Evaluation of the Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation (PoC) 2012-2016:

Final Report

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Disclaimer

The findings, analysis, and recommendations made in this report reflect the views of the independent evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations, the Government of Albania or other stakeholders involved in the programme of cooperation.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following acronymsn and abbreviations are used frequently in this report.

ALMMs	Active Labour Market Measures
CF	Coherence Fund for the GoA-UN Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016
CLE	Country led evaluation
CoM	Council of Ministers of the GoA
CSO	Civil society organisation
DaO	Delivering as One
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GoA	Government of Albania
HDI	Human development index
HR	Human rights
HRBA	Human rights based approach
JAWP	Joint annual work plans
JBWP	Joint biennial work plan
JEC	Joint Executive Committee for the PoC
LTA	Long term agreement
MTR	Mid-term review
OMT	United Nations Operations Management Team
OWG	Output working group
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
NSDI I	Strategy for Development and Integration, 2007-2013
NSDI II	Strategy for Development and Integration, 2014-2020
PoC	Government of Albania-United Nations Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016
PS	Private sector stakeholders
PwD	Persons with disabilities
SAA	Albania-EU Stabilization and Association Agreement
SMART	Specic-Measureable-Achievable-Relevant-Timebound [*in relation to development results*]
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

Acknowledgements

Executive summary

Introduction

Albania has made steady progress over the past decade to emerge as a stable democracy. It has been able to sustain positive economic growth rates despite the ongoing economic crisis and recessionary dips in part of the Eurozone since 2008[1]. Albania's human development index (HDI) value for 2013 was 0.716, placing the country at 95 out of 187 countries and in the high human development category[2]. In June 2014, the European Council granted Albania candidate status. The EU integration process is accepted by all parties as the country's highest priority and the National Strategies for Development and Integration (NSDI) define the broad framework for development. The Government of Albania is in the process of preparing the new NSDI II for the period 2014-2020. Albania is also one of eight countries selected in January 2007 to become a *Delivering-as-One* pilot country with a first One Programme for the period 2007-2011. A country-led evaluation in 2010 provided lessons and recommendations that shaped the current Programme of Cooperation.

The goal of the Government of Albania (GoA) and United Nations (UN) Programme of Cooperation (PoC), 2012-2016, is to '*promote sustainable and equitable development, social inclusion, and the adherence to international norms and fulfilment of international obligations, in support of the integration of Albania into the EU*'[3]. At the request of the Government, the PoC aimed to expand and deepen the Delivering-as-One approach of the United Nations with coordinated, harmonized arrangements for joint, coordination, planning, monitoring, and progress reporting, together with country partners. Finalized in October 2011 between the Government of Albania and 20 participating UN agencies, the PoC for 2012-2016 contains a results framework with 11 outcomes and 41 outputs, an indicative budget of USD $132 million, and a joint resource mobilization strategy.

The programme is operationalised with joint annual work plans (JAWP) which form an agreement between UN agencies and implementing partners on the use of resources. The design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of joint annual work plans are coordinated by the output working groups, which are co-chaired by the Government and the United Nations. Regular joint programme reviews were used to monitor progress and make mid-course adjustments.

A Coherence Fund was established in 2007 to support the achievement of the PoC outcomes. Allocations from the Coherence Fund to implementing partners are based on the budgets in the signed JAWP. In 2014, The Coherence Fund enjoys the financial support from the Governments of Sweden and the Switzerland.

The coordinating partner in government is the Department of Development Programming, Financing and Foreign Aid (DDPFFA), within the Prime Minister's Office. Key cooperation partners are GoA line ministries and thematic bodies, arms-length bodies for public oversight such as the offices of the Public Advocate and Commissioner for Anti-Discrimination, civil society and public and private media organisations, and the private sector.

Coordination and management arrangements for the PoC include:

» The GoA Government Modernization Committee responsible for high level policy coordination and decision-making;

» A Joint Executive Committee responsible for executive decisions related to implementation of the PoC;

» Outcome coordinators and inter-agency, multi-partner Output Working Groups (OWG) with technical responsibilities for day to day implementation, monitoring, review, reporting; and

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[1] World Bank, Albania Overview, March 2015.
[2] UNDP, Human Development Indicators, January 2015.
[3] Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016. October, 2011.

» Inter-agency advisory bodies, including: the Operations Management Team; the Communications Team; the Gender Theme Group; the HIV and AIDS Theme Group; and the Results-Based Management Advisory Committee.

Evaluation purpose, users, and methodology

The **purpose** of the evaluation is to:

» Make conclusions about the progress of PoC implementation and demonstrate the UN's accountability to the GoA for its contributions to national development priorities; and

» Identify important recommendations and lessons that can strengthen ongoing implementation of the PoC to the end of 2016 and the design of the next programme for the period 2017-2021.

Evaluation of the PoC meets UN's requirement for evaluation of UN development assistance frameworks once in their cycle. The PoC is currently in its penultimate year of implementation. The evaluation was scheduled for the start of 2015 in order to provide usable recommendations and lessons for the process to prepare the new PoC, which will begin from the last quarter of 2015. This means that the evaluation has a *summative* element focused on results achieved for the period 2012-2014 and a *formative* element that provides recommendations and lessons that are relevant for the remainder of the current PoC and for the preparation of the next.

The terms of reference provide two **objectives**:

I. Assess the **contribution** of UN system to national development priorities through the actual results of the Programme of Cooperation (PoC). It will assess the effectiveness and efficiency by which PoC outcomes are being achieved, their sustainability and relevance to national priorities and goals.

II. Assess the **process** of UN system support, through the PoC, to Albania's national priorities and goals. It will assess the processes, mechanisms and procedures in the light of effective and efficient contribution to the national development efforts and capacity building.

The **users of the evaluation** findings are: the GoA, UN Agencies, international donors, and other partners in civil society and the private sector. The results of the evaluation will also be of interest to stakeholders that follow closely the evolution of the DaO strategy and one programmes at country level, including the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), other pilot countries, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.

Two major issues that affect the scope of the evaluation design.

1. The **mid-term review** (MTR) of the PoC in 2014 consolidated the results framework from 11 to 4 outcomes and from 41 to 15 outputs. Implementation against the new framework began in January 2015. Efforts to understand the extent to which planned results were achieved and their plausible contribution to national priorities are based on the original PoC results framework. Recommendations to strengthen the formulation of results and indicators, implementation strategies, and coordination and partnership arrangements are directed towards the updated results framework.

2. The Government of Albania, elected in June 2013 is still in the process of preparing a **new national development plan**. Recommendations are, as far as possible, relevant to the emerging shape of the new national development framework.

The evaluation of the PoC is a strategic, programmatic evaluation. The **methodology** applied **contribution analysis** to understand and assess how the outputs achieved through programme cooperation have contributed to expected outcomes and influenced progress towards the achievement

of national development priorities and targets. The evaluation was conducted in a participatory manner, ensuring the involvement of key stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation.

To meet the objectives of the evaluation, the evaluation used the following criteria:

» **Relevance**. The extent to which the PoC expected PoC results and strategies were consistent with the vision, strategic priorities, and policies of the National Strategy for Development and Integration, 2007-2013 and the commitments related to Albania's ratified treaties and international agreements.

» **Effectiveness**. The extent to which planned PoC results (mainly outputs) were achieved and how, if at all, they made a contribution to the expected outcomes and progress towards national development priorities and targets.

» **Efficiency**. The extent to which PoC results were achieved in an economic manner (i.e. avoiding waste and duplication) and with minimum transaction costs.

» **Sustainability.** The extent to which the PoC results are likely to continue beyond 2016 and how the complementarities and collaboration fostered by the PoC contributed.

The criterion related to **impact** was not required by the TOR. Given that the PoC is still in its penultimate year of implementation it was not appropriate for the evaluation design. The actual impacts of the PoC are not likely to be evident until after the end of the programme period.

The evaluation employed the following data collection methods:

» **Document review** focusing on all major the plans and reports related to the PoC and NSDI

» **Semi-structured interviews** with individual and small groups of key stakeholders from GoA, UN, civil society, and development partners

» **Focus group discussions** involving small groups and sub-groups of the stakeholders.

The evaluation team used multiple questions with different groups of respondents in order to triangulate their findings and to ensure that the findings and conclusions are credible and convincing.

Conclusions, recommendations, and lessons

These conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned are based upon the findings and analysis presented in chapter 3 of the report. They are structured according to the evaluation objectives and evaluation criteria. The recommendations were reviewed and commented upon by GoA and UNCT stakeholders to ensure their relevance and applicability.

Unless otherwise stated, the main actors to implement the recommendations are the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) and the UNCT.

Objective I.

Assess the <u>contribution</u> of the UN system to national development priorities through the outcomes of the Programme of Cooperation (PoC)

Relevance and Effectiveness

Based on the evidence, this evaluation concludes that the PoC was **highly relevant** to the priorities expressed in the NSDI I, including those for EU accession. The POC was also **verifiably effective** in terms of the achievement of most planned PoC outputs, and their plausible contribution to the expected outcomes, and to progress towards country priorities.

Using the analysis presented in section 3.2, the evaluation team concludes that 28 of the original 41 planned outputs were substantially achieved and that for 10 of the 11 original outcomes there is tangible evidence of progress towards the expected institutional or behavioural changes.

In addition, each of the 11 PoC outcomes is linked explicitly to no fewer than 3 strategic priorities and policies of the NSDI I. Many of these were driven by EU accession requirements under the of the *acquis communautaire*. This demonstrates that PoC results and strategies complemented Albania's EU accession aims and that PoC results made plausible contributions to the ground work for the granting of Albania's EU candidate status in June 2014.

Qualitatively, there was a high degree of alignment between the content of UNCT annual progress reports and the perceptions of key stakeholders in government, and from civil society and donor organisations. Stakeholders from both government and civil society were able to speak meaningfully and specifically about the role and contribution of the UNCT for the achievement of outputs, the extent to which these outputs contributed to the planned outcomes, with concrete examples of improved institutional performance. They could also speak to the influence that these changes have had on progress towards national development priorities.

Programme partners also spoke very positively about the nature of the partnership, the value of a delivering-as-one approach, and the connection with the UNCT. Respondents referred to it as '*respectful*', '*challenging*', and '*engaging*'. As one senior key informant reported: '*The one UN has worked… it has succeeded in introducing a development agenda in Albania*'.

Donors appear to greatly value the delivering-as-one (DaO) approach. Their representatives reported that the UN had '*the right people in the right place*' and valued the UNCT's ability to use its neutrality to '*engage at political level*' on topics that were seen as being too sensitive for full donor engagement. The UN's instrumental work to support the successful territorial reform was offered as an example. The UN leadership was also seen as playing a constructive role in donor coordination.

Looking forward, the ongoing relevance and effectiveness of the PoC for the period 2015-2016, and the design of the next PoC for the period 2017-2021 will be influenced by Albania's rapidly evolving situation, including:

» The continued sharpening of the GoA priorities and the launching of the NSDI II;

» The introduction by the EU of direct budget support for sector programmes; and

» The restructuring of sector coordination mechanisms and the role of donors and cooperation partners including UN Agencies.

EU accession remains Albania's top development priority. The total indicative allocation of the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for the period 2014-2020 (IPA II) is € 640 m or approximately US$680m[4]. This is equivalent to about 5-6% of the value of the Albanian economy estimated at

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[4] Ref to EU progress report and strategy paper

US$12.9bn in 2013[5]. In addition, the GoA and EU have decided to phase-in a number of **sector programmes** using a **direct budget support** modality. As of mid-2015, two sector programmes were launched for Public Administration Reform and Employment. The EC anticipates a further 1 to 2 sector programmes to be introduced annually.

Coordination is another pressing matter. Sector working groups, currently with co-leads from GoA and donor or other cooperation partners, are to be replaced with **Integrated Planning and Management Groups (IPMGs)** that will comprise GoA actors only. IPMG Secretariats are to be established to ensure coordination and communication within government departments as well as with other development partners. The coordination links between the sector programmes, the IPMGs and their secretariats, and the PoC strategic management are still to be established.

The introduction of sector programmes, direct budget support, and IPMGs offer interesting opportunities to lever the knowledge and experience gained from GoA-UN cooperation through the PoC. The UN could position itself as a key implementing partner for targeted sector programmes, or areas of sector programmes, where it has expertise and a track record of results. It could also provide greater opportunities for GoA cost-sharing in the next PoC, 2017-2021.

Going forward, there is a good potential for effective UN engagement in:

» The design of sectoral programmes and capacity development for IPMG secretariats related to policy analysis, planning, monitoring, and reporting, as well as gender-responsive approaches;
» Building the capacity of implementing sector ministries and departments at national and local level to absorb the expected IPA II funding
» Play a 'bridging role' to ensure that sector programmes are designed and implemented in open and consultative ways involving CSOs and community consultation
» Supporting the convergence of services at local level. The territorial reform resulted in the amalgamation of 61 new municipalities and regions or local government units (LGU) from the original 373. GoA partners and donors have stated that there is a pressing need for the new LGUs to show that they can perform effectively and deliver quality local services.

However, as pointed out by some donor partners, it is not a given that UN Agencies will be involved. There are many potential partners including bilateral development organisations, international and national NGOs, and private sector groups that can offer implementation support. The UN must make the case - deliver a clear and convincing argument to GoA and donor stakeholders - that they are best positioned in particular sectors and themes to support implementation and the achievement of results. A part of this case will be evidence from PoC implementation for the period 2012-2014. This demonstrates the UN's proven ability to deliver results in complex multi-stakeholder environments and in politically sensitive areas, and its ability to promote international standards, policy expertise, and good practices,

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Recommendations

1. Analyse the existing and planned sector programmes to identify policy development and implementation areas that are a best fit for UN programme support. These should be based on the tangible results achieved during the current PoC.

2. Liaise with GoA sector leads and EU partners to understand the full scope of the shift from sector working groups to Integrated Planning and Management Groups (IPMGs) and seek clarification on the capacity support needs of IPMGs.

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[5] See World Bank data http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/albania

Recommendations

3. On the basis of 1 and 2 (above) engage with the EU to seek advice and define a role and expected contribution of the GoA-UN PoC to the overall sector programme approach. This may require a re-alignment of the PoC results framework and indicators. On a limited basis, consider supporting the GoA to conduct structured capacity assessments for coordination and implementation in sectors or themes of particular joint interest and where the UN system can best add value.

Sustainability

This evaluation can conclude that several PoC results and related strategies are likely to continue beyond 2016. These are:

- » A significant legal and policy advocacy agenda.
- » In 26 of 61 municipalities, there are working mechanisms for the identification, reporting, and referral for services of situations of domestic violence. The representative of a donor organisation commented that, with these services, there was '*real case management happening at local level*'.
- » Mediation and probation services for juveniles with 67% of court sentences given as probation or community service.
- » Territorial reform moving forward.
- » Gender equality measures and metrics mainstreamed in the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP, 2014-2017).
- » Increasing public 'ownership' of vulnerability in Albania, particularly for groups such as Roma, LGTB persons, and victims of domestic violence.
- » Increase in enrolment rates for pre-school education beyond the already achieved target of 60% for children ages 5-6 and improved standards and curricula for early learning systems
- » Increased effectiveness and outreach of employment promotion programmes through support for increased transparency and accountability of decision-making, including more targeted interventions for vulnerable communities.
- » Improvements in accessibility and integration for persons with disabilities.
- » The UN programme made valuable contributions through development of strategies in the area of social protection, social care, and social inclusion; however sustainability and viability of the latter will greatly depend on whether the Government is committed to allocating funding to these sectors.

Recommendations

4. Given the large proportion of the PoC budget that is un-funded (see section on efficiency below) and the constraints in the availability of external donor resources, engage with the GoA to discuss ways for greater cost-sharing by the GoA for ongoing programmatic efforts. Advocacy should focus on results areas that are most closely aligned with the NSDI II priorities.

Efficiency of the PoC

This evaluation can conclude that the PoC was able to achieve results in an economic manner and with manageable transaction costs. There was near consensus amongst partners from government and civil society that PoC results of had been achieved with little waste and duplication. Moreover, partners were keen to emphasise the flexibility and adaptability of UN agencies both during planning and implementation. In addition, it was confirmed that PoC work plans are aligned with the planning and budget cycle used by GoA ministries and departments.

In terms of budgetary efficiency, despite a funding gap of nearly 1 in $3 there were many substantial and sustained results achieved over the period 2012-2014 (see section 3.1 and 3.2). This suggests that the original outcome budgets may have been excessive. And with a projected funding gap for 2015-2016 of USD $21.4 m, further review and revision of outcome budgets is warranted. More modest and realistic funding gaps can often be a help to resource mobilisation efforts.

Coherence fund contributions reached a peak in 2009 and fell steadily well into 2014, despite the achievement of tangible PoC results. This suggests strongly that coherence fund performance is *de-linked* from programme performance. The modest performance of the coherence fund in Albania mirrors that of all UN one programme funds globally and reflects a move back to earmarking of donor resources for greater accountability visibility at the level of component programmes and projects. Despite the value placed on the CF by the GoA and UN, it is only one of several channels for development assistance. Donors will use it when it makes sense to channel multiple sources of funding for agreed, specific priorities, such as was done for the work on work on gender equality and social inclusion. Beyond these opportunities, and given the shift in donor attitudes and funding constraints, large future commitments to the CF are not likely without greater efforts to promote it.

On the delivery side of the PoC budget, delivery rates have increased to 79% in 2014 from 67% in 2012 and delivery rates by outcome in 2014 showed very good performance, with only 2 outcomes 1.1 Public oversight and 3.1 Regional and rural development below a 60% threshold.

In terms of operational efficiency, the Operations Management Team (OMT) has inter-agency long-term procurement agreements (LTA) for nine lines of business such as travel and translations services and fuel. These common LTAs have helped UN Agencies to avoid 446 hours of staff processing time per year and to realise an estimated cost savings of USD $166,268 from volume purchasing since the LTAs came into force. The evaluation team did an assessment of the business operations practices in Albania related to leadership, working arrangements, incentives, and the use of analysis and evidence, and the **OMT scored 8 out of a possible 10**, which is excellent[6].

Recommendations

Funding Gaps

5.   Outcome coordinators and OWG should review and revise the outcome budgets for the period 2015-2016 to arrive at more realistic funding gaps. With reference to recommendation 4 (above) more modest funding gaps can often assist resource mobilisation efforts.

[*Action: Outcome coordinators and OWG chairs*]

Resource mobilisation and Coherence fund

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[6] This is based on the management practice KPI: Number of good business operations practices applied at country level out of 10.UNDG, Business Operations Harmonization at Country Level, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Reporting Process, FINAL DRAFT, 11 June, 2014.

Recommendations

6. Document and disseminate up to 3 compelling examples of how the coherence fund (CF) enabled the GoA, UN, and concerned partners to take rapid, effective programmatic action aligned with national priorities. These coherence fund stories should emphasise the value of the CF not just as a funding channel, but as a way to marshal the combined value of UN system competence in Albania.

7. Consult further with all JEC members and donor partners to confirm their perceived value of the CF and their willingness to promote and use it as an important channel for UN development cooperation. Based upon favourable feedback, the JEC and UNCT should develop a concrete advocacy and communication plan for promotion of the CF. This is also an opportunity to highlight the value and complementarity of UN programme assistance with the sector budget programmes (see Rec.3) and the more realistic funding gaps (see Rec. 5)

8. Given the complex resource mobilisation environment and the introduction of sector budget support by the EU and GoA, the UNCT should review and update (as needed) the Joint Resource Mobilisation Strategy and ensure more frequent inter-agency communication around RM efforts.

Business Operations

9. Make a priority to (1) analyse and develop a business case for additional LTAs for common categories of goods and services, such as vehicle management and maintenance, and (2) Develop and implement the common services plan for the one UN house (as per 2015 OMT work plan).

[*Action: OMT*]

10. Provide updated data on (1) the total value of purchase orders raised against common LTAs, (2) the estimated cost savings from volume procurement for all 9 LTAs, (3) and the estimated transaction costs avoided for all LTAs since their inception. This should be communicated in the RCAR for 2014 or 2015, as appropriate.

[*Action: OMT*]

Objective II.

Assess the <u>process</u> of the UN system's contribution through the PoC for the achievement of national priorities

Application of UNDG programming principles

The UNDAF Guidelines[7] identify 5 programming principles: a <u>Human rights-based approach</u>, <u>Gender equality</u>, <u>Environmental sustainability</u>, <u>Capacity development</u>, and <u>Results based management</u>. The principles help to identify results and strategies for more effective UN-supported programme cooperation. They also help to balance the pursuit of international norms and standards with the achievement of national development priorities[8].

Human rights-based approach

Based on the achievements described in **section 3.1 and 3.2** the evaluation concludes that PoC results and strategies were driven or at least informed by the standards and principles of Albania's ratified human rights treaties. Specific results and strategies, both in the original plan and as implemented from 2012 through 2014, are linked concretely to many of the concluding observations and recommendations of UN treaty body reports.

However, there is no evidence of a systematic or sustained application of the 3 steps of the HRBA process: (1) Structured causality analysis, (2) role and pattern analysis; and (3) Capacity gaps analysis for specific duty bearers and rights holders. So, while the PoC results were informed by, and responded, to human rights standards, principles, and concerns, the process was not based on a structured, purposive application of the entire HRBA approach and steps.

Gender equality

This evaluation concludes that programming process and results for gender equality from 2012-2014 represented a significant achievement of the PoC. The Gender Theme Group performed very well and has helped all OWG to meet the expectation that programme assistance should reflect on how planned strategies and activities will affect women and men and to disaggregate data. This is reflected in the updated results framework.

The UN, through the work of the output working groups and gender theme group, made important contributions to: Legal and criminal code amendments for women's property rights, expanded reporting and referral services across the country that respond to domestic violence, effective 'get-out-the-vote' campaigns during the 2013 national elections, the institutionalisation of gender-sensitive budgetary process (MTBP) and numerous publications that greatly increased the availability of disaggregated data. Overall, UN support for gender equality achievements was mentioned by programme partners from government and civil society more often than for any other topic.

Environmental sustainability

Environmental considerations including efforts to identify and address disaster risks were addressed mainly under PoC outcome 2.2. Many of the achievements are sectoral rather than relating to broader environmental mainstreaming. Notwithstanding the contribution to the national law for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and work to draft the renewable energy law, this evaluation concludes that mainstreaming efforts proceeded more slowly and work in this area appears to have occurred more as a *silo* compared with the other principles. Two priority engagement areas that emerged from the MTR were: (1) Promotion of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental

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[7] UNDG, How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams, UN, Nov 2009. 3-4. See also: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams

[8] UNDG, Guidance Note: Application of the Programming Principles to the UNDAF, January 2010.

management and protection in all relevant sectors; and (2) Support to line ministries, in coordination with Ministry of Environment, to establish environmental targets in their sector strategies and plans.

However, rather than re-assert this mainstreaming agenda the updated PoC results framework is more modest in scope. Environmental mainstreaming does not appear in the results and indicators place emphasis on the expansion of protected areas and the adoption of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Capacity development

This evaluation concludes that the UN played an important role to develop new institutional capacities in many GoA ministries, bodies, and amongst CSO partners. Despite indications that capacity constraints were discussed on a frequent, informal basis, there is no evidence that more formal, structured capacity assessments were conducted as part of the PoC preparation, during implementation, or for the MTR. Three important issues were also identified:

» Some government respondents reported that UN agencies have, in some areas of cooperation, tended to take on too much of the actual programme delivery rather than '*hand-over*' more responsibility to country partners for implementation. There was a request for greater willingness to '…*let government make mistakes and learn by doing*'.

» Government respondents urged UN agencies to place even greater emphasis on capacity development, with a particular focus on in-service training and advisory support related to current government work assignments, particularly the approximation of laws and policies with the EU Acquis and for implementation at local, municipal level.

» Third, perceptions amongst CSOs are that the UN has placed too much emphasis on consultancies at the national level and not enough on capacity support for local and community-based organisations for implementation. There was also a sense that the UN had, in some instances, *encroached* on the 'delivery' responsibilities of CSOs rather than building their abilities to deliver.

Recommendations

Human rights-based approach

As part of preparations for the *next* PoC:

11. Conduct a review with partners at the outcome level of linkages with all relevant concluding observations and recommendations from Albania's treaty body reports. In light of substantial programme achievements and lessons learned, ensure that future planned outcomes, outputs, and activities are responding to any outstanding recommendations.

12. Where feasible, introduce the 3 steps of the HRBA more explicitly into planning, monitoring and review processes, where they are certain to add value[9]. This will help to ensure that programme choices are aligned as closely as possible with human rights concerns in Albania and that an understanding of HRBA as a process is integrated more systematically in the programming process.

Gender equality

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[9] The road map to prepare the next PoC (2017-2021) asserts: 'A human rights-based approach is crucial to ensure inclusiveness, non-discrimination and accountability of the development agenda'. A combined HRBA-RBM refresher training is planned for programme staff as part of PoC preparations. United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Albania 2017-2021, Road Map. May 2014.15. It should be noted that the application of a HRBA is highly time consuming and may not be appropriate or desired by all sectors.

Recommendations

No recommendation. The JEC and UNCT should continue its excellent work, including efforts to establish a national coordinating mechanism and capacity for gender equality[10].

Environmental sustainability

At the next annual review and/or as part of preparations for the next PoC:

13. In coordination with Ministry of Environment, assess the feasibility of incorporating results related to the promotion of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental management and the introduction of indicators for environmental mainstreaming in selected sector strategies and plans.

Capacity development

As part of preparations for the *next* PoC:

14. In priority areas of cooperation and where multiple UN agencies are contributing, conduct a limited number of formal capacity assessments to ensure that capacity development results and activities are responding fully to the situation and are clearly aligned with programmatic strategies.

15. Going forward, the UNCT should ensure that all capacity development initiatives are designed to be technically relevant as possible to the specific tasks at hand and that they produce actionable results, such as policy recommendations, draft regulations, codes, and the skills to see them implemented. Given the high relevance and lack thereof of data monitoring systems to support evidence based policy-making, the UNCT should consider providing greater direct technical advice and support to INSTAT.

Results-based management (RBM)

The essence of RBM is planning and managing so that the processes, products and services of development cooperation contribute to the achievement of desired results: outputs, outcomes and impacts which are aligned with national development priorities. The major weaknesses of the **original PoC results framework** were: (1) the lack of an outcome monitoring framework, (2) no explicit links with NSDI I strategic priorities, policies, and monitoring indicators, and (3) no mention of the major assumptions or risks that underpinned the programme design. Combined, these would have helped to make clear, measureable connections between the expected contributions of the PoC and national development priorities[11]. Overall, PoC annual progress reports were good, well-structured, and readable. But the weaknesses described above meant that the contribution analysis at the level of outcomes and the NSDI I was either missing or implied. Overall, the structure of the original PoC results framework and subsequent reporting focused mainly on activities and outputs.

Several of these weaknesses also apply to the ***revised* PoC results framework (2015-2016)**. There are still no explicit links to the priorities and indicators contained in the draft NSDI II[12], the consolidated,

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[10] For example, it is noted that the UNCT is currently supporting the GoA to prepare a new National Strategy on Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence (2016-2020) that is fully aligned with the draft NSDI II (2015-2020).

[11] For example, a comparison of the NSDI I and PoC pillars 1 and 2 (5 outcomes from 1.1 through 2.2) found that, of 8 indicators at the outcome level that could have been used in the PoC, only 2 were These are: Corruption perception index (NSDI indicator 6 for anti-corruption and PoC 1.3.4 indicator 3); and No. trafficking victims (NSDI indicator 7 for organised crime and PoC 1.3.2 indicator 2)

[12] This can be attributed to the change in government in 2013 and that fact that the NSDI II (2014-2020) is still being reviewed by the new government. However, the GoA has made clear its 6 priorities and the EU has identified 5 priorities for accession. Identification of preliminary priorities, based on the above and the draft NSDI II is both possible and important for the overall logic of programme assistance.

updated framework, as a stand-alone document, does not always offer a clear, coherent enough story about where and how the GoA and UN are planning making a difference.

The recommendations in this section can be summed up as having to do with: 'connecting the dots'. They are important for establishing a sound theory of change for programme cooperation, in relation to planned outcomes and country priorities.

Recommendations

To prepare the next PoC (2017-2021):

16. Ensure that the PoC results framework includes:

1. A row to identify the <u>specific</u> strategic priorities and policies from the draft NSDI II to which the PoC outcomes are expected to contribute.

2. Additional outcome indicators (3 to 5 per outcome) that reflect the actual institutional changes expected from programme cooperation (see discussion and 4 examples in section 3.5.5). Where possible, these should include relevant indicators from the finalised NSDI II monitoring framework.

3. *The key assumptions and risks that underpin the programme design and include these in the PoC results framework.*

17. Together with country partners, prepare **theory of change diagrams** for each outcome that will summarise how UN programme cooperation is expected to make a contribution to the outcome and to selected NSDI II priorities. Use the updated framework and theories of change to structure future progress reports and communication pieces.

Management arrangements for the PoC

This evaluation concludes that the revised PoC management structure for the period 2015-2016 comply with the standard operating procedures for DaO. Country partners at both strategic and technical levels have expressed satisfaction with the arrangements and they have produced a flow of performance information from OWGs to the JEC to inform decision-making.

The **joint biennial work plans (JBWP)** prepared for the period 2015-2016 are of very high quality. They provide a strong vehicle for joint programming by PoC partners, without the added transaction costs of having to develop separate joint programme documents. Most importantly, the JBWP identify the un-funded deliverables for the period, providing the clearest possible view of what results will not be achieved for lack of funding.

The inter-agency **UN Communications Team** is working very effectively to promote the results of GoA-UN cooperation, to support common advocacy priorities, and to raise awareness about key development challenges in Albania. The impressive digital face of GoA-UN cooperation in Albania, including an active social media presence is important for the success of programme cooperation.

There are also ongoing challenges:

» The PoC results framework and work plans are still too '*one-sided*' in that they do not reflect the contributions of GoA sector plans and budgets.

» For UN Agencies, the burden related to work planning, monitoring and reporting is still very large. While the expected simplification of procedures for planning, monitoring, and reporting has not happened, the overall high quality of PoC annual reviews and reports, including the MTR process and report suggest that a balance has been found between time and resources

> spent for reporting on PoC results vis-à-vis UN agency corporate results. However, this has come at the expense of UN staff time and energy.

» The preparation of joint biennial work plans (JBWP) for the PoC is more of a consolidation of UN agency work plans rather than a joint work planning process with partners. It is not clear that the JBWPs actually do reflect a joint visioning between the collaborating UN agencies and country partners.

» Finally, lessons identified through the annual and mid-term review process have not always been fully incorporated into the results and indicators of the updated PoC results framework.

Recommendations

To address the burden of work planning, monitoring, and reporting: <u>No recommendation</u>

The need for UN Agencies at country level to respond to their corporate results frameworks is related to the separate governance mechanisms of UN agencies and to the accountability of country representatives to agency executive directors in headquarters. This dynamic affects all UNCTs, whether supporting a DaO one programme or standard UNDAF. The Albania UNCT has no scope to alter these mechanisms and the incentive systems they produce.

18. To ensure that the Joint Biennial Work Plans (JBWP) actually do reflect a joint vision of the programme partners, the UNCT should consider formalising a 'joint visioning' moment prior to preparation of UN agency and OWG work plans.

This would provide an opportunity to reflect first on country sectoral or thematic priorities for the year and the priorities for programme cooperation PRIOR to the preparation of agency-specific work plans. The joint visioning moment could take the form of a meeting between OWG co-chairs and outcome coordinators to define specific priorities and possible alignment between GoA and UN system efforts.

19. Building on the recommendations above under RBM, each JBWP cover page should include the relevant outcome indicators and it should identify the specific strategic priorities and policies from the draft NSDI II to which the results are expected to contribute.

20. For the updating of the 2016 work plans and as part of the preparation for the next PoC (2017-2021) the outcome coordinators and OWGs should take stock of all previous lessons-learned and ensure that they have been accounted for in programme strategy, results, and indicators.

21. The outcome coordinators (Heads of UN agencies) should ensure that they compensate for the loss of the RBM Advisