania's public administration reform, good governance priorities, and the push towards a citizen-centric service model benefiting women and men as well as businesses. The project provided assistance in line with government priorities in the strengthening of human capital in public administration through tailored capacity building. The project's revision in 2022 to focus on online service applications reflected this alignment.
2. **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** CSDA contributes to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by improving access to public services, reducing corruption, and promoting inclusive governance. It also supports SDG 5 (Gender Equality), such as through service standards implementation support and capacity building programs, as well as SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) through its focus on the digital agenda.
3. **EU Integration:** The project's activities, particularly on service standards and standardization as well as digital agenda implementation, have reinforced Albania's EU integration efforts by helping the country align with EU norms and practices, including on public service standard compliance and Broadband as universal service.

4. **Partner Projects and South-South Cooperation:** CSDA has ensured complementarity with other ongoing reform programs and international partnerships, such as under the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) and UNDP’s regional cooperation agenda. These include BACID III – Building Administrative Capacities of the Western Balkans and the Republic of Moldova supported by ADC, EU Good Governance Project and World Bank’s “Improving Equitable Access to High Standard Public Services through GovTech” in Albania, not to mention UNDP’s other projects such as STAR3 – Local Governance Institutional Capacity Building for Ownership and Sustainability, “Leave No One Behind” and EFLAS – Expanding Free Legal Aid to Men and Women in Albania (also funded by ADC).
5. **Alignment with the mission, vision, and strategic priorities of local governance units on delivering quality services to citizens:** This alignment ensures that the project supports and enhances the primary mandate of local authorities in serving their communities.
6. **Commitment to serving women and vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities:** The project demonstrates alignment with the broader global “leave no one behind” principle. The collaboration with various Albanian public institutions, including local governments, shows a concerted effort to ensure that reforms gains are available to all beneficiaries, especially that are in risk of marginalization.

EQ5: What has been its added value?

Finding 7: CSDA project has maintained strong coherence both within its own structure and in relation to external goals and frameworks. Its added value is evident in its contributions to institutional reform, service delivery, digital transformation, and policy development in Albania

The project has introduced **sustainable and scalable systems**, especially through the promotion of public service standards, quality management systems (ISO certified), and innovations that directly impact citizens and businesses.

1. **Improving Public Administration Efficiency and Standards:** By helping central government institutions like the General Directorate of Civil Registry-DPGJC; General Directorate of Industrial Property-DPPI; Agency for Territory Development-AZHT; National Business Center-QKB and Health and Social Care Quality Assurance Agency-ACSK) adopt ISO 9001:2015 compliant quality management systems that have successfully gained ISO certification, the project has made a significant contribution in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, raising standards for transparency, accountability and performance in Albania's public administration.
2. **Supporting Vulnerable Communities:** Its focus on vulnerable groups, including through municipality-administered joint citizen-centric service centers (co-location of central and local government services), based on the one-stop-shop and in-one-place model and customer service training and informative solutions with special focus on underserved populations (such as persons with disabilities as well as members of Roma and Egyptian communities), ensures that public services are more accessible. This directly contributes to reducing inequality in public service access, particularly for ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and rural populations.
3. **Innovation and Digitalization:** The emphasis on the **digital agenda**, such as assisting in the implementation of Albania’s National Broadband Plan 2020 – 2025, in close collaboration with Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy-MIE, on operationalizing state aid for the development of Broadband, and tackling the digital divide challenge at the policy level and with identified pilot

digital literacy initiatives, specifically targeting adults aged 45 and above, positions the project as a contributor to Albania’s transformation into a more tech-savvy, inclusive, and modern public service provider. This focus supports the **regional integration of the Western Balkans** and ensures Albania progresses in adopting the EU *acquis Communautaire*.

4. **Strengthening Policy Frameworks:** The policy document on **public service standards** and recommendations for national performance monitoring prepared with expertise provided by the project offers Albania a robust framework for sustained improvement in public service quality. Furthermore, the project's legal expertise in support of creating a new framework law for state inspections highlights its role in **improving regulatory frameworks** to improve public administration performance towards entrepreneurs and improve the business climate.
5. **Capacity Building:** The extensive **training programs for public officials**, including leadership training, cascading objectives and performance appraisal systems, directly contribute to improving the performance of public administration. This strengthens the institutional capacity of the government to provide better services in a more coordinated, effective manner.

Effectiveness

EQ6: What are the main project accomplishments?

Finding 8: The project has made significant strides in public administration reform in Albania. Key accomplishments include the formulation of a Public Service Standards policy in 2023 and conducting annual Trust in Government Opinion Polls from 2020-2023, offering valuable insights on citizen perceptions. It supported ISO 9001:2015 certification for multiple service providers and delivered leadership and capacity-building programs to enhance institutional efficiency. Citizen-centric services were expanded to benefit over 378,000 residents, improving accessibility for vulnerable groups. The project also advanced Albania’s digital transformation, improved the business inspection system, and piloted performance management reforms to enhance accountability across public institutions.

Main Project Accomplishments

1. Improvement in Public Service Standards:

- ✓ The **Policy Document on Public Service Standards** in Albania was formulated and approved in April 2023, marking a significant step in Albania's public administration reform. This document provides a foundation for consistent public service standards across institutions and channels of delivery.
- ✓ **Conduct of the Trust in Government Opinion Poll (TiG), 2020-2023**, which provides annual insights on perceptions by citizens on institutional trustworthiness, transparency, accountability, corruption, engagement in policy and decision-making, public service delivery, and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies, as well as comparisons across years. Starting with the 2022’s 10th milestone edition, the TiG report includes also an expanded trend analysis based on the collected data over the years.

2. Institutional Capacity Building:

- ✓ Successful **ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems certification** by multiple public service providers based on project assistance including readiness assessment, capacity building, preparation of documentation / process maps as per ISO standards and mentoring, is

a testament to the project’s success in embedding high-performance standards in public institutions.

- ✓ Capacity-building initiatives, such as leadership training for senior public officials of central government institutions and specialized programs for public administration staff, enhanced institutional capabilities, helping ensure sustainable and efficient service delivery. This program addressed shortcomings in human resource management and improved cooperation within the public administration, contributing to both current capacity building needs and in the preparation of the next phase of public administration reform.

3. Expansion of Citizen-Centric Service:

- ✓ The project supported the **expansion of the implementation of citizen-centric public service delivery standards** through the support for citizen-centric public services centers based on the one-stop-shop and in-one-place delivery model providing for improved transparency, quality, and accessibility, which has enabled an enhanced application, information, and assistance experience, including for online services **in 14⁷ small** and medium size local government units benefitting **over 378,000** residents. 96.23% of local-level duty bearers interviewed during the project final evaluation data gathering responded that the application of customer care standards at the citizen-centric public services centers in delivering services is rated as 'Effective' or 'Very Effective' in meeting citizens' needs; 86.79% of respondents stated that service delivery at the Center is 'Very Accessible' or 'Accessible' to vulnerable or marginalized groups; 100% of the rights holders surveyed reported that accessing the center was 'Easy' or 'Very Easy; Approximately 82% of respondents rated the efficiency (timely delivery) of services at the center as 'Excellent' or 'Good.' Additionally, 100% of the rights holders surveyed said they would recommend these services to other citizens in their municipality.

4. Increased Focus on Vulnerable Groups:

- ✓ The project enabled improved service accessibility for vulnerable populations and targeted training for duty bearers on serving persons with disabilities. In 2023, specific **accessibility standards** were implemented in citizen-centric public services centers, such as tactile tiles for the visually impaired.

5. Innovation and Digital Agenda:

- ✓ The project made important contributions toward Albania's **digital transformation**, including advancing the **National Broadband Action Plan** implementation through provision of a comprehensive analysis of EU practices and a draft detailed manual of standard operating procedures to implement identified state aid schemes for both the supply side (broadband infrastructure) and demand side (usage by citizens) in order to help enable access to online services for the more vulnerable groups in remote, rural and economically depressed areas in the country.

⁷ Eleven citizen-centric public services centers were opened under the ISDA Support Project. An additional three were established under the CDSA, with continued support provided to the existing centers for implementing citizen-centered standards, with special focus on accessibility and access to information on services.

- ✓ The project also provided **recommendations for adult digital literacy** policy and implementation, with special focus on adults 45 and over years of age, aiming to close the digital divide and enable greater participation in online public services.

6. Support for Better Business Climate:

- ✓ The project conducted a comprehensive analysis of the **state inspections system**, providing recommendations to improve business inspections' effectiveness and transparency and legal expertise in the drafting of the new framework law which was approved by the Albanian Parliament on September 12, 2024. This contributes to higher standards by the public administration vis-à-vis businesses in Albania and enhancing the business climate and regulatory environment.

7. Performance Management and Leadership Development:

- ✓ **Piloting a cascading objectives approach and the updating of the performance appraisal in 5 central government institutions** - three line ministries: Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), Ministry of Interior (MI), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), and two subordinated agencies: Department of Public Administration (DPA) and Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA), helped align institutional goals and streamline performance evaluations, laying the groundwork for improved accountability and performance appraisal across the public administration.
- ✓ **Delivery of leadership development programs** targeting top public officials focused on reenergizing human capital in leadership role, fostering excellence in public administration and improving institutional culture.

EQ7: To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved?

Finding 9: CSDA project has successfully achieved core outputs, as per the focused scope in line with funding available, particularly in the areas of policy support and standards, institutional capacity building and digital agenda. Its efforts to strengthen policy frameworks and quality management systems were also met. The provision of public services based on customer care principles reached underserved populations, helping fulfill the project's goal of citizen-centric service delivery. The ADISAs offices have introduced an exemplary model for delivering citizen services, recognized as a best practice standard. In terms of outcomes, the project has made substantial contributions to improving public administration in Albania. It has positively impacted public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls. The support for Albania's National Broadband Plan implementation furthered the country's digital transformation efforts. These contributions provide an essential impetus in the context of Albania's EU integration. However, some outcomes, such as fully embedding a culture of customer service across all institutions, are still in progress and may require additional time for full realization.

CSDA project successfully delivered expected results outlined in its revised Log frame. The monitoring and evaluation systems effectively captured the project's activities, outcomes, and the beneficiaries, particularly in relation to improved public service quality. The Log frame includes clear indicators at the impact, outcome, and output levels, mostly disaggregated by sex, age, and location—crucial for ensuring gender and equity considerations. Targets for tracking progress across the years along the impact pathway are well-defined, with baseline data in place. Based on provisional data for 2024, several cumulative targets for the indicators have already been achieved or exceed as of August 2024. Quantitative evidence gathered from the Results Framework, M&E documents, and stakeholder inputs from KIIs and FGDs demonstrates

that the intervention either fully/ largely/partially achieved or exceeded (one case not applicable) the intended results outlined in the PRODOC. Full results can be found in Results Frameworks. A detailed assessment of the project’s outputs, outcomes, and impact, along with the corresponding scores, is provided in Annex H: Project Results Framework.

Outputs and Outcomes Achieved to a Significant Extent:

1. Under Policy and Oversight (KRA 1):

- ✓ The formulation of a national **public service standards policy** and drafting a ***Council of Ministers’ decision on the establishment, implementation and monitoring of national standards in public service delivery***, in addition to the provision of policy analysis and recommendations in terms of service standard indicators, performance monitoring, standard operating procedures, as well as promotion of quality management adoption by public administration to drive establishment of standards and compliance reflect substantial progress in institutionalizing public service standards.
- ✓ Public trust in institutions, as measured by the **Trust in Government Opinion Poll**, providing annual insights on perceptions by citizens on institutional trustworthiness, transparency, accountability, corruption, engagement in policy and decision-making, public service delivery, and enforcement of non-discriminatory laws and policies, as well as comparisons across years, showed progress in public service delivery, improved equitable access to public services for both women and men in Albania, along with a satisfactory reduction in the gender gap in the equal treatment of women and men by public administration in service delivery.

2. Under Institutional Capacity Development (KRA 2):

- ✓ The project successfully supported multiple institutions in achieving ***ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System requirements***, an instrument to sustain high standards in public service delivery in Albania certifications, enhancing the **quality management systems** of public service providers. Here included is: a. assistance to the Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services in Albania-ADISA as the then appointed standards’ authority to obtain certification of ISO 9001:2015. This took place in December 2021 in tandem with the adoption of the ISO 37001:2016 Anti-bribery and Anti-corruption Management, making ADISA the first government agency in Albania to gain such a certification; b. Successful roll out adoption of ISO-compliant quality management system **by five** central government agencies providing public services to citizens and businesses (General Directorate of Civil Registry-DPGJC; General Directorate of Industrial Property-DPPI; Agency for Territory Development-AZHT; National Business Center-QKB and Health and Social Care Quality Assurance Agency-ASCK). The five agencies successfully passed the two stages of the certification audit and ISO 9001:2015 certificates were issued in February 2024
- ✓ Capacity-building activities have been multiple and targeted all ministries and their key subordinated institutions and have entailed specialized training for public officials ensuring institutional readiness for reforms and embracing standards. These include: ***Building capacity in public institutions to better serve vulnerable groups***, such as persons with disabilities through training certified by the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA); Delivery of a highly customized ***“Levelling-up Leadership Training”*** for senior staff of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy to further develop knowledge and skills on specific subjects making them more effective leaders towards the achievement of set objectives; ***Support for the piloting of the cascade objectives (CO) approach and the updating of the performance appraisal (PO)*** in five selected central government institutions (three line ministries: Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and two subordinated

agencies: Department of Public Administration and ASPA, through: a) a thorough process of diagnosis; b) the design and approval of pilot templates and processes; c) the delivery of training workshops for managerial staff in the targeted agencies from the level of secretary general to directors and heads of units; hands-on implementation support for deployment during the mid-term evaluations, and f) recommendations for the next steps; ***Tailored leadership development program (LeadDEv24)*** for top public administration officials on targeted areas under individual, intellectual, interpersonal, managerial and motivational behaviors in order to achieve excellence in people leadership and leading ethically and based on values.

3. Service Standard Application (KRA 3):

- ✓ The project implemented the further expansion of **customer care standards** in the territory through joint citizen service centers and accessibility improvements with the focus on small and medium size local government units serving over 378,000 residents (2011 Census), bringing their number to fourteen⁸, a cumulative contribution of ISDA Support and CSDA projects, This contributed to improved service delivery at the local level benefiting in particular women and the more vulnerable groups based on enhanced transparency, quality, and accessibility. The ADISAs offices have introduced an exemplary model for delivering citizen services, recognized as a best practice standard.
- ✓ The project placed strong emphasis on **stakeholder engagement** and provided ongoing support for meaningful stakeholder consultation opportunities in all areas within the project's scope, including public service standards, Broadband as universal service, anticorruption, innovation, etc., as well as expert assistance for effective communications and engagement efforts by government partners.

4. Innovation and Digital Agenda (KRA 4):

- ✓ The project advanced the **digital agenda** by operationalizing state aid for Broadband infrastructure in line with EU norms on developing Broadband as universal service, through provision to the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE) of a comprehensive analysis of EU practices and a draft detailed manual of standards operating procedures to implement identified state aid schemes for both the supply side (broadband infrastructure) and demand side (usage by citizens). This is an important instrument in support of public service digitalization.
- ✓ The project engaged effectively in efforts to promote digital literacy and close the digital divide. This entailed the provision of an in-depth situation analysis, conclusions and recommendations on a **conceptual framework and actionable platform for developing innovatively adult digital literacy in Albania**, as a key instrument to address the digital divide as part of support for digital transformation of public service delivery in Albania under the principle of leaving no one behind, which reflected discussions with central and local government stakeholders: Ministry of Finance, National Agency of Skills and Employment -AKPA, MIE, Tirana Municipality; consultation with beneficiaries and best EU and international practices. A

⁸ Maliq, Belsh, Patos, Librazhd, Divjakë, Burrel-Mat, Koplík-Malësi e Madhe, Kukës, Pogradec, Roskovec, Ersekë-Kolonjë, Tepelenë, Himarë, Përmet

concept idea for a pilot to address identified needs especially in the adult population 45 years and above, resident in a contained geographical area, was also flashed out.

EQ8: What are the main facilitating or hindering factors for results achievement?

Finding 10: Key facilitating factors for the project's success included strong partnerships between UNDP, the Government of Albania, and the Austrian Development Agency, alignment with national priorities, flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances, and a strong focus on capacity-building for public officials. These factors enabled the project to achieve high-quality results and foster long-term sustainability. On the other hand, hindering factors such as government restructuring, limited budget, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the absence of a centralized authority for national standards slowed progress and limited the project's reach.

Facilitating Factors for Results Achievement

1. Strong Partnerships and Expertise: The success of the CSDA project was underpinned by a strong partnership among UNDP, the Government of Albania, and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), which ensured that the project could effectively deliver high-quality results. This collaboration allowed the CSDA to navigate Albania's evolving public administration landscape and align its efforts with national priorities. Additionally, the project drew on both international and local expertise, enabling the formulation of comprehensive policies and standards, and ensuring that global best practices were tailored to Albania's specific context, enhancing the overall impact of the project.

2. Alignment with National Priorities: The CSDA project's alignment with Albania's national priorities, including its EU integration goals, public administration reform, and digital transformation agenda, played a critical role in ensuring its relevance and success. By focusing on these high-priority areas, the project secured strong government buy-in and contributed directly to Albania's long-term development objectives. The alignment with EU standards, particularly in governance and digitalization, also positioned the project as an essential component of Albania's broader reform efforts. This synergy between the project's goals and national priorities not only facilitated effective implementation but also enhanced the project's overall impact and sustainability.

3. Flexibility and Adaptability: One of the key strengths of the CSDA project was its flexibility and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Throughout its implementation, the project demonstrated a capacity for recalibrating its activities in response to shifts in government priorities and structure in adherence to its goals. For example, when necessary, the project revised the scope of certain key result areas and consolidated outputs to remain effective and aligned with its evolving operational landscape. This adaptability allowed the project to maintain its relevance and ensure progress, even in the face of challenges such as government reshuffling or changes in policy focus or institutional mandates. The ability to pivot without compromising its objectives was crucial to its sustained effectiveness.

4. Capacity-Building Focus: A central component of the CSDA project was its investment in training and capacity-building for public officials. This focus on strengthening the skills and knowledge of government staff not only improved the quality of public services but also ensured the sustainability of the reforms supported or introduced by the project. By equipping public officials with the tools and competencies needed to implement and maintain new standards and practices, the project created a foundation for ongoing improvement in service delivery. The emphasis on capacity-building helped embed a culture of professionalism and accountability within Albania's public administration, ensuring that the project's benefits would endure beyond its completion. The project maintained throughout a strong focus on sustainability through the organization of training of trainer's sessions, mentoring during the

implementation of the training content, and establishing an effective collaboration with ASPA leveraging also the established partnership of the institution with UNDP.

Hindering Factors for Results Achievement:

1. Government Restructuring: The dissolution of key government counterparts, notably the Ministry of State for Service Standards, and the delays in mandate succession and the appointment of new key government interlocutors, caused a temporary halt in new project activities across all four key result areas. This disrupted project momentum and hindered timely implementation of several planned interventions.

2. Limited Budget Allocation: Operating with only 36% of its estimated budget, the project had to prioritize certain interventions, which inevitably limited the scope and reach of some activities.

3. COVID-19 Pandemic: The project commenced during the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacted timely progress at its start. Activities that required in-person engagement, such as stakeholder outreach, training workshops, and community interactions, were initially delayed or modified to accommodate restrictions. This created early challenges in achieving full-scale implementation.

4. Digital Divide: Despite notable advancements in Albania’s digital transformation, the digital divide is present, particularly in rural areas where internet access and digital literacy remain limited. In this context, the government decision for exclusive online access of public services at the central level created challenges for several population groups, including the elderly and those in remote locations, which continue to find it challenging to use online platforms like e-Albania. This led, among others, to the rise of usage by third-party access to digital IDs, often against a fee, a practice that creates also issues with user safety and security. Overall, these challenges affected the project goal reach trajectory in terms of access to quality public services.

5. Lack of centralized authority: The absence of a centralized authority tasked with the responsibility of developing, overseeing, and ensuring compliance with national standards across various government institutions. Without such an authority, there is a lack of coherence in policy implementation, leading to inconsistent application of standards and varying levels of service quality across different sectors. Many government institutions struggle to understand their roles in adhering to these standards and often lack the necessary technical expertise to develop compliant technical standards that align with national requirements. Furthermore, the absence of a systematic review and update process for national standards results in outdated practices that fail to address the evolving needs of the public and the complexities of governance

These assumptions and risks collectively required ongoing adjustments, budget reallocations, and increased focus on digital inclusivity to support the successful implementation of the CSDA Project’s objectives.

Sustainability

EQ9: What are the major hindering and facilitating factors that influenced prospects for sustainability of the project?

Finding 11: Local leadership is committed to upholding the service standards previously established by ADISA’s, despite the institution’s dissolution. In the near future, several ADISA employees in the municipalities of Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake and Përmet will transition to roles as municipal employees. Funded by municipal budgets, these positions will be dedicated to delivering citizen services.

Finding 12: The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment, capacity-building initiatives, digital transformation efforts, and the institutionalization of reforms. However, several factors, such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, financial constraints, and institutional capacity challenges may pose risks to the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Continued international support, sustained government ownership, and efforts to address the digital divide and capacity gaps are crucial for ensuring that the project's achievements are maintained and built upon in the future.

The sustainability of the CSDA project results depends on various factors that either support or challenge their long-term impact and continuity. Below is an analysis of the major hindering and facilitating factors that influenced the project's sustainability prospects:

Facilitating Factors for Sustainability of the Project

1. Alignment with National Policies and Priorities

The CSDA project's objectives were thoroughly linked to Albania's broader public administration reform and grounded in principles of good governance, the EU integration agenda, and the digital transformation strategy. This strategic alignment played a pivotal role in fostering a sense of government ownership and commitment to the project. By integrating its goals with national priorities, the project not only secured strong buy-in from various stakeholders but also increased the likelihood of long-term sustainability for the initiatives introduced. This synergy ensured that reforms were not seen as foreign impositions but rather as essential components of Albania's path toward modernization and European integration.

2. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening

The project placed a strong emphasis on capacity-building activities, which included comprehensive leadership development programs and specialized training sessions for public administration staff. This investment was critical in institutionalizing best practices and ensuring that public officials were equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to sustain reforms after the project concluded.

Additionally, the adoption of ISO-compliant quality management systems and the successful certification by several institutional public service providers achieved with project support through clear commitments from the agencies involved, have fostered a culture of continuous improvement and performance accountability. By embedding these quality standards within institutional frameworks, the project contributed significantly to its long-term sustainability.

Moreover, support for the expansion of citizen-centric standards in public service delivery across 14 small and medium-sized municipalities was instrumental in addressing specific local needs and leveraging the readiness of local partners. This initiative not only raised citizen expectations regarding the quality of public services but also strengthened local accountability, enabling municipalities to take ownership of service provision and maintenance of standards.

3. Public Service Standards Policy Framework

The establishment of a robust policy framework through the development and approval of the Policy Document on Public Service Standards was a critical milestone for the project. This framework included also the drafting decisions by the Council of Ministers for the establishment and monitoring of public

service standards. This created a legal and regulatory infrastructure that is essential for sustaining the quality and consistency of public services beyond the project's lifespan. By laying this solid foundation, the project ensured that the reforms were institutionalized within the governance framework, which is vital for their longevity and effectiveness in serving the public.

4. Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership

The success of the CSDA project was significantly bolstered by the strong partnerships established between UNDP, the Government of Albania, ADA, public institutions, and civil society organizations. This collaborative approach was crucial in ensuring local ownership of the reforms and embedding them within the local context. The broad-based stakeholder engagement fostered a sense of shared responsibility among all parties involved, enhancing the project's sustainability prospects. By actively involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, the project ensured that the reforms were more responsive to local needs and contexts, which further contributed to their longevity.

5. Focus on Vulnerable Groups and Inclusiveness

A critical aspect of the project was its commitment to improving service accessibility for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities and marginalized communities such as the Roma and Egyptian populations. By prioritizing inclusiveness, the project contributed to the development of a more equitable service delivery system. This focus on inclusive public service practices enhances the likelihood that future public administration reforms will continue to prioritize equity and address the needs of marginalized communities. By ensuring that these groups are considered in service provision, the project helps build a foundation for sustainable and fair governance.

6. Ensuring Continuity in Citizen Services Through Municipal Commitment and Staffing Transitions

The leadership at the local level remains steadfast in its commitment to preserving and continuing the high standards of service previously set by ADISA, ensuring that the quality of citizen support remains uninterrupted. Although ADISA as an institution has ceased to operate, its legacy of efficient and accessible public service delivery, as per the evidences collected, will be sustained within the municipalities of Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake and Përmet. In the coming period, several former ADISA employees in these areas will be absorbed as full-time municipal employees. This transition will be facilitated through municipal funding, which has been allocated to support these positions and ensure their operational continuity. These employees will take on specialized roles, exclusively dedicated to serving citizens, which reaffirms the municipalities' commitment to maintaining high-quality service standards and accessible government support at the local level.

6. Innovation and Digital Agenda

CSDA project made significant contributions to Albania's digital transformation agenda, which included support for implementing the National Broadband Action Plan and promoting digital literacy initiatives. These efforts support the sustainability of public services by making them more accessible, efficient, and technology-driven. As digitalization initiatives align with Albania's broader modernization goals and aspirations for EU accession, they are likely to yield long-term impacts on the efficiency and quality of public services. The integration of technology into public administration not only enhances service delivery but also positions Albania favorably on the path toward achieving its strategic development objectives.

Hindering Factors for Sustainability of the Project

1. Government and Institutional Restructuring

The changing institutional landscape, including the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards in 2023 after a half mandate, while under the recognition of the positive impact achieved, was a significant setback for the CSDA project, as this ministry served as a crucial interlocutor for project activities. The institutional restructuring and the lag time until former mandate succession created uncertainty and delayed decision-making processes, which are vital for the successful implementation of reforms. These changes can lead to shifting priorities, making it challenging to maintain focus on ongoing initiatives. Moreover, they often result in the loss of institutional memory, as experienced personnel may leave or be reassigned, complicating the continuity of reforms.

2. Limited Budget Allocation

Operating on only 36% of its estimated budget restricted the scope of interventions that the CSDA project could undertake. Such financial limitation can lead to the potential underfunding and increased demand on the government to take on additional costs. As a result, some reforms may not receive the necessary resources to ensure their long-term sustainability once the project concludes. Without adequate budget allocation, the government may struggle to support ongoing activities, which can result in a regression of the progress made during the project.

3. Capacity Gaps in Local Governments

Despite the project's focus on capacity-building, many local governments in Albania continue to grapple with significant challenges in implementing and sustaining reforms. Limited technical expertise, high staff turnover, and inadequate resources hinder the effective administration of public services, particularly in municipalities with numerous challenges, especially in remote rural areas. Competing priorities and the pressure of rapid digitization initiatives, without sufficient transitional support and accompanying digital literacy programs, compromise the institutional preparedness necessary for sustaining reforms. The lack of capacity may impede local governments' ability to maintain the standards introduced by the project, jeopardizing its long-term success.

4. Digital Divide

The persistent digital divide—especially in rural and underserved areas—remains a formidable barrier to sustainability. Limited access to reliable internet and low levels of digital literacy among certain population segments may hinder the widespread adoption of digital public services. This lack of access can diminish the effectiveness and sustainability of digital innovations, as a significant portion of the population may be unable to utilize the new services effectively. Addressing these disparities is essential to ensure that the benefits of digital transformation reach all citizens.

5. Institutional Resistance to Change

In some public institutions, there is resistance to adopting new practices or standards, especially when these require substantial changes to entrenched bureaucratic processes. This resistance can slow the institutionalization of reforms and impede the sustainability of the outcomes achieved during the project.

Overcoming this inertia requires targeted change management strategies and ongoing engagement with stakeholders to foster a culture of openness and adaptability.

6. Political and Economic Instability

Political shifts can significantly impact the sustainability of the CSDA project. Changes in political leadership or priorities may lead to de-prioritization of reforms under way, which can hinder the continued implementation of project outcomes. Furthermore, economic constraints, such as public sector austerity measures or economic downturns, can affect the government's ability to allocate necessary resources to sustain project results in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

Project reflect the complexity of public service reform in a transitioning society like Albania. Key lessons include:

1. **Alignment with government priorities:** Close alignment of the project with the government vision for citizen-centric public service delivery as a fundamental transformational effort, is crucial in order to be able to implement effectively adjustments in face of shifting priorities. – UNDP engagement in the area dates back to 2014 at the outset of the reform in Albania with the ISDA Support Project, the predecessor to CSDA. The current project has built on the lessons learned from its predecessors and a fruitful ongoing dialogue with government stakeholders, as well as development partners active in the good governance area.
2. **Government Commitment and Adaptability:** Commitment from the Albanian government, despite shifting priorities and external challenges like cabinet reshuffles, is crucial. Adaptability in project design and implementation, including realignment of key result areas (KRAs), was vital for maintaining the project's momentum and effectiveness. The ability to adjust activities in response to changing government structures, especially the dissolution of key ministries, demonstrated the importance of flexibility in long-term projects.
3. **Importance of Digital Transformation:** The emphasis by the project on accessibility and a structured approach to bridging the digital divide to address the need for inclusive approaches that consider active adult population on one hand, and vulnerable groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, and remote rural populations took place on both policy and intervention level. It helped advance discussions with government interlocutors at the central and local level, as well development partners, in line with existing overall strategies on education and e-government as well as the National Broadband Plan in Albania, in order to detail dedicated policies and propose pilot interventions. These have entailed support for digital transformation efforts abiding by the right of every citizen for quality and accessible public services. Lack of a well-defined policy-level government body responsible for digital literacy as a cross-cutting goal remains an issue to ensure required coordinated activities by relevant players.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusivity:** Cross-cutting stakeholder engagement and outreach were necessary to ensure the success of service delivery reforms. The project emphasized support for women and vulnerable groups, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities such as the Roma and Egyptians. Efforts to expand customer care standards in

underserved areas and enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities reflected a commitment to equitable service provision. Throughout its implementation, the CSDA Project prioritized accessibility and actively engaged with government stakeholders to emphasize the importance of digital literacy, particularly among adults aged 45 and older, as a critical factor in addressing the digital divide and supporting successful digitalization efforts. Assistance included the development of a comprehensive conceptual framework and action plan, as well as the design of a pilot initiative grounded in a community-based approach.

5. **Policy Development and Good Governance:** The project reinforced the importance of establishing clear public service standards and promoting quality management in the public sector. Through policy support, performance monitoring, and efforts to promote transparency and anti-corruption measures, the project contributed to strengthening the principles of good governance in Albania. Legal reforms, such as the framework law on inspections, were key to improving the accountability of state institutions. When addressing issues related to good governance, policy input - through expertise and facilitated stakeholder engagement - combined with concrete activities on the ground, which precede and/or succeed a formal / amended policy platform can ensure impactful interventions and sustainable results. One such example is the project work on quality management (QM). This started with the piloting of the adoption of ISO-compliant quality management system (QMS) in the central government agency appointed as the public services standards' authority. It continued with support for the policy document on public service standards approved by the government, which included specific reference to Quality Management (QM), as well the promotion of policy implementation discussions at the decision-making levels for the implementation of QM in the public administration in Albania. This was followed by the provision of QM expertise to five central government public service providers, which were able to gain as a result ISO 9001:2015 certification.
6. **Expanding Citizen-Centric Standards to Local Municipalities Strengthens Ownership and Replication:** Assistance to expand standards established at the citizen-centric public services center in the periphery multiplies opportunities for further independent adoption as they raise citizen expectations which contributes to strengthening local ownership, as well as provide replicable examples for other entities. CSDA project was able to take advantage of the readiness by local authorities to expand the application of citizen-centric public service delivery standards in small and medium-size municipalities, which would have not otherwise undertaken steps due to resource limitations, among others, not to mention the considerations of local autonomy and decentralization. The assistance has created a set of best practices that are responsive to current needs of citizens and businesses and based on local ownership, can be adopted to future needs.
7. **Agile project design and horizon scanning it ensure its relevance amid political shifts and risks:** Horizon scanning and scenario planning as instruments and an embedded agility in project design and implementation can assure that project activities remain relevant and coherent in face of identified risks, which may be more severe and disruptive than anticipated, such as government reshuffles and election cycles. The project was able to manage two election cycles with changed rules of engagement due to legal amendments, as well as new cabinet changes and reshuffling. This was based on a proactive stance in identifying challenges and opportunities and engaging in project document revision - such as with the establishment of the Minister of State for Service Standards, and strong relations with direct beneficiaries, such as in completing successfully the intervention in the municipality of Përmet, or work of ISO-compliant QMSs with five agencies in the interim period until the appointment of the project's new key government counterpart.
8. **International Collaboration and Compliance:** The project showcased the value of collaboration with international partners like the UNDP and Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC). It also

aligned with Albania's EU integration agenda, promoting compliance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contributing to regional cooperation.

Overall, the CSDA Project demonstrated the importance of adaptability, digital innovation, standardization, inclusivity, and strong policy frameworks in public service reform

CONCLUSIONS

1. **Relevance of the CSDA Project:** The CSDA project successfully addressed Albania's key needs in public administration reform, particularly improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility. This highlights its alignment with Albania's critical priorities and the necessity of continued support for administrative modernization.
2. **Adaptability and Responsiveness:** The project's adaptability, demonstrated by its proactive adjustments to emerging challenges, ensured sustained progress toward its goals. This ability to realign with evolving government priorities reinforced its relevance and effectiveness, setting a benchmark for handling dynamic administrative landscapes.
3. **Need for Inclusive Digital Solutions:** Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups has been essential in enhancing the impact of CSDA interventions. Strengthened digital literacy and inclusion programs, combined with improved accessibility during Albania's transition to online services, have contributed to fostering equitable access to public services and effectively supporting underserved populations.
4. **Internal Coherence:** Even after a significant revision in 2022 to accommodate shifting government priorities, the CSDA project maintained internal coherence. This reflects the project's strong foundation, ensuring continued alignment with Albania's digital transformation and online service delivery goals.
5. **External Coherence and Alignment with International Frameworks:** The CSDA project effectively aligned with Albania's public administration reform and international frameworks, including SDGs 16, 5, and 9. By reinforcing Albania's EU integration efforts and promoting good governance, the project enhanced its global and national relevance.
6. **Added Value in Reform and Service Delivery:** The CSDA project's contributions to institutional reform, digital transformation, and service delivery reforms highlight its added value. By fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and digital innovation, the project played a pivotal role in Albania's public administration improvement.
7. **Significant Strides in Public Administration:** The project made substantial advances in public administration reform, including policy development, public service standardization, and digital transformation. The increased public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls, signals the project's positive impact on citizen perceptions. However, some goals, like embedding a full culture of customer service across institutions, will require further time to fully realize.
8. **Facilitating and Hindering Factors:** Strong partnerships, flexibility, alignment with national priorities, and capacity-building were key facilitators of the project's success. However, challenges like government restructuring, limited budget, the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the lack of a centralized standards authority slowed progress. Addressing these barriers is essential to extending the project's reach.
9. **Sustainability of Project Outcomes:** The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level and institutionalized reforms. However, risks such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, and financial constraints must be addressed.

Continued international support and efforts to close the digital divide are essential to sustaining and building on the project’s achievements in the long term. Local leadership is committed to upholding ADISA’s high standards of citizen services, even after the institution's closure, by integrating former ADISA employees as dedicated municipal staff in Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake, and Përmet. Funded by municipal budgets, these roles will ensure the continued provision of efficient, accessible public services at the local level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines the key recommendations for future actions, derived from the findings of the final evaluation of the CSDA Project implementation. A crucial aspect highlighted throughout the evaluation is the indispensable role played by donors, particularly the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in the success of the project. The continued support of these donors remains vital in helping Albania achieve its long-term aspirations, particularly its goal of joining the European Union. Respondents at various levels emphasized that without the backing of ADA and UNDP, many of the project’s key milestones would have been difficult to achieve, underscoring the necessity of their ongoing engagement.

Furthermore, the insights gathered during field consultations reaffirm that UNDP holds a uniquely influential and well-regarded position in the realm of Good Governance in Albania. The organization’s longstanding presence, technical expertise, and ability to foster cross-sectoral partnerships have positioned it as a trusted partner to both the Albanian government and local stakeholders. The successful implementation of the CSDA Project exemplifies UNDP’s effectiveness in navigating the complexities of governance reforms and service delivery improvements, thus reinforcing its critical role in Albania’s journey toward EU integration. Good governance is a central pillar of UNDP’s global mission, and its extensive expertise in this area plays a critical role in supporting governance reforms in Albania. UNDP’s longstanding commitment to fostering transparent, accountable, and effective governance systems has positioned it as a key development partner for the country, particularly as Albania continues its efforts toward EU integration. By leveraging its global knowledge and experience in good governance, UNDP has been instrumental in shaping public administration reforms, enhancing institutional capacity, and promoting digital transformation in Albania. As such, it is recommended that UNDP continue leveraging this position to facilitate future initiatives aimed at public administration reform, digital transformation, and capacity building for inclusive governance in Albania.

Based on the key findings and conclusions, the evaluator developed four recommendations. A relation between findings, conclusions and recommendations are developed in Annex I.

Recommendation 1: A comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted for all vulnerable groups to evaluate their usage of online public services and identify barriers to access them.

Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment for vulnerable groups is essential to understanding their interaction with online public services and identifying barriers to access. This assessment should go beyond quantifying usage to explore qualitative aspects such as the experiences and challenges faced by these groups. Analyzing user data disaggregated by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and geography is crucial for identifying specific barriers and usage trends unique to certain populations. For instance, older adults might face difficulties due to limited digital skills, individuals with disabilities may encounter accessibility challenges in interface design, and rural or underserved areas might experience lower usage rates due to limited internet access. By examining these factors, public service providers can gain actionable insights to

inform targeted strategies, enhance user experience, and ensure equitable access to digital services for all groups.

Principal Addressees: Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy and Ministry of Local Governance with support of ADA and UNDP

Recommendation 2: Proposed amendments to the performance evaluation process in public administration should be finalized through comprehensive consultations with key stakeholders. The pilot intervention on cascade objectives and performance appraisal should be institutionalized within the framework of promoting meritocracy.

Institutionalizing the pilot intervention related to cascade objectives and performance appraisal within the framework of promoting meritocracy is crucial for fostering a culture of fairness and accountability in public administration. By embedding these practices into the operational structure, public institutions can ensure that performance assessments are not only consistent but also aligned with the principles of rewarding merit and competence. This approach enhances trust among employees, motivating them to pursue excellence and cultivating an environment where skills, dedication, and results are recognized and rewarded. Establishing these practices as a standard element of the administrative system reinforces transparency and contributes to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

To facilitate this institutionalization, it is imperative that proposed amendments to the performance evaluation process be finalized through comprehensive consultations with key stakeholders. Engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders—including policymakers, public sector employees, and civil society representatives—ensures that the revised framework is both practical and inclusive. This collaborative approach helps identify potential challenges, integrates diverse perspectives, and builds consensus, which is essential for the smooth implementation of the changes. Comprehensive consultations foster stakeholder buy-in and trust, making the new performance appraisal system more effective and resilient as it becomes an integral component of public administration.

Principal Addressees: State Ministry of Public Administration and Anticorruption, Local NGOs, experts and companies that have experience in monitoring the performance of the provision of services

Recommendation 3: Future interventions should provide technical assistance to ensure the adoption of EU and international best practices, including certified quality management systems for both central and local public service providers. The appointment of a lead institution in Quality Management should be prioritized to oversee the development, implementation, and updating of national standards.

The appointment of a lead institution in the area of Quality Management is essential to ensure cohesive and efficient development, implementation, and continuous updating of national standards. A central authority should be designated with the responsibility of overseeing policy-making and ensuring that quality standards are developed in alignment with good governance principles. This approach will allow for the adoption of uniform standards across government institutions, ensuring they are compliant with national regulations. Regular monitoring of compliance, alongside performance evaluations, will promote transparency and the effective application of these standards. Furthermore, making data related to the application of standards publicly accessible will foster trust and accountability in government services. To this end, Decisions no. 640/2019, no. 343/2016, and no. 252/2022 should be considered as key references for structuring the responsibilities and procedures related to quality assessment, monitoring, and service provision in Albania.

In line with EU and international best practices, it is recommended to further advance the implementation of quality management through the development and execution of the policy document on service standards. Promoting certified quality management systems across central government institutions, as well as encouraging adoption at the local level, will contribute to the overall improvement of public service delivery. The initial efforts made by the former Minister of State for Service Standards, in collaboration with the CSDA Project, should be seen as a foundation for future progress. This includes a focus on the 83 central government institutions that offer services and promoting this practice in local authorities, with due respect for local autonomy and decentralization. Such a comprehensive approach will ensure that quality management practices are embedded in public service systems across all levels of government, resulting in better service delivery to citizens.

Principal Addressees: The Government of Albania, State Ministry of Public Administration and Anticorruption and Newly established lead institution in the area of Quality Management with support of ADA and UNDP

Recommendation 4: Albanian Municipalities should invest in preserving the investment and standards of public service delivery established by ADISA following the closure of the institution.

Integrating former ADISA employees into municipal structures, while maintaining ADISA's infrastructure and logistics, is key to preserving the improvements made under the ADISA framework. Municipalities like Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake, and Përmet are already incorporating ADISA-trained staff and infrastructure established into their budgets, ensuring the continuation of capacity-building efforts and high standards for public service delivery. This strategy enables a smooth transition after ADISA's closure and strengthens local governments' ability to deliver quality services aligned with established reforms. Funding these roles through municipal budgets ensures the long-term sustainability of these positions and the continued delivery of citizen-focused services. By integrating former ADISA employees, municipalities institutionalize the skills and knowledge gained through this institution, reinforcing reforms at the local level. This approach sets the stage for expanding these improvements across all 61 municipalities, promoting ongoing progress in public service delivery throughout Albania.

Principal Addressees: Ministry of Local Governance, 61 Albanian municipalities

ANNEXES

Annex A: ToRs

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Final Evaluation of CSDA Project
Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania
No: UNDP-00115506; ADA-8345-00/2020

Post Title: Evaluation Consultant
Project Title: Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania (CSDA)
Duty Station: Albania (Tirana and regions)
Duration: Thirty-five (35) working days during the period of July – October 2024
Type of Contract: Individual Contract

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I. Context and Background

Project Title:	Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania (CSDA)	
Project No.:	UNDP no. 00115506; ADA-8345-00/2020	
Corporate outcome and output:	GoA - UN Programme of Cooperation for Sustainable Development 2022-2026, Outcome C1: By 2026, governance is more transparent and accountable, enabling people to enjoy quality, inclusive services, enhanced rule of law and access to justice in line with Albania’s human rights commitments. UNDP Country Programme Document for Albania 2022-2026, Output 3. Public sector accountability and quality services: Institutions at national and municipal level enhanced capacities and systems to deliver quality, responsive, efficient, transparent, inclusive and accessible services that meet the increasing social demand and perception of corruption in the public sector	
Country & Region:	Albania, Europe	
Date Project Document Signed:	Original ProDoc is dated 26 May 2020 Revision 1 signed on 27 September 2022	
Project Dates:	Start	Planned end
	1 June 2020	30 November 2024
Project Budget:	USD 1,191,565 (actual, 36% of estimated resources)	
Project Expenditure as of 16 May 2024 (provisional):	USD 930,021	

Funding Source:	Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), UNDP
Implementing Party:	UNDP
Key Government Counterpart:	Deputy Prime Minister/Director of ADISA (Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services in Albania) during June 2020 – September 2021 Minister of State for Service Standards (MS3) during October 2021-September 2023 ¹ Minister of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption since March 2024 Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), Partner from June 2020
Ultimate Beneficiaries:	Citizens and businesses in Albania
Geographical Scope:	Capital Tirana and the regions

The UNDP-administered “Consolidation of Citizen-Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania” Project (CSDA project), with Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) as a key contributor together with UNDP, responds to further assistance requests from the Government of Albania (GoA) towards strengthening access to public services and the quality and efficiency in their delivery in Albania sustainably through citizen-centric innovation and utilization of information technology, based on shared standard requirements.

As a successor to the ISDA Support Project (‘Innovation against Corruption: Building a Citizen-centric Public Service Delivery Model in Albania’ 2014-2020), CSDA continues to support the progress of the public administration reform under the principles of good governance.

The project asserts the concept of the right to quality public services for all citizens leaving no one behind, ensuring special attention to women and vulnerable groups, the elderly, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities – with specific reference to Roma and Egyptians, the economically disadvantaged, and the rural population in particular in remote locations.

Through its activities, CSDA is positioned to support the country's EU integration and regional cooperation agendas, help further comply with Sustainable Development Goals, and promote South-to-South cooperation, while ensuring synergy and complementarity with concurrent reform programs that impact service delivery activities, as well as partner assistance projects.

The project is implemented by the Government of Albania in partnership with UNDP, following UNDP’s national implementation modality. UNDP provides project and financial management support in accordance with UNDP’s regulations and rules for project management.

CSDA Project builds upon the achievements and lessons learned of its predecessor, the ISDA Support Project as outlined in the latter’s evaluation report².

CSDA interventions take place in the key result areas (KRA) of:

1. Policy and Oversight
2. Institutional Capacity Development
3. Service Standard Application and
4. Innovation and Digital Agenda.

The project, which began in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, underwent a revision in 2022, which also reflected a focusing of its activities in line with the available funds (36% of the estimated budget).

The revision was necessitated by significant changes in the project’s operating environment due to shifting government priorities with exclusive adoption of online public service applications along with a strengthened focus on service standards, as well as cabinet reshuffling. The process resulted in a validation

¹ Following the dissolution of the Ministry of State for Service Standards in September, and in the absence of a direct successor to the former Minister’s mandate, which included also chairmanship of the CSDA’s Steering Committee, the project was approved a six-month no-cost extension until 31 August 2024 to enable its successful closure.

² <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/15527>

of CSDA Project's goal and positioning in support of the common vision for citizen centric public service delivery in Albania. The overall objective was reconfirmed with an increased focus on shared public service standard requirements applicable across providers, channels, and services.

The required degree of realignment took place primarily at the project activity level, harmonized with priority interventions identified by the government. It was reflected in the consolidation of certain outputs due to refocusing, but also recalibration due to an appropriate expansion of scope, which originally targeted specific institutional beneficiaries and delivery channels.

Specifically, the project retained its 4 KRA structure with the following revisions:

- **KRA 1** kept the same focus and formulation, i.e., no change at the output level, with an added reference to standard development.

The anticipated revised ProDoc KRA 1 activities take place *under Output 1.1 Policy support under the public administration reform provided*, and *Output 1.2: Quality management and performance monitoring enhanced*. They address the need to provide expertise geared towards support in terms of policy, change management and oversight with a strong emphasis on public service standards.

- Under **KRA 2**, the scope was expanded from one institutional beneficiary, whose role was evolving, to targeting key institutional public service providers on standardized Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) preparation, process re-engineering (re-location from Key Result 4), training, as well as support for international certification preparation and tools to facilitate standard compliance work. Hence, two outputs were reformulated to reflect the expanded scope, while the third on stakeholder engagement and outreach was relocated as was under KRA 3 in line with the latter's revision.

The anticipated revised ProDoc KRA 2 activities take place under *Output 2.1: Assistance provided towards obtaining relevant certification and establishing core processes aligned with national standards*, and *Output 2.2: Sustainable institutional capacities at the governance level enabled*. They strive to provide the necessary support and expertise, in close coordination also with the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA), to develop institutional capabilities relative to the standard requirements in terms of understanding them and the required capacity for their implementation, as well as effective and efficient performance, so that these institutions deliver sustainably benefits to citizens and businesses, fulfilling their mandate and ensuring ongoing improvement.

- **KRA 3** retained the general focus on the implementation of customer care principles in public service delivery outside the capital removing references to the physical service delivery channel and channel development and emphasizing support for standard implementation to reflect GoA priorities. This resulted in the consolidation of the two existing outputs into one.

The anticipated revised ProDoc KRA 3 activities take place under *Output 3.1 Adaptation and application of public service standards expanded nationwide for women and men*, and *Output 3.2 Engagement and outreach conducted*. They sustain customer service principles in public service delivery in Albania which were reflected in the Citizen Charter formulated with assistance from the ISDA Support Project, and approved in October 2018. Supporting their application throughout the territory at the central and local level, and stakeholder engagement and public outreach as crosscutting support, constitute the areas of focus. They build upon the results and practice to date. Key target groups of the activities under this result are especially women and the vulnerable, especially based on age and disability.

- Under **KRA 4**, the focus on promoting innovation in public service delivery and supporting the advancement of Albania's digital agenda was maintained reflecting on the role of new stakeholders and the progress of GoA efforts such as with the approval of the National Broadband Plan. Given the latter, two of the three original outputs were consolidated in one.

The anticipated revised ProDoc KRA 4 activities take place under *Output 4.1 Innovation in public service delivery with focus on women and vulnerable advanced*, and *Output 4.2: Implementation of the National Broadband Plan advanced*. They are built upon the premise that innovation and implementation of IT solutions remain key enabler of increased benefits to citizens and businesses in

service delivery, with due regard to mitigating the digital divide and obstacles to internet access. Activities under this result are focused on these two areas and relate also to the digital integration pillar of the Western Balkans' regional economic area.

II. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Users

The purpose of this evaluation is learning. It is intended to assess the progress achieved to date, prospects of sustainability, facilitating and hindering factors, as well as identify good practices and lessons learned. Importantly, the evaluation will provide evidence for UNDP Albania, ADA and other key stakeholders to improve programming, implementation and monitoring of similar future interventions.

The main intended users of the evaluation results are UNDP program units, including headquarters departments and bureaux, regional bureaux, and UNDP country office, project and program staff and managers involved in the evaluation process, UNDP senior management, who oversee and assure the quality of the planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes and products, and use monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for decision-making, including resident representative, deputy resident representative, and outcome, sector or program managers; ADA staff locally and at Headquarters (HQ); stakeholders and partners, such as MAPA, civil society organizations, United Nations and development partners.

III. Evaluation Scope and Criteria

The evaluation will cover the project implementation from its start until the date of the start of this assignment. It will assess specific aspects of the project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness and sustainability as outlined in the evaluation questions below (Section IV). These evaluation criteria are selected among the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria based on strategic knowledge interests from UNDP and ADA. The criteria of Efficiency and Impact will not be assessed as part of this evaluation, due to considerations of feasibility in terms of available resources, time and expected access to evidence.

Field visits are anticipated to at least seven (7) citizen service centers supported by the project, out of 14 in total in the following locations across Albania: Maliq, Belsh, Patos, Librazhd, Divjakë, Burrel-Mat, Koplik-Malësi e Madhe, Kukës, Pogradec, Roskovec, Ersekë-Kolonjë, Tepelenë, Himarë, Përmet. The choice of locations for field visits will be finalized during the inception phase, based on various criteria identified through preliminary document review and interviews as well as considerations of coverage and feasibility.

The evaluation will be guided by the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) (see annex), UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2016)³, Evaluation Policy of the Austrian Development Cooperation (2019) (see annex), ADA's Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020) (see annex), and the evaluation criteria of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)⁴.

IV. Evaluation Questions

Relevance:

1. How relevant has the project been in addressing the needs in the country? Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how did the project address them?
2. How could possible future engagement be made even more relevant in particular with respect to the most vulnerable groups / to leave no one behind?

³ <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>

⁴ [http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DCD/DAC\(2019\)58/FINAL&docLanguage=En](http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=DCD/DAC(2019)58/FINAL&docLanguage=En)

Coherence⁵:

3. How coherent has the project been internally and externally? What has been its added value?

Effectiveness:

4. What are the main project accomplishments? To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved? What are the main facilitating or hindering factors for results achievement? 8. 9.

Sustainability:

5. What are the major hindering and facilitating factors that influenced prospects for sustainability of the project?

V. Design and Methodological Approach

The evaluator must lay out in the inception report an adequate evaluation approach, methodology and related methods, and a detailed work plan, which will be fully discussed and agreed between Evaluation Management, project Steering Committee co-chairs⁶ and donor, to be finalized during the inception phase. The suggested approach must be human rights-based approach and gender sensitive.

The evaluator is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation manager, project partners and direct beneficiaries. The proposed methodology should employ mixed methods and ensure triangulation. Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the evaluator and the consequences of these limitations discussed in the inception report. The evaluator shall, to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address these limitations. At all times, the evaluator must ensure that confidentiality is ensured and that the evaluation design and its implementation do not put key informants and stakeholders at risk.

At a minimum the evaluation methods suggested should include:

- a) Desk research and document review: includes a review of project documentation, including annual workplans, activity designs; mid-year and annual project reports, monitoring data, existing evaluative and other evidence⁷ etc. and the research for and review of third party data and documents (published by government, civil society, donors, academia etc.).
- b) Key informant interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders.
- c) Focus group discussions (FGD) with beneficiaries and stakeholders.
- d) On-site observations.

The evaluator is asked to consider applying outcome mapping methodology to this evaluation.

VI. Workplan – Key Deliverables and Timeframe

The preliminary timeline and milestones for the process is detailed in the table below.

Deliverables include:

1. Inception Report (for report outline reference see linked under annexes: UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) section 4.4.3 Evaluation inception report, pg. 27, and ADA's Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020) annex 5 Quality Checklist for Inception Report (IR), pg.46);
2. Data collection and analysis;

⁵ Coherence means “the extent to which other interventions support or undermine the intervention, and vice versa. [...] Internal coherence addresses the synergies and interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by the same institution/government, as well as the consistency of the intervention with the relevant international norms and standards to which that institution/government adheres. External coherence considers the consistency of the intervention with other actors’ interventions in the same context. This includes complementarity, harmonisation and co-ordination with others, and the extent to which the intervention is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.” See <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dacriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

⁶ UNDP and Ministry of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption (MAPA) co-chair the CSDA Project Steering Committee.

⁷This includes a recent strategic evaluation of ADC's engagement in Albania (<https://www.entwicklung.at/en/ada/evaluation/evaluation-reports/evaluation-reports-2017-2022>), annual ‘Trust in Governance’ (2020-2023) conducted within the framework of the project (<https://idmalbania.org/?s=Trust%20in%20Governance>), official statistics or other existing relevant evaluations and studies.

3. Draft Evaluation Report (for report outline reference see linked under annexes: UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) annex 4 Quality Checklist for Evaluation Report (ER), pg. 56, and ADA's Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020) annex 6 Quality Checklist for Evaluation Report (ER), pg. 48;
4. Final Evaluation Report, which should be accompanied by the filled Results Assessment Form (RAF) (see above for report outline references).

Templates for the Evaluation Matrix, Evaluation Audit Trail / Feedback Matrix and RAF are available at ADA's Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations (2020) annexes 7-9, pg.51-53, and UNDP Evaluation Guidelines (2021) pg. 51 and 31.

Payment is expected in one installment.

Phase	Tasks	Estimated minimum no. of working days	Time-frame
Inception	Kick-off meeting	7 working days	July 2024
	Initial document review; Development of evaluation design (methodology and methods), including the workplan and list of stakeholders to be interviewed; Drafting of the inception report (IR), 15 pages maximum, plus annexes.		
	Review of draft IR; IR Finalization; IR approval		
Inquiry (Data collection and analysis)	Interviews, focus group discussion, observation in the field, and key informant interviews; Document review	15 working days	July-September 2024
	Debriefing to UNDP, ADA and possibly other key stakeholders		
Analysis & Synthesis and Reporting	Processing and analysis of the data	4 working days	September-October 2024
	Drafting of the evaluation report (40 pages maximum, including executive summary 3-4 pages, plus annexes.); Submission of the draft report; Consolidation of comments to the report; Debriefing with UNDP	7 working days	
	Finalization and submission of the revised evaluation report, accompanied by the filled audit trail / feedback matrix	2 working days	
	TOTAL	35 working days	

VII. Evaluation Management and Implementation Arrangements

This evaluation is commissioned by UNDP Albania. It will be conducted by one (1) Evaluation Consultant. Management of the evaluation implementation process will be carried out by the Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst, UNDP Albania, as Evaluation Manager. The CSDA Project Manager and team will provide support in the implementation of evaluation, if/when necessary and without impacting the evaluation's impartiality and independence.

VIII. Evaluation Ethics

The Evaluation Consultant will be held to the highest ethical standards and are required to sign a pledge of ethical conduct (see annex for the document) upon acceptance of the assignment.

UNDP evaluations are conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.

IX. Required Competencies

The Evaluation Consultant is expected to have the following competencies:

A. Qualifications:

Education

- Advanced Degree in social sciences, development, public administration, or related field.

Work experience

- At least 10 (ten) years of experience in evaluating development interventions;
- Experience in conducting evaluations from a governance-based perspective and thematic or sectorial in scope, and in implementing a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection tools and methods in project evaluation;
- Extensive experience with program/project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the functioning of public administration in Albania;
- Gender expertise and competencies are required as is knowledge and/or experience of social inclusion;
- Previous experience of undertaking evaluations for UNDP and/or ADA is considered an asset.

B. Corporate Competencies:

- Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards (human rights, tolerance, integrity, respect, and impartiality);
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

C. Functional Competencies:

- Has strong analytical and M&E skills;
- Plans and produces quality results to meet established goals within the agreed deadlines;
- Generates practical solutions to challenging situations and is able to manage complexities;
- Conceptualizes and analyses problems to identify key issues, underlying problems, and how they relate, as well as provides well-thought-out recommendations to address them;
- Possesses strong oral and written communication skills;
- Responds positively to critical feedback and differing points of view.

D. Skills:

- Strong leadership and planning skills;
- Fluency in spoken and written English language;
- Strong communication skills;
- Ability to deliver under pressure/meet deadlines;
- Ability to network with partners on various levels;
- The necessary computer skills with competence in MS office package.

Core Values

Integrity:

- Demonstrate consistency in upholding and promoting the values of UN in actions and decisions, in line with the UN Code of Conduct.

Professionalism:

- Demonstrate professional competence and expert knowledge of the pertinent substantive areas of work.

Cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity:

- Demonstrate an appreciation of the multicultural nature of the organization and the diversity of its staff;
- Additionally, the individual should have an international outlook, appreciating difference in values and learning from cultural diversity.

X. Application Requirements

As part of the application package, interested candidates are required to submit a technical proposal (max. 3 pages) with a description on how they will approach and complete the assignment including the proposed methodology and work plan. Lack of submission of the technical proposal would disqualify the application from the evaluation process.

Additionally, please note that the financial proposal shall be all-inclusive and should take into account various expenses to be incurred by the consultant during the assignment. They should be clearly detailed in the appropriate breakdown format. These expenses shall include also the cost related to local travel for visiting no less than seven (7) municipalities with a citizen service center opened with donor support from the list provided in the ToR. The absence of such costing would imply noncompliance with the ToR requirements and would disqualify the application from the evaluation process.

XI. Evaluation Procedure

UNDP applies a fair and transparent selection process that would consider both the technical qualification of Individual Consultants as well as their financial proposals. The contract will be awarded to the candidate who has indicated acceptance of UNDP's General Terms and Conditions and whose offer:

- Is deemed technically responsive / compliant / acceptable (only technically responsive applications / candidates will be considered for the financial evaluation)
- And has obtained the highest combined technical and financial scores.

Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation – max points: 70

- Criteria A: Professional experience in the assignment area – max points: 20
- Criteria B: Relevant competencies and know-how (functioning of public administration in Albania, gender, and social inclusion) – max points: 20
- Criteria C: Technical proposal – max points: 30

Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation – max points: 30

Candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% (49 points) of the maximum obtainable points for the technical criteria (70 points) shall be considered for the financial evaluation.

The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score who has accepted UNDP's General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

XII. Annexes

- United Nations Development Programme - Evaluation Guidelines, available at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/>
- (2019) Evaluation Policy of the Austrian Development Cooperation, available at: https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Englisch/Evaluation_policy.pdf
- (2020) ADA Guidelines for Programme and Project Evaluations, available at: https://www.entwicklung.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Dokumente/Evaluierung/Evaluierungs_Leitfaeden/Guidelines_for_Programme_and_Project_Evaluations_ADA_2020.pdf
- Pledge of Ethical Conduct, available at: <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/3683>

Annex B: Stakeholder Mapping and KIIs and FGDs

Institution, Name, Position	Evaluation tools
<i>MAPA-Ministry of State for Public Administration & Anticorruption, principal GoA interlocutor as of March 2024</i>	
Adea Pirdeni, Minister	KII Tool 4
Fotjona Taçe, Chief of Cabinet, GoA CSDA Project Director	KII Tool 4
<i>MIE-Ministry of Infrastructure & Energy, key project partner</i>	
Enkelejda Muçaj, Deputy Minister	KII Tool 3
Florenca Korbi, General Director	KII Tool 3
Irena Malolli, Director of Telecommunications and Post Strategy and Policy Development	KII Tool 3
<i>MSKB-Ministry of State for Entrepreneurship and Business Climate</i>	
Martin Kajo, Chief of Cabinet	KII Tool 3
<i>General Directorate of Civil Registry-DPGJC; General Directorate of Industrial Property-DPPI; Agency for Territory Development-AZHT; National Business Center-QKB and Health and Social Care Quality Assurance Agency-ASCK</i>	
General Directors: Vangjush Stavro, Rovena Beqiraj, Adelajda Roka, Iris Ago, Denis Gjika	KII Tool 3
<i>Municipalities</i>	
Mayor/Deputy Mayor	KII Tool 3
Heads of Citizens Service Center (CSC) and service windows staff	KII or FGD Tool 1 & 2
<i>End beneficiaries</i>	
Citizens served at CSCs	FGD or KII Tool 6 & 7
<i>IDM (began under the CSDA Predecessor Project)</i>	
Sotiraq Hroni, Executive Director	KII Tool 3
Besa Kuci, TiG2022 & 2023 Coordinator	KII Tool 3
<i>Consultants</i>	

Institution, Name, Position	Evaluation tools
Enkeleda Kuka, National Digital Skills Expert	KII Tool 3
Arben Memo, Team leader for ADISA ISO Certification, founder of service provider TMC; Leonat Luli, team leader for 5 agencies' ISO certification support, administrator of service provider TMC	KII Tool 3
Erald Pashaj, Senior HRM Expert	KII Tool 3
<i>UNDP</i>	
Vladimir Malkaj, Development Specialist	KII Tool 5
Rudina Mullahi, Project Manager	KII Tool 5
<i>ADA</i>	
Elona Fana, Project Manager	KII Tool 5

Former Key Government Interlocutors

Institution , Name, Position	Evaluation tools
<i>Former Ministry of State for Service Standards</i>	
Milva Ekonomi, Former Minister of State for Service Standards, principal GoA interlocutor during October 2021 – September 2023	KII Tool 4
Etleva Martiri, Advisor to Minister Ekonomi, Project Director during February 2022 – February 2023	KII Tool 4
Edlira Zyfi, Advisor to Minister Ekonomi, Project Director between March – September 2023	KII Tool 3
<i>ADISA (Agency for the Delivery of Integrated Services in Albania)</i>	
Lorin Ymeri, Former ADISA Executive Director, Project Director during June 2020 – September 2021	KII Tool 4

Annex C: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question	Indicators/Judgment Criteria	Sources	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
Relevance				
1. How relevant has the project been in addressing the needs in the country? Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how did the project address them?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Degree and modality of participation (high, medium or low) central and local level stakeholders as well as duty bearers and rights holders, including the most vulnerable (LNOB/RFB), in project design, implementation and programmatic changes throughout the project lifecycle Central and local stakeholders' perceptions of project's response to project beneficiaries needs (including duty bearers and rights holders) (highly responsive, somewhat responsive, not responsive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents, e.g., Annual/ narrative reports, PRODOC, Agreements etc Theory of change rationale and documentation M&E data reported, project reports, narrative reports, etc. 	Desk review KIIs, e.g. national and local level leadership FGD with municipal level stakeholders	<p>Gather and consolidate information: findings from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review comparative analysis Quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collection forms from FGDs Triangulation <p>Organize findings: Data that meet the defined criteria will be analyzed and grouped per evaluation criterion, question, type of deliverable</p> <p>Analyze data: Analyze the responses received as a result of KII and FGD and other sources of information and provide findings, recommendations & conclusions</p>
2. How could possible future engagement be made even more relevant in particular with respect to the most vulnerable groups / to leave no one behind?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Duty bearers and Right holders' responses that Engagement is not a one-time effort but is sustained and adapted over time to meet the evolving needs of vulnerable groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project documents, e.g., Annual/ narrative reports, PRODOC, Agreements etc Theory of change rationale and documentation M&E data reported, project reports, narrative reports, etc. 	Desk review KIIs, e.g. national and local level leadership FGDs/ KIIs with citizens FGDs/ KIIs with duty bearers (public administration)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review comparative analysis Quantitative and qualitative analysis of stakeholder interviews <p>Organize findings: Data that meet the defined criteria will be analyzed and grouped per evaluation criterion, question, type of deliverable</p> <p>Analyze data: Analyze the responses received as a result of KII and FGD and other sources of information and provide findings, recommendations & conclusions</p>

Evaluation Question	Indicators/Judgment Criteria	Sources	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
Coherence				
<p>3.How coherent has the project been internally and externally? What has been its added value?</p>	<p>4. Responsiveness of strategic planning processes throughout project cycle to improve linkages (harmonisation) and coordination with GoA policies and legislation.</p> <p>5. Did the project work with stakeholders to set overall goals and develop a plan to achieve them. Steps may have included: Defining goals to improve standard of services for citizens and business; gathering related information; developing alternative strategies and selecting the strategy that provides the best chances of meeting the goals; implement the plan; and evaluating and revising when needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review, e.g. national documentation re case management processes • Project Documents, e.g., design documents, narrative reports, project visit reports, progressive reports, activity reports, etc. 	<p>FGD, e.g. steering committee members, KIIs, e.g. national and local level leadership</p>	<p>Gather and consolidate information: findings from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualitative Analysis 2. Thematic Analysis 3. Comparative Analysis 4. Triangulation <p>Organize findings: Data that meet the defined criteria will be analyzed and grouped per evaluation criterion, question, type of deliverable</p> <p>Analyze data: Analyze the responses received as a result of KII and FGD and other sources of information and provide findings, recommendations & conclusions.</p>
Effectiveness				

<p>4. What are the main project accomplishments? To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved? What are the main facilitating or hindering factors for results achievement?</p>	<p>6. Positive or negative unintended results documented in project reports including the quantitative evidence coming from indicators results framework</p> <p>7. Quantitative evidence from M&E documents that the project achieved results as intended in the project document (PRODOC)</p> <p>8. Qualitative and quantitative evidence on how the results achieved have contributed to progressing the objectives of the intervention as articulated in the TOC.</p> <p>9. Central and Local stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness of the intervention and how future interventions may be developed that affect citizens centric standard service delivery (very effective, somewhat effective, not effective)</p>	<p>Project documents, e.g., project design, narrative reports</p>	<p>KIIs FGD, e.g. steering committee members, duty bearers (public administration) and right holders (citizens), KIIs, e.g. national and local level leadership M&E data</p>	<p>Gather and consolidate information: findings from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualitative Analysis 2. Thematic Analysis 3. Comparative Analysis 4. Triangulation <p>Organize findings: Data that meet the defined criteria will be analyzed and grouped per evaluation criterion, question, type of deliverable</p> <p>Analyze data: Analyze the responses received as a result of KII and FGD and other sources of information and provide findings, recommendations & conclusions</p>
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Evaluation Question	Indicators/Judgment Criteria	Sources	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
Sustainability				
<p>5. What are the major hindering and facilitating factors that influenced prospects for sustainability of the project?</p>	<p>10. Project efforts to identify sustainability issues at the outset and throughout the project cycle to determine how the activities would be maintained after project ended</p> <p>11. Evidence of policy and procedural commitments by national and local government during the intervention and on the future policy space, financial space, partnerships, M&E systems, etc.</p>	<p>Desk review, e.g. donor documents Project Documents, e.g. project design, project reports</p>	<p>FGD, e.g. duty bearers (public administration) KIIs, e.g., central and local government leadership</p>	<p>Gather and consolidate information: findings from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualitative Analysis 2. Thematic Analysis 3. Comparative Analysis 4. Triangulation <p>Organize findings: Data that meet the defined criteria will be analyzed and grouped per evaluation criterion, question, type of deliverable</p> <p>Analyze data: Analyze the responses received as a result of KII and FGD and other sources of information and provide findings, recommendations & conclusions</p>

Annex D: Data Collection Tools

Consent Form to Participate

Final Evaluation of CSDA Project “Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania”

Who are we and why are we conducting this evaluation?

The evaluation is being conducted by UNDP Albania for the CSDA Project “Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania”, June 2020-November 2024. The UNDP-administered CSDA project, with Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) as a key contributor together with UNDP, responds to further assistance requests from the Government of Albania (GoA) towards strengthening access to public services and the quality and efficiency in their delivery in Albania sustainably through citizen-centric innovation and utilization of information technology, based on shared standard requirements.

The purpose of this evaluation is learning. It is intended to assess the progress achieved to date, prospects of sustainability, facilitating and hindering factors, as well as identify good practices and lessons learned. Importantly, the evaluation will provide evidence for UNDP Albania, ADC and other key stakeholders to improve programming, implementation and monitoring of similar future projects.

As evaluator, I am contracted by UNDP, but I am not employee of UNDP. The purpose is to obtain an independent evaluation of the Project implemented in four key result areas: 1. Policy and Oversight; 2. Institutional Capacity Development; 3. Service Standard Application, and Innovation and Digital Agenda.

What will be your involvement?

Your opinion and point of view are very important; therefore, I invite you to participate in this interview/focus group and share your perspectives, attitudes and experiences related to the Project. This will allow me to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Project.

I anticipate the interview/focus group will take 1 hour.

It is an obligation on your part to keep information that is discussed confidential.

How will the information collected be used?

Everyone who participates in this evaluation is guaranteed confidentiality to protect their privacy. No names or identifiers will be included in any documents or reports. Only summary data for all respondents will be presented in an evaluation report of the Project.

While you will not benefit immediately from taking part in this interview/focus group, findings from this evaluation will be used to support other measures that can be taken for future similar projects in Albania.

Evaluator will not provide financial reimbursement nor gifts of any type for participation. Refusal to participate will not impact you in any way. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer or stop the interview at any point without penalty. You can contact UNDP Office in Tirana if you have questions.

How do I give permission for my participation in this evaluation?

This interview may be recorded. No one will have access to the recording except the evaluator. The recording will not be copied, distributed or shown to any external party, group or institution. You acknowledge that:

- This interview will not be audio-recorded; the interviewer will take detailed notes.
- This interview will be audio recorded, subject to the rules of anonymity of participants.

You give your permission to participate by checking the appropriate ‘Yes’ box and signing the form. If you do not give your permission to participate, check the ‘No’ box. You should also sign and date this form, and return this form to evaluator before you begin the interview.

Yes, I agree to participate in the interview and will keep information confidential that is discussed during the interview/focus group.

No, I do not agree to participate in the interview for this evaluation.

Signature _____ Date _____

Focus Group Discussion Sign-In Sheet

**Final Evaluation of CSDA Project
“Consolidation of Citizen Centric Public Service Delivery in Albania”**

**(LOCATION)
(DATE)**

(Example: Revise as Needed)

#	Name	Institutions	Position	Signature
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				

TOOL 1: Semi-Structured Questions for Discussions – FDG with Municipal employees at the Citizen Service Center (CSC) or KII with Head of CSC

Interviewer name:

Date:

Location:

Number of participants: Female: _____ Male: _____

Participant names, institutions and Positions: See participant sign-in sheet.

Introduction/Directions (5 minutes)

1. Each participant will complete sign-in sheet as they enter meeting room.
2. The evaluator will introduce herself when the meeting begins.
3. Review the informed consent form. The evaluator will ask each participant to sign the informed consent before beginning the discussion.
4. The evaluator will explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. She will explain that first a data sheet (Tool 2) will be distributed with a few preliminary questions that the evaluator would like them to fill out. This will only take 10 minutes. A discussion related to these questions and others will follow. The discussion should take about 1 hour.
5. The evaluator will ask each participant to introduce themselves (position and role in the Citizen Service Center (CSC)).

Distribute Data Sheet¹ (10 Minutes)

Familiarity with the Project (Warm Up 5 minutes)

1. Describe your experience with the center.

Relevance (10 Minutes):

1. Was the opening of the CSC with project support the right thing to do?
2. To what extent does it respond to beneficiaries' needs and your needs?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current standards applied, especially in terms of relevance to vulnerable groups?
4. What more can/should be done in the future?

Coherence (10 Minutes):

1. Can you describe the center operations before 1 May 2022 and after?
2. Has the project been present and responsive?

¹ Given the CSC employees' workload and the limited time available to leave the workplace, the data collection form can, in some cases, be emailed in advance, completed, and then handed to the evaluator during the meeting in the municipality.

Effectiveness (15 minutes):

1. How has the center impacted your daily work?
2. Regarding your role as duty bearer, do you think the support by the project was effective and why?
3. Has the center served citizens and businesses well?
4. How would you describe the effect on the service to vulnerable groups?

Sustainability (10 minutes):

1. Do you think the standards of citizen-centric service delivery which the Citizen Service Center embodies, is here to stay?
2. What do you see as related future developments?
3. What are some lessons learned in serving citizens and businesses in general, and vulnerable groups, in particular?
4. What best practices can be identified that should be carried forward into future projects?

Closing Remarks

Thank the group for their participation. Ask if anyone has any additional comments or suggestions. Remind the group that the one of the purposes of the evaluation is to inform Project's lessons learned and if they have any comments, questions or concerns about this they may contact UNDP Office in Tirana, as indicated in the Evaluator's introduction letter from UNDP.

TOOL 2: Data Collection Sheet – Municipal employee at the Citizen Service Center

The following questions collect information about your involvement with the Project and to ask about how you feel about various aspects of your involvement. Your answers are anonymous and will not be attributed to you. Thank you for completing this form.

Are you: Female _____ Male _____

Have you been in your current position since:

2020; 2021; 2022; 2023; 2024

Section 1: Background Information

1. Department/Unit:
 - (please specify): _____
2. Position:
 - (please specify): _____
3. Years of Service in the Municipality:
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 5-10 years
 - More than 10 years

Section 2: Service Delivery Effectiveness

4. How effective do you think is the application of the customer care standards in the Center in delivering services that meet citizens' needs?
 - Very Effective
 - Effective
 - Somewhat Effective
 - Ineffective
 - Very Ineffective
5. To what extent do citizens provide feedback on the services delivered by the Center?
 - Frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Rarely
 - Never

6. How often does the Center make changes based on citizen feedback?
- Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never

Section 3: Accessibility and Inclusivity

8. How accessible is service delivery at the Center to vulnerable or marginalized groups?
- Highly Accessible
 - Accessible
 - Somewhat Accessible
 - Not Accessible
 - Not Sure
9. What additional measures can be taken to ensure that the delivery of public services is inclusive and accessible to every citizen? (*Open-ended*)

Section 4: Continuous Improvement

10. From your perspective, what are the main challenges in maintaining high quality in the delivery of public services with citizens at the Center? (*Select all that apply*)
- Limited resources (e.g., budget, staff)
 - Bureaucratic processes
 - Inadequate training or skills
 - Lack of citizen engagement
 - Digital gap/divide
 - Other (please specify): _____
11. As a follow up, what would you recommend as potential solutions? (*Select all that apply*)
- Improved human resource management
 - Process simplification and standardization
 - Quality management
 - Digital skills training for staff and citizens
 - Citizen outreach
 - Other (please specify): _____

Section 6: Training and Capacity Building

12. Does the Center meet staff needs as a working space? (*Open-ended*)
13. What additional training or resources do you think are needed to enhance citizen-centric service delivery in your department? (*Open-ended*)

Section 7: Overall Satisfaction

14. Overall, how satisfied are you with Center's ability to deliver citizen-centric services?
 - Very Satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very Dissatisfied

TOOL 3: Questionnaire – Beneficiary Leadership (Deputy Minister/General Director/Department Director or Chief of Minister’s Cabinet at the central level; Mayor/ Deputy Mayor at the local level

Interviewer name:

Date:

Institution:

Location:

Interviewee name and title:

Introduction/Directions

1. The evaluator will Introduce herself when the meeting begins.
 2. Review the informed consent form. The participant will be asked to sign the informed consent before beginning the discussion.
 3. The evaluator will explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology.
 4. The discussion should take about 1 hour.
-

***Clarification:** This questionnaire is intended for various stakeholders who have collaborated with the project in different interventions. As such, not all questions may be applicable to every respondent. Please respond only to the questions that pertain to your specific interactions with the project.*

Please specify the project’s relevant intervention(s) as per its key result areas:

1. Policy and Oversight
2. Institutional Capacity Development
3. Service Standard Application
4. Innovation and Digital Agenda

Can you describe your experience, including the specific role you played?

Questions

Relevance (10 Minutes):

1. Is the Project doing the right things?
2. To what extent do the Project’s objectives and design respond to your institution’s needs? Do you think that the project, within its scope, throughout its implementation, has responded to the priorities and needs of your institution? Please explain.
3. Has the Project’s specific intervention(s) in question contributed to the institution’s ability to address the needs of more vulnerable citizens?
4. In your opinion, what are additional areas or measures that would benefit your institution in relation to service delivery, public administration reform and good governance in future projects?

Coherence (10 Minutes):

1. How well do you think the specific intervention(s) by the Project fit with other related interventions in your institution? Please describe.
2. Is there a close alignment with the overall mission, vision, and strategic priorities of your institution? Please describe. What about relevant national, local, or international policies and standards? If yes, which are they?
3. Has the Project been coherent in the specific intervention(s), notwithstanding changes in circumstances, if applicable? Please explain.

Effectiveness (10 minutes):

1. What would you identify as strengths and weaknesses of the intervention(s) in question? Can you describe any unintended results, either negative or positive, that occurred during its implementation and if the Project responded to or capitalized on these?
2. How do you assess the effectiveness of Project's specific intervention(s) regarding duty bearers (public administration) and right holders (citizens and businesses), and why?
3. Do you think there are any local/central conditions/factors influencing the results of the Project specific intervention(s)? How?
4. What challenges need to be addressed to improve future Projects? What are the lessons learned from the intervention(s) supported by the Project in the institution you represent?
5. What can you recommend for similar interventions in the future?

Sustainability (10 minutes):

1. Do you think that the Project has strengthened structures, capacities, and processes through its specific intervention(s) in your institution so that results are sustainable?
2. Are there any potential risks that exist as it relates to sustaining the results of the intervention(s) in the long term? (Including policy space, financial space, partnerships)?
3. What recommendations would you offer to strengthen the sustainability of the Project and its results?

TOOL 4: General Questionnaire – Key Government Interlocutors

Interviewer name:

Date:

Institution:

Location:

Interviewee name and title:

Introduction/Directions

1. The evaluator will introduce herself when the meeting begins.
 2. Review the informed consent form. The participant will be asked to sign the informed consent before beginning the discussion.
 3. The evaluator will explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology.
 4. The discussion should take about 1 hour.
-

General Questions

Relevance (10 Minutes):

1. Is the Project doing the right things?
2. Were you involved in the Project design/revision and what did you do?
3. How would you describe Project responsiveness to beneficiary needs and priorities within its scope, and their evolution during its implementation? Please explain.
4. In your opinion, has the project interventions contributed to bringing to the fore the needs of the more vulnerable citizens and advancing the ability to address them?

Coherence (10 Minutes):

1. How well do Project interventions fit with other related activities by the government and other donors? Please describe.
2. Is the project well aligned with strategic vision and priorities of the government? Please describe.
3. Has the Project been coherent in its interventions, notwithstanding changes in its operating environment? Please explain.

Effectiveness

1. What are the strengths and weakness of the Project?
2. How do you assess the effectiveness of Project's positioning and approach, and why? What about the results regarding duty bearers (public administration) and right holders (citizens and businesses). Please explain.

3. Do you think national or institutional arrangements have been in place to support the Project to date, including policy, financial, political, etc?
4. What are the lessons learned from the Project?
5. What can you recommend for similar interventions in the future?

Sustainability

1. Do you think that the Project has strengthened structures, capacities and processes in its interventions so that there is ownership and results are sustainable?
2. What factors would you identify as hindering or facilitating the achievement of sustainable results by the Project?
3. What recommendations do you offer to strengthen the sustainability of Project results?

TOOL 5: Questionnaire – UNDP and ADA

Interviewer name:

Date:

Agency: UNDP and ADA

Location:

Interviewee name and title:

Questions

Relevance (20 Minutes): Is the Project doing the right things? The extent to which the Project's objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' needs (citizens and business community).

1. Has the Project been in line with national priorities and needs of the Government? If yes, in what ways?
2. In what ways has the Project been relevant to Albania?
3. Were you involved in a stakeholder (duty bearers and rights holders, including HRBA/LNOB/RFB) analysis at the project design stage and throughout the project cycle?
4. When the Project was in the design stage, or at times throughout the project, how were the needs of duty bearers and rights holders considered? Were they consulted?
5. How was the Project designed to respond to context (public administration reform) throughout implementation? Were these responses effective?
6. How were project activities adapted to conform with context referenced in project documents?
7. How was the Project designed to respond to bottlenecks during the project? Were these responses effective?

Coherence (5 Minutes): How well does the Project fit with other Projects in a country, sector or institution.

1. Did the strategic planning processes actively seek coherence and synergies to improve coordination, including LNOB and updated throughout project cycle?
2. Is the project aligned with relevant national, local, or international policies and strategies? If yes, which are these policies laws and regulations?
3. Is the project harmonized with the efforts of other organizations, NGOs, donors, or community groups active in the country?

Effectiveness (15 minutes): Is the Project achieving its objectives? The extent to which the Project achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups.

4. When you think about the Project, what has worked well as it relates to implementation and achieving results? Is there anything that has not worked so well?
5. Can you describe any unintended results, either negative or positive, that occurred during the Project and how the it responded to them (can include economic or legal effects)?
6. Are there any challenges or barriers to the Project's success or effectiveness? If yes, what are they?
7. How would you describe Project contribution at the central and local level?

1. Regarding duty bearers, do you think the Project was very effective, somewhat effective or not effective and why?
2. Regarding right holders (citizens and business), do you think the Project was very effective, somewhat effective or not effective and why?
3. Do you think national and local conditions/factors (financial, institutional, political) influenced the results of the Project? How?
4. What challenges need to be addressed to improve future Projects?

Sustainability (10 minutes)

1. Do you think that the Project has strengthened structures, capacities and processes in its interventions so that there is ownership and results are sustainable?
2. Are there any potential risks that exist as it relates to sustaining the Project's results in the long term? (Including policy space, financial space, partnerships)?
3. What recommendations would you offer to improve sustainability of the Project and its results?

TOOL 6: Data Collection Sheet – Right Holders (citizens)

Section 1: General Information

1. Age:

- Under 18
- 18-30
- 31-45
- 46-60
- 61 and above

2. Gender:

- Female
- Male
- Other

3. Location:

- Urban
- Rural
- Suburban

4. Services Used:

- applied for and received a service?
- requested information for service(s)?
- asked and received assistance in obtaining a service?
- Other (Please specify: _____)

Section 2: Service Accessibility

5. How easy was it to access the service at the Center?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neutral
- Difficult
- Very difficult

6. Were the service hours convenient for you?

- Yes
- No

7. How would you rate the availability of information about services?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

Section 3: Service Efficiency

8. How long did it take to be served (queueing) during your visits at the center?

- Less than 15 minutes
- 15-30 minutes
- 30 minutes - 1 hour
- More than 1 hour

9. Were you able to satisfy the reason you visited the center in a timely manner?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

10. How would you rate the efficiency (timely delivery) of the service provided at the center?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

Section 4: Staff Behavior

11. How would you rate the politeness and professionalism of the staff?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

- Very poor

12. Did the staff provide clear and helpful information?

- Yes
- No
- Partially

13. Were your concerns and questions addressed to your satisfaction?

- Yes
- No

Section 5: Overall Satisfaction

14. How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the service?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

15. Would you recommend this service to others?

- Yes
- No

16. Please rate your overall experience:

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Very poor

This questionnaire covers key aspects of service quality and allows for both quantitative and qualitative feedback, providing a comprehensive understanding of citizen satisfaction.

TOOL 7: Semi Structured Questionnaire – Right Holders (citizens)

Interviewer name:

Date:

Location:

Number of participants: Female: _____ Male: _____

Participant names, institutions and positions: See participant sign-in sheet.

Introduction/Directions (5 minutes)

6. Each participant will complete sign-in sheet as they enter meeting room.
7. The evaluator will introduce herself when the meeting begins.
8. Review the informed consent form. The evaluator will ask each participant to sign the informed consent before beginning the discussion.
9. The evaluator will explain the scope and purpose of the evaluation and offer a brief description of the methodology. She will explain that first a data sheet (Tool 6) will be distributed with a few preliminary questions that the evaluator would like them to fill out. This will only take 10 minutes. A discussion related to these questions and others will follow. The discussion should take about 1 hour.
10. The evaluator will ask each participant to introduce themselves.

Distribute Data Sheet (10 Minutes)

Familiarity with the Project (Warm Up 5 minutes)

1. Describe your experience with the Citizen Service Center in your municipality.

Relevance (10 Minutes):.

1. Was the opening of the center the right thing to do?
2. To what extent does it respond to your needs?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current standards applied, especially considering the vulnerable groups?
4. What more can/should be done in the future in the center?

Effectiveness (15 minutes):

1. Has the center served you well?
2. How has the center improved the quality of the services that you need to obtain from public institutions?
3. How would you describe the quality of the service to vulnerable groups?
4. What do you like most about the service in the center? What about what you don't like?

Sustainability (10 minutes):

1. Do you think the standards of citizen-centric service delivery, which the Citizen Service Center embodies, are here to stay?

2. What more can be done or improved in the future?
3. Any additional comments or suggestions?

Closing Remarks

Thank the group for their participation. Ask if anyone has any additional comments or suggestions. Remind the group that the one of the purposes of the evaluation is to inform Project's lessons learned and if they have any comments, questions or concerns about this they may contact UNDP Office in Tirana, as indicated in the Evaluator's introduction letter from UNDP.

Annex E: Table on Triangulation of Findings

Finding	Desk Review	Project documents	KII	FGD	Duty Bearers Survey	Right Holder Survey	Observations
Relevance							
Finding 1. The CSDA project has proven to be relevant in addressing critical needs in Albania's public administration reform, particularly in improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility.	X		X	X			
Finding 2. CSDA project adaptability to emerging challenges and shifting priorities in Albania's public service landscape is evidenced by proactive realignments and project document revision to meet evolving needs addressing implementation challenges and taking advantage of opportunities created to advance outcome achievement and result sustainability.	X	X	X				
Finding 3. There is a need for future engagement to enhance the relevance and inclusivity of CSDA project interventions, particularly for vulnerable groups, by adopting key strategies. These include strengthening digital inclusion and literacy programs as well as well-targeted interventions in terms of higher accessibility and assistive solutions, especially for vulnerable communities, ensuring a smooth transitional period towards the full shift to online services also at the local level, expanding capacity-building efforts, and improving monitoring and feedback mechanisms.			X	X	X	X	X
Finding 4. Regional cooperation, gender-sensitive service delivery, and better data collection on vulnerable populations will help address specific challenges and promote equitable access to public services in Albania.			X	X	X		
Coherence							
Finding 5. The project maintained its internal coherence even after a significant revision in 2022, which was necessitated by changing government priorities. The revision ensured that the project's outputs remained relevant while reflecting the government's focus on online service delivery and digital innovation.	X	X	X				

<p>Finding 6. CSDA project demonstrated strong external coherence by aligning effectively with national and international frameworks and coordinating closely with other development partner initiative in the good governance area. It supported Albania's public administration reform and good governance priorities, contributed to SDG 16 as well as SDG 5 and SDG 9, and reinforced the country's EU integration efforts through assistance for digital agenda implementation and service standardization.</p>	X	X	X				
<p>Finding 7. CSDA project has maintained strong coherence both within its own structure and in relation to external goals and frameworks. Its added value is evident in its contributions to institutional reform, service delivery, digital transformation, and policy development in Albania</p>		X	X	X			
Effectiveness							
<p>Finding 8. The project has made significant strides in public administration reform in Albania. Key accomplishments include the formulation of a Public Service Standards policy in 2023 and conducting annual Trust in Government Opinion Polls from 2020-2023, offering valuable insights on citizen perceptions. It supported ISO 9001:2015 certification for multiple service providers and delivered leadership and capacity-building programs to enhance institutional efficiency. Citizen-centric services were expanded to benefit over 378,000 residents, improving accessibility for vulnerable groups. The project also advanced Albania's digital transformation, improved the business inspection system, and piloted performance management reforms to enhance accountability across public institutions</p>		X	X	X	X	X	X

<p>Finding 9. CSDA project has successfully achieved core outputs, as per the focused scope in line with funding available, particularly in the areas of policy support and standards, institutional capacity building and digital agenda. Its efforts to strengthen policy frameworks and quality management systems were also met. The provision of public services based on customer care principles reached underserved populations, helping fulfill the project's goal of citizen-centric service delivery. The ADISAs offices have introduced an exemplary model for delivering citizen services, recognized as a best practice standard. In terms of outcomes, the project has made substantial contributions to improving public administration in Albania. It has positively impacted public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls. The support for Albania's National Broadband Plan implementation furthered the country's digital transformation efforts. These contributions provide an essential impetus in the context of Albania's EU integration. However, some outcomes, such as fully embedding a culture of customer service across all institutions, are still in progress and may require additional time for full realization.</p>		X	X	X	X	X	
<p>Finding 10. Key facilitating factors for the project's success included strong partnerships between UNDP, the Government of Albania, and the Austrian Development Agency, alignment with national priorities, flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances, and a strong focus on capacity-building for public officials. These factors enabled the project to achieve high-quality results and foster long-term sustainability. On the other hand, hindering factors such as government restructuring, limited budget, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the absence of a centralized authority for national standards slowed progress and limited the project's reach</p>		X	X	X	X		X
Sustainability							
<p>Finding 11. Local leadership is committed to upholding the service standards previously established by ADISA's, despite the institution's dissolution. In the near future, several ADISA employees in the municipalities of Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake and Përmet will transition to roles as municipal employees. Funded by municipal budgets, these positions will be dedicated to delivering citizen services.</p>			X	X			X

<p>Finding 12. The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level, capacity-building initiatives, digital transformation efforts, and the institutionalization of reforms. However, several factors, such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, financial constraints, and institutional capacity challenges may pose risks to the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Continued international support, sustained government ownership, and efforts to address the digital divide and capacity gaps are crucial for ensuring that the project's achievements are maintained and built upon in the future.</p>		X	X	X			
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Annex F: Interviewees List

Municipalities				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	Malësia Madhe	M	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	KII Tool 3
2		M	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
3		M	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
4		F	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
5		F	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
6		F	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
7		F	Municipality of Malesia e Madhe	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
8	Divjakë	M	Municipality of Divjake	KII Tool 3
9		M	Municipality of Divjake	KII Tool 3
10		F	Municipality of Divjake	KII Tool 3
11		F	Municipality of Divjake	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
12		M	Municipality of Divjake	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
13		F	Municipality of Divjake	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
14		F	Municipality of Divjake	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
15		F	Municipality of Divjake	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
16	Roskovec	F	Municipality of Roskovec	KII Tool 3
17		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
18		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
19		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
20		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)

21		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
22		F	Municipality of Roskovec	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
23	Permet	F	Municipality of Përmet	KII Tool 3
24		M	Municipality of Përmet	KII Tool 3
25		F	Municipality of Përmet	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
26		F	Municipality of Përmet	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
27		M	Municipality of Përmet	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
28	Kukes	F	Municipality of Kukës	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
29		F	Municipality of Kukës	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
30		M	Municipality of Kukës	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
31		M	Municipality of Kukës	KII Tool 3
32	Librazhd	F	Municipality of Librazhd	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
33		M	Municipality of Librazhd	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
34		F	Municipality of Librazhd	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
35		M	Municipality of Librazhd	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
36		M	Municipality of Librazhd	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
37	Ersekë	M	Municipality of Ersekë	KII Tool 3
38		F	Municipality of Ersekë	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
39	Maliq	F	Municipality of Maliq	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
40		F	Municipality of Maliq	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
41		F	Municipality of Maliq	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
42		F	Municipality of Maliq	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
43		F	Municipality of Maliq	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
44		M	Municipality of Maliq	KII Tool 3

45	Belsh	M	Municipality of Belsh	KII Tool 3
46		F	Municipality of Belsh	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
47		F	Municipality of Belsh	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
48		F	Municipality of Belsh	FGD and Survey (Tool 1 & 2)
49	Tepelenë	M	Virtually	KII Tool 3

Central Government				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	MAPA	F	MAPA office	KII Tool 4
2	MoI	M	MoI office	KII Tool 3
3	MoI	F	MoI office	KII Tool 3
4	MoI	M	MoI office	KII Tool 3
5	GDIP	F	GDIP office	KII Tool 3
6	National Business Center	F	National Business Center office	KII Tool 3
7	National Business Center	F	National Business Center office	KII Tool 3
8	National Business Center	F	National Business Center office	KII Tool 3
9	MIE	F	MIE office	KII Tool 3
10	MIE	F	MIE office	KII Tool 3

11	Ministry of State for Entrepreneurship and Business Climate	M	Ministry of State for Entrepreneurship and Business Climate office	KII Tool 3
12	Health and Social Care Quality Assurance Agency	M	Virtually	KII Tool 3

Consultants				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	Experts	M	Coffee Bar Tirana	KII Tool 3
2	Experts	M	Coffee Bar Tirana	KII Tool 3
3	Experts	M	Coffee Bar Tirana	KII Tool 3
4	Experts	F	Virtually	KII Tool 3

Non-Governmental Institutions (NGO)				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	IDM	F	Virtually	KII Tool 3

Former Key Government Interlocutors				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	Former Ministry of State for Service Standards	F	Coffee Bar Tirana	KII Tool 4

2	Former Ministry of State for Service Standards	F	Virtually	KII Tool 3
3	Former ADISA	M	Virtually	KII Tool 4
4	Former Ministry of State for Service Standards	F	Coffee Bar Tirana	KII Tool 4

Donor and Implementer				
No	Name of institution	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	UNDP staff	F	Virtually	KII Tool 5
2	ADA staff	F	ADA Office	KII Tool 5

End Beneficiaries					
No	Right holders	Municipalities	Gender	Location	Evaluation Tool
1	Right holder	Roskovec	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
2	Right holder	Roskovec	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
3	Right holder	Roskovec	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
4	Right holder	Roskovec	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
5	Right holder	Roskovec	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
6	Right holder	Roskovec	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
7	Right holder	Përmet	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
8	Right holder	Përmet	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
9	Right holder	Përmet	F	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
10	Right holder	Përmet	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
11	Right holder	Përmet	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)

12	Right holder	Maliq	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
13	Right holder	Maliq	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)
14	Right holder	Maliq	M	Premises of Municipality	FGD & Survey (Tool 6 & 7)

Annex G: Signed Pledge



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.



INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional**, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible**.



ACCOUNTABILITY

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.



RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access** to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).



BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration** of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm**. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

Elvana Gadeshi August 14, 2024

(Signature and Date)

Annex H: CSDA Project Results Framework

Intervention Logic	Indicators	Data source	Baseline Value	Target	Project achievements : Note All data is as 30 August 2024. For indicators sourced from the Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll, the analysis references the targets set for 2023, as the TIG2024 data is expected to become available by the end of December 2024. As the project timeline has been extended by 11 months into 2024, deviating from the original completion date of February 2024, the TIG2024 will be critical in assessing the project's final achievements. For indicators based on project-specific data, the analysis is aligned with the targets for February 2024, which correspond to the original project completion deadline..	Overall Status
Impact: All persons and businesses in Albania effectively exercise their right for citizen-centric public service delivery	Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services (SDG Indicator 16.6.2)	WB CCSD Project Impact Assessment 2020	65.0%		<p>In 2020, 68%, a 3% increase (was 65% in 2018, 51% in 2016)</p> <p>Female: 70% (was 68% in 2018, 57% in 2016) Male: 66% (was 64% in 2018, 47% in 2016) Under 55 y.o.: 68% (was 67% in 2018, 49% in 2016) Over 55 y.o.: 68% (was 61% in 2018, 57% in 2016) Rural: 65% (was 65% in 2018, 51% in 2016) Urban: 66% (was 70% in 2018, 51% in 2016) Wealth index-Poorer: 67% (was 64% in 2018, 53% in 2016) Wealth index-Middle: 69% (was 69% in 2018, 54% in 2016) Wealth index-Richer: 68% (was 65% in 2018, 49% in 2016) Roma: 67% (was 68% in 2018, 52% in 2016)</p>	Note: This data is part of the original RF. Retained in the revised version for reference only as the data collection instrument was no longer available with the conclusion of the WB project. It was replaced by TIG provided below. Baseline and targets were revised.
		Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll (TIG)	44.1%	60.0%	<p>In 2021- 54% of users of administrative services were satisfied or very satisfied, 9.9pp compared to 2019 (was 44.7% in 2020).</p> <p>Disaggregated: Female, 55 y.o. & under and Urban: 55% Male: 53% Rural and Over 55 y.o.: 51%.</p> <p>Highest figures on satisfaction recorded for civil registry - 72%, social insurance - 64%, and road transport - 60%</p> <p>Additionally, as a proxy, data on satisfaction with services delivered in ADISA service centers are as follows: 2021: satisfied or very satisfied - 76.9%, visited an ADISA service window - 36.9% 2020: satisfied or very satisfied - 73.4%, visited an ADISA service window - 29.4%. 2019: satisfied or very satisfied - 69.3%, visited an ADISA service window - 23.9%; In 2022 - 56% of users of administrative services were satisfied or very satisfied, 11.9pp higher compared to 2019.</p> <p>Disaggregated: Females respondents were on average 3.5pp more satisfied than male respondents. Respondents over 55 y.o. were on average 5.3pp less satisfied than respondents 55 y.o. and under. Rural respondents were on average 2.4pp more satisfied than those from urban areas. Highest figures on satisfaction recorded for civil registry - 74.7%, road transport - 63.4% and social insurance - 61.9% (Questions on ADISA discontinued); In 2023- 58.5% of users of administrative services were satisfied or very satisfied, 14.4pp higher compared to 2019.</p> <p>Disaggregated: Gender-based data reveals comparable satisfaction levels between women and men. Females respondents were on average less than 0.3pp more satisfied than male respondents. Respondents over 55 y.o. were on average 8.3pp less satisfied than respondents 55 y.o. and under. Rural respondents were on average 4.4pp more satisfied than those from urban areas. Highest figures on satisfaction among most used administrative services recorded for civil registry - 71.6%, road transport - 68.3%; social insurance - 66.7%</p>	LARGELY ACHIEVED: 1.5pp gap to final target, i.e. 14.4pp vs. 15.9pp or 58.5% vs. 60%, on a three-year positive trend by no less than 2pp increase year-on-year, based on 2023 Trust in Government Opinion Poll report. Final attainment data would be available upon TIG 2024 data, which could be available no earlier than end of December 2024.
Outcome: Based on shared standard requirements, access to public services and the quality and efficiency in their delivery is enhanced sustainably through innovation and utilization of information technology	A. Percent increase of equal access to public services for women and men in Albania	Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll	Av. 68.8% (F. 66.4% M. 71.1%)	77.8%	<p>In 2020- 71.3% of respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement that in Albania, men and women have the same access to the public services. 74.5% of male respondent and 68.2% of female respondents reported that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement.; In 2021 - 74.8% of respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with this statement that in Albania, men and women have the same access to public services, 6pp higher than in 2019.</p> <p>Male and female respondents tended to think alike, with 75.8% and 73.8% respectively.</p> <p>Between 2019 and 2021, the percentage of women agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement increased noticeably. In 2021, it went up by 6 pp compared to 2020, and by 8 pp compared to 2019. The percentage of men agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement also continued to increase, though at a lower rate (1 pp compared to 2020), giving a cumulative increase of 5 pp compared with 2019. As a result, the gender gap narrowed to 2 pp, the smallest since the 2016 survey. ; In 2022- 77.1% of respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with this statement that in Albania, men and women have the same access to public services, 8.3pp higher than in 2019.</p> <p>Female respondents: 74.3% Male respondents: 80.2%; In 2023- 77.6% of respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with this statement that in Albania, men and women have the same access to public services, 8.8pp higher than in 2019. Female respondents: 76% Male respondents: 79.2%</p>	LARGELY ACHIEVED 0.2pp gap to final target, i.e. 8.8pp vs. 9pp or 77.6% vs. 77.8%, on a four-year positive trend, based on 2023 Trust in Government Opinion Poll report. Final attainment data would be available upon TIG 2024 data, which could be available no earlier than end of December 2024.

	B. Percentage decrease of gender gap in equal treatment of women and men by public administration in service delivery in Albania	Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll	6.5%	0.5%	<p>2020- 4.8%, a reduction of 1.7 p.p.</p> <p>In 2020 65.4% of female respondents and 70.2% of male respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement "Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion", compared to 64.3% and 70.8%, respectively, in 2019. In 2021 - 1.0%, a reduction of 5.5 pp (cumulative), 3.8 pp more than 2020</p> <p>In 2021, 76.1% of female respondents and 77.1% of male respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement "Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion", compared to 64.3% and 70.8% in 2019. This is the narrowest gender gap since the 2016 survey.; In 2022 - 5%, a reduction of 1.5pp compared to 2019, yet reversing the gains recorded in the last two years.</p> <p>In 2022, 69.9% of female respondents and 74.9% of male respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement "Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion".</p> <p>Overall figure stands at 72.4% (was 76.6% in in 2021). ; In 2023 - 2%, a reduction of 4.5pp compared to 2019, correcting the slip in 2022.</p> <p>In 2023, 70% of female respondents and 72% of male respondents said that they 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the statement "Public servants serve women and men with the same ethics and devotion".</p> <p>Overall figure stands at 71.1%.</p>	<p>LARGELY ACHIEVED</p> <p>5.5pp reached in 2021 in an increasing trend from 2020. Reversal in 2022 which witnessed the drastic government decision to close central government physical service windows as of 1 May announced in April 2022. Slip corrected in 2023 from 1.5pp in 2022 to 4.5pp, with a 1.5pp gap to the final target of 6pp. Final attainment data would be available upon Trust in Government 2024 data, which could be available no earlier than end of December 2024.</p>
	C. Percentage of women applicants for public services	Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll	50.2%	Above 50%	<p>2020: 50.1%; 2021; 50.8%; 2022 50.5%; 2023 47.8%</p> <p>750 female applicants resulted out of 1570 user of central and local government services. Year 2023 is the first year to register a drop under 50%. This reflects a drop of female respondents who said they had received a central government service, which as of 1 May 2022 are provided only online.</p>	<p>LARGELY ACHIEVED</p> <p>Met in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Decreased for the first time in 2023. This reflects a drop of female respondents who said they had received a central government service, which as of 1 May 2022 are provided only online.</p>
Output 1.1: Policy support under the public administration reform provided	1.1.1 Percentage increase of perceived accountability for central government institutions	Annual Trust in Governance Opinion Poll	32.8%	41%	<p>In 2020: 34.5% of respondents indicated that they perceive the central government as accountable, 1.7pp higher compared to 2019</p> <p>No substantial differences were found for gender, education, employment status, geographical representation, or whether a respondent has a disability or not.</p> <p>Female: 35%; Male: 34%</p> <p>Respondents with an income of more than 70 001 ALL were less likely to indicate that they perceive the central government as accountable (32%). In 2021: 37.5% indicated that they see the central government as accountable, 4.7pp higher compared to 2019.</p> <p>No substantial differences were found by age group or geographical location. Results show that substantial differences were found according to gender.</p> <p>Female: 40%; Male: 35%</p> <p>Respondents without a regular monthly income were less likely to see the central government as accountable (27%).; In 2022: 36% of respondents said they consider the central government to be accountable, 3.2pp higher compared to 2019, but lower than the 2021 result.</p> <p>There was a relatively small difference in the perception of accountability based on gender.</p> <p>Female: 37%; Male: 35%</p> <p>The youngest age group (18–25 years old) had the lowest perception of accountability by the central government: 32%. Respondents aged 66 and over had the highest: 43%.</p> <p>Respondents with the highest income levels (over 70,001 ALL) had a lower perception of accountability compared to other income groups: 35%.</p> <p>Rural respondents had greater faith in government accountability compared to urban respondents: 38% ; In 2023 : 33.6% of respondents said they consider the central government to be accountable, less than 1pp higher compared to 2019, continuing the reduction since 2022, reversing the upward trend in 2020-2021.</p> <p>There were no notable differences in the perceptions of women and men.</p> <p>Female: 34%; Male: 33%</p> <p>Respondents aged 66 and over had the highest perception of accountability of all age groups, with 37% believing the central government is accountable.</p> <p>Respondents living in rural areas demonstrated greater trust in government accountability: 35% ; In The same with respondents indicating belongingness to a minority group (32%).33.6% of respondents said they consider the central government to be accountable, less than 1pp higher compared to 2019, continuing the reduction since 2022, reversing the upward trend in 2020-2021.</p> <p>There were no notable differences in the perceptions of women and men.</p> <p>Female: 34%; Male: 33%</p> <p>Respondents aged 66 and over had the highest perception of accountability of all age groups, with 37% believing the central government is accountable.</p>	<p>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</p> <p>Based on 2023 Trust in Government Opinion Poll report. Final attainment data would be available upon TiG 2024 data, which could be available no earlier than end of December 2024. This indicator measures public perception of government accountability in general at the central and local level. While satisfaction of citizens users of administrative public services has increased over the years, this has not been reflected in their perception of overall accountability.</p>
Output 1.2: Quality management and performance monitoring enhanced	1.2.1 Public service delivery standard legal and reporting instruments available	Minister of State Cabinet; Official Gazette	No legal instrument	Legal & reporting framework in place	<p>Roadmap drafted</p> <p>Public Service Delivery Index / Barometer with indicators drafted and piloted</p> <p>Public Service Standards Policy Document drafted</p> <p>Public consultations on the draft policy document conducted in October-November 2022; Policy Document on Public Service Standards, including references to the public service delivery quality index and key performance indicators, approved by the Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 204, dated 7 April 2023, prepared by the Minister of State for Service Standards following policy input through international and local expertise by the CSDA Project</p> <p>Draft Decision of the Council of Ministers on the establishment, implementation and monitoring of the national public service standards, August 2023</p>	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p>
Output 2.1: Assistance provided	2.1.1 Percentage of institutional ISO quality management certification readiness	Project reports	15%	100%	<p>Certification for ISO 9001:2015 Quality management and ISO 37001:2016 Anti-bribery awarded to ADISA on 17 December 2021; A 9001: 2015 standard by five central government public service providers to citizens and businesses: General Directorate of Civil Registry-DPGJC; General Directorate of Industrial Property-DPPI; Agency for Territory Development-AZHT; National Business Center-QKB and Health and Social Care Quality Assurance Agency-ASCK), as an instrument to help sustain high quality public service delivery. Assistance through the project included readiness assessment, capacity building, preparation of documentation/process maps as per ISO standards, mentoring and certification audit facilitation. By 11 November 2023, all the agencies had the formal relevant internal orders of ISO-compliant process maps in place. As of end of December 2023, the formal certification process was under way. Certification of successful adoption of ISO-compliant quality management systems in six central government agencies</p>	<p>FULLY ACHIEVED</p>

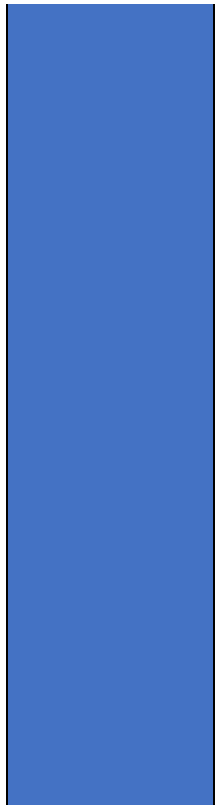
towards obtaining relevant certification and establishing core processes aligned with national standard	2.1.2 No. of trained public administration staff on the public service standard	Project documentation	0	200	<p>In 2024, 298 public administration staff are trained cumulatively on the public service standard : Six (6) training workshops organized during September - October 2021, four of which online, and two face-to-face, including a training of trainers on customer care standards in public service delivery in Albania with the focus on persons with disabilities: 69 participants from Tirana, Elbasan, Kruja, Lushnja, Kavaja, Shkodra and Gjirokastra who received training certificates from the Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA)</p> <p>72% were female including 7 out of 8 from the ToT</p> <p>67% from outside the capital.</p> <p>- ISO 9001:2015 fundamentals; Training sessions on the fundamentals of ISO 9001:2015: 44 staff members from the five target agencies were trained (20% weighted average of overall agency staff, ranging between a minimum of 10% and up to 35% within each agency), 73% of which women;</p> <p>19 training workshops on Cascade Objectives and Performance Appraisal in April-June 2024 with the participation of 185 managerial staff in five pilot institutions, 70% of which women, and the organization of a training of trainers (ToT) with 12 participants, 10 of which women</p>	EXCEEDED TARGET
Output 2.2: Sustainable institutional capacities at the governance level enabled	2.2.1 No. of mentoring initiatives implemented	s	0	6	<p>In 2024, 6 mentoring initiatives were cumulatively implemented : 1. Mentoring of ADISA staff by CSDA's social media and digital content expert</p> <p>2. Mentoring of ADISA staff on ISO 9001:2015 compliance 3. Mentoring on ISO 9001:2015 compliance in additional five target agencies</p> <p>4. Mentoring on the piloting of Cascade Objectives and updated Performance Appraisal processes in three line ministries and two agencies; 5. Levelling-up leadership for senior staff at the Ministry of Infrastructure and energy (MIE)</p> <p>6. Leadership development for top public administration officials</p>	FULLY ACHIEVED
Output 3.1: Adaptation and application of public service standard expanded nationwide for women and men	3.1.1 Reach of application of standard requirements for women and men	INSTAT	229,173	450,000	<p>378,496 inhabitants in 14 Municipality-based joint citizen service centers (cumulative, 2011 census data)</p> <p>No addition in 2023.</p>	LARGELY ACHIEVED
Output 3.2: Engagement and outreach conducted	3.2.1 No. of outreach events targeting women and vulnerable groups	Project reports	0	12	<p>12 cumulative engagement and outreach were cumulatively conducted : 1. Covid-19 delayed public events featuring the newly operational citizen service centers established with donor support hosted by the Roskovec and Pogradec municipalities, September 2020</p> <p>-2. Consultations on the area of increased public service accessibility as part of the preparatory work for the new Open Government Partnership (OGP) 2020 – 2022 Action plan for Albania : 4. Social media campaign on the service information package for Roma and Egyptian communities as well as answers to most frequently asked questions on public services by help-line callers</p> <p>5. Inauguration ceremony of the project-supported citizen service center in Tepelena implementing the highest accessibility standards, 18 June 2021</p> <p>6. Certificates' ceremony for the training on customer-care standards in public service delivery with special focus on persons with disabilities, showcasing achievements and needs in this area, 9 November 2021</p> <p>7. Promotion of 1 800 118 number for information on services in municipal citizen service centers</p> <p>8. Showcasing by the Mayor of the project-supported Përmeti citizen service center including applied accessibility standards for persons with disabilities, 27 October 2022, part of UN Week activities' program in the municipality</p> <p>- 9&10 Two consultative roundtables with stakeholders and beneficiaries organized in June 2023 on operationalizing State Aid for Broadband in Albania, to help enable access to online services for the more vulnerable groups in remote, rural and economically depressed areas</p> <p>- 11. One focus group with beneficiaries of a donor-supported digital support center at Tirana Municipality's "Të qëndrojmë së bashku" Kombinat Community Center, July 2023</p> <p>- 12. Consultation with Tirana Municipality directors of the Social Protection and Inclusion as well as Innovation Departments (Directorate of Social Services) on a potential joint pilot project on digital skills for adults above 45 years of age, with the focus on the most vulnerable</p>	FULLY ACHIEVED
Output 4.1: Innovation in public service delivery with focus on the women and vulnerable advanced	4.1.1 No. of service delivery innovation initiatives envisaged	Project reports	0	10	<p>11 cumulativeservice delivery innovation initiatives were envisaged: 1. Service Information package for Roma and Egyptian communities to ensure easy access to information on most required/needed public services identified by beneficiaries (https://www.adisa.gov.al/komuniteti-rom-dhe-egjptiane);</p> <p>2. ADISA Online Chat at www.adisa.gov.al to offer an alternative channel helping citizens and business access information on public services, launched in response to Covid-19 restrictions;</p> <p>3. Citizen Internet Corner at ADISA Centers, an experimentation project to help promote usage of online services through providing internet access in a dedicated self-service space in ADISA centers (included in ADISA commitments under Albania's 2020-2022 Open Government Partnership Action Plan) ; 4. Public services accessibility map for persons with disabilities in Albania's public institutions - Data gathering</p> <p>5. Citizen Internet Corner implemented at the joint service center in Tepelenë municipality opened in June 2021</p> <p>6. Citizen Internet Corner with dedicated assistance at the integrated service center in Kamëz opened in November 2021;</p> <p>7. Citizen Internet Corner implemented at Përmet municipality citizen service center in October 2022</p> <p>8. Quality Management (QM) for Public Administration in Albania: Conversation with Decision Makers to assist in establishing an articulate platform for policy decisions and action in institutionalizing QM for public sector organizations in order to support delivery of high standard public services to citizens and businesses in Albania, 30 May 2023</p> <p>9. Digital literacy pilot project design, August 2023;</p> <p>10. Innovation Forum with public and private sector participations organized by the Ministry of State for Public Administration and Anticorruption in tandem with the Ministry of Economy, Culture and Innovation with CSDA Project support, 30 May 2024</p> <p>11. Introduction of Cascade Objectives and improved performance evaluation through a redesigned form and process, March-August 2024</p>	EXCEEDED TARGET

<p>Output 4.2. Implementation of the National Broadband Plan advanced</p>	<p>4.2.1 Percentage of women and men in Albania aware of the e-albania portal and users</p>	<p>Trust in Governance Opinion Poll</p>	<p>37.8%</p>	<p>80%</p>	<p>In 2020- 69.1%, 31.3pp increase</p> <p>In 2020, 93.0% of respondents said that they were aware of e-albania.al, and 74.3% of them said they had received an electronic service through the portal, i.e. 69.1% in total, compared to 71.2% and 53.1% respectively, i.e. 37.8% in total, in 2019.</p> <p>A pre-Covid increased GoA focus on the provision of services online combined with utilization of e-albania for a variety of permissions during Covid-19 lock-down are contributing factors to these figures.</p> <p>When checking across demographics in 2020, no substantial differences were found for gender and geographical representation, with calculated total percentages for female and urban respondents only slightly higher. On the other hand, the figures for '55 y.o. and under' and 'Over 55 y.o.' are 75.9% and 43.4%, respectively. In 2021 - 71.6%, 33.8pp increase (cumulative), 2.5pp higher than in 2020</p> <p>In 2020, 89.4% of respondents said that they were aware of e-albania.al, and 80.1% of them said they had received an electronic service through the portal, i.e. 71.6% in total, compared to 71.2% and 53.1% respectively, i.e. 37.8% in total, in 2019.</p> <p>When checking across demographics in 2021, no substantial differences were found for gender, with calculated total percentages for male respondents only marginally higher compared to female respondents (72% and 71.2% respectively). On the other hand, the figures for '55 y.o. and under' and 'Over 55 y.o.' are 76.9% and 38.7%, respectively. Whereas for urban and rural respondents, they are: 70.6% and 65.4% In 2022- 75.2%, 37.7pp increase (cumulative), 3.6pp higher than in 2020</p> <p>In 2022, 90.7% of respondents aware of e-albania.al and 82.9% of them said they had received an electronic service through the portal.</p> <p>When checking across demographics in 2022, 90.6% of women and 90.8% of men were aware. Younger age groups, respondents with a university degree or higher, students, public sector employees, and urban residents were more likely to report that they are aware of the e-Albania portal.</p> <p>A higher percentage of women than men reported that they received electronic services through the e-albania portal in 2022; the difference, however, was not substantial (83.8% vs. 81.9%). Younger age groups, respondents with a university degree or higher, students, and public sector employees were all more likely to report that they had received services through the e-albania portal.</p> <p>Overall, no substantial differences were found for gender, with calculated total percentages for female respondents only 1.5pp higher compared to male respondents (75.9% and 74.4% respectively). In 2023 - .69.6% of women and men in Albania aware of the e-albania portal and users, 31.8pp increase (cumulative), 0.5pp higher than in 2020, yet a drop compared to both 2022 and 2021</p> <p>In 2023, 92% of respondents aware of e-albania.al and 75.6% of them said they had received an electronic service through the portal.</p> <p>When checking across demographics in 2023, young respondents (aged 18–25) exhibit a higher level of awareness, with 95.6%, compared to those aged 66 years and older, where the awareness level is 77.8%. Additionally, respondents with lower educational attainment were less aware compared to those with a university or higher level of education. Conversely, respondents from urban and rural areas display a similar level of awareness.</p> <p>In terms of usage, 75.6% of those aware of the e-albania portal, indicated that they had used it during 2023.</p>	<p>LARGELY ACHIEVED</p> <p>Based on 2023 Trust in Government Opinion Poll report. Final attainment data would be available upon TIG 2024 data, which could be available no earlier than end of December 2024</p>
	<p>4.2.2 Percentage increase of women and men as independent users of the e-albania portal</p>	<p>Trust in Governance Opinion Poll</p>	<p>70%</p>	<p>80%</p>	<p>No improvement recorded</p> <p>In 2021, 70% reported they accessed the electronic services personally, while 30% did so with the help of others. In 2022 - 47.9% respondents reported that they accessed e-Albania portal 'always by themselves' and 20.5% 'usually by themselves', while 15.9% said 'usually with the help of others,' and 15.7% 'always with the help of others.'</p> <p>In 2023, 45.4% respondents reported that they accessed e-Albania portal 'always by themselves' and 22.2% 'usually by themselves', while 18.8% said 'usually with the help of others,' and 13.6% 'always with the help of others.'</p>	<p>NOT APPLICABLE</p> <p>Given the funding gap and impact of government reshuffling, project interventions in the digital literacy area were agreed to be consolidated into the recommended conceptual framework, proposed work plan and a community-based pilot design targeting adults 45 years of age and over.</p>

Annex I: Relation between findings, conclusions and recommendations

Criterion	Evaluation Questions (EQ)	Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Relevance	1. How relevant has the project been in addressing the needs in the country?	1. The CSDA project has proven to be relevant in addressing critical needs in Albania's public administration reform, particularly in improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility.	Relevance of the CSDA Project: The CSDA project successfully addressed Albania's key needs in public administration reform, particularly improving public service delivery, transparency, and accessibility. This highlights its alignment with Albania's critical priorities and the necessity of continued support for administrative modernization.	
	2. Have new, more relevant needs emerged and how did the project address them?	2. CSDA project adaptability to emerging challenges and shifting priorities in Albania's public service landscape is evidenced by proactive realignments and project document revision to meet evolving needs addressing implementation challenges and taking advantage of opportunities created to advance outcome achievement and result sustainability.	Adaptability and Responsiveness: The project's adaptability, demonstrated by its proactive adjustments to emerging challenges, ensured sustained progress toward its goals. This ability to realign with evolving government priorities reinforced its relevance and effectiveness, setting a benchmark for handling dynamic administrative landscapes.	
	3. How could possible future engagement be made even more relevant in particular with respect to the most vulnerable groups / to leave no one behind?	<p>3. There is a need for future engagement to enhance the relevance and inclusivity of CSDA project interventions, particularly for vulnerable groups, by adopting key strategies. These include strengthening digital inclusion and literacy programs as well as well-targeted interventions in terms of higher accessibility and assistive solutions, especially for vulnerable communities, ensuring a smooth transitional period towards the full shift to online services also at the local level, expanding capacity-building efforts, and improving monitoring and feedback mechanisms.</p> <p>4. Regional cooperation, gender-sensitive service delivery, and better data collection on vulnerable populations will help address specific challenges and promote equitable access to public services in Albania.</p>	Need for Inclusive Digital Solutions: Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups has been essential in enhancing the impact of CSDA interventions. Strengthened digital literacy and inclusion programs, combined with improved accessibility during Albania's transition to online services, have contributed to fostering equitable access to public services and effectively supporting underserved populations.	Recommendation 1 : A comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted for all vulnerable groups to evaluate their usage of online public services and identify barriers to access them.

Coherence	4. How coherent has the project been internally and externally?	<p>5. The project maintained its internal coherence even after a significant revision in 2022, which was necessitated by changing government priorities. The revision ensured that the project's outputs remained relevant while reflecting the government's focus on online service delivery and digital innovation.</p> <p>6. : CSDA project demonstrated strong external coherence by aligning effectively with national and international frameworks and coordinating closely with other development partner initiative in the good governance area. It supported Albania's public administration reform and good governance priorities, contributed to SDG 16 as well as SDG 5 and SDG 9, and reinforced the country's EU integration efforts through assistance for digital agenda implementation and service standardization.</p>	<p>Internal Coherence: Even after a significant revision in 2022 to accommodate shifting government priorities, the CSDA project maintained internal coherence. This reflects the project's strong foundation, ensuring continued alignment with Albania's digital transformation and online service delivery goals.</p> <p>External Coherence and Alignment with International Frameworks: The CSDA project effectively aligned with Albania's public administration reform and international frameworks, including SDGs 16, 5, and 9. By reinforcing Albania's EU integration efforts and promoting good governance, the project enhanced its global and national relevance</p>	
	5. What has been its added value?	<p>7. CSDA project has maintained strong coherence both within its own structure and in relation to external goals and frameworks. Its added value is evident in its contributions to institutional reform, service delivery, digital transformation, and policy development in Albania</p>	<p>Added Value in Reform and Service Delivery: The CSDA project's contributions to institutional reform, digital transformation, and service delivery reforms highlight its added value. By fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and digital innovation, the project played a pivotal role in Albania's public administration improvement.</p>	
	6. What are the main project accomplishments?	<p>8. The project has made significant strides in public administration reform in Albania. Key accomplishments include the formulation of a Public Service Standards policy in 2023 and conducting annual Trust in Government Opinion Polls from 2020-2023, offering valuable insights on citizen perceptions. It supported ISO 9001:2015 certification for multiple service providers and delivered leadership and capacity-building programs to enhance institutional efficiency. Citizen-centric services were expanded to benefit over 378,000 residents, improving accessibility for vulnerable groups. The project also advanced Albania's digital transformation, improved the business inspection system, and piloted performance management reforms to enhance accountability across public institutions</p>	<p>Significant Strides in Public Administration: The project made substantial advances in public administration reform, including policy development, public service standardization, and digital transformation. The increased public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls, signals the project's positive impact on citizen perceptions. However, some goals, like embedding a full culture of customer service across institutions, will require further time to fully realize.</p>	<p>Recommendation 2: Proposed amendments to the performance evaluation process in public administration should be finalized through comprehensive consultations with key stakeholders. The pilot intervention on cascade objectives and performance appraisal should be institutionalized within the framework of promoting meritocracy.</p>
Effectiveness				



7. To what extent have the expected outputs and outcomes been achieved?

9. CSDA project has successfully achieved core outputs, as per the focused scope in line with funding available, particularly in the areas of policy support and standards, institutional capacity building and digital agenda. Its efforts to strengthen policy frameworks and quality management systems were also met. The provision of public services based on customer care principles reached underserved populations, helping fulfill the project's goal of citizen-centric service delivery. The ADISAs offices have introduced an exemplary model for delivering citizen services, recognized as a best practice standard. In terms of outcomes, the project has made substantial contributions to improving public administration in Albania. It has positively impacted public trust in government services, as reflected in opinion polls. The support for Albania's National Broadband Plan implementation furthered the country's digital transformation efforts. These contributions provide an essential impetus in the context of Albania's EU integration. However, some outcomes, such as fully embedding a culture of customer service across all institutions, are still in progress and may require additional time for full realization.

Recommendation 3: Future interventions should provide technical assistance to ensure the adoption of EU and international best practices, including certified quality management systems for both central and local public service providers. The appointment of a lead institution in Quality Management should be prioritized to oversee the development, implementation, and updating of national standards.

	<p>8. What are the main facilitating or hindering factors for results achievement?</p>	<p>10. Key facilitating factors for the project's success included strong partnerships between UNDP, the Government of Albania, and the Austrian Development Agency, alignment with national priorities, flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances, and a strong focus on capacity-building for public officials. These factors enabled the project to achieve high-quality results and foster long-term sustainability. On the other hand, hindering factors such as government restructuring, limited budget, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the absence of a centralized authority for national standards slowed progress and limited the project's reach</p>	<p>Facilitating and Hindering Factors: Strong partnerships, flexibility, alignment with national priorities, and capacity-building were key facilitators of the project's success. However, challenges like government restructuring, limited budget, the COVID-19 pandemic, the digital divide, and the lack of a centralized standards authority slowed progress. Addressing these barriers is essential to extending the project's reach.</p>	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Sustainability</p>	<p>9 What are the main facilitating or hindering factors for results achievement?</p>	<p>11. Local leadership is committed to upholding the service standards previously established by ADISA's, despite the institution's dissolution. In the near future, several ADISA employees in the municipalities of Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake and Përmet will transition to roles as municipal employees. Funded by municipal budgets, these positions will be dedicated to delivering citizen services.</p> <p>12. The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level, capacity-building initiatives, digital transformation efforts, and the institutionalization of reforms. However, several factors, such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, financial constraints, and institutional capacity challenges may pose risks to the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Continued international support, sustained government ownership, and efforts to address the digital divide and capacity gaps are crucial for ensuring that the project's achievements are maintained and built upon in the future.</p>	<p>Sustainability of Project Outcomes: The sustainability of the CSDA project is supported by strong government commitment in local and central level and institutionalized reforms. However, risks such as resistance to change, infrastructure limitations, and financial constraints must be addressed. Continued international support and efforts to close the digital divide are essential to sustaining and building on the project's achievements in the long term. Local leadership is committed to upholding ADISA's high standards of citizen services, even after the institution's closure, by integrating former ADISA employees as dedicated municipal staff in Kukës, Roskovec, Tepelene, Divjake, and Përmet. Funded by municipal budgets, these roles will ensure the continued provision of efficient, accessible public services at the local level.</p>	<p>Recommendation 4: Albanian Municipalities should invest in preserving the investment and standards of public service delivery established by ADISA following the closure of the institution.</p>

Annex J: Bibliography

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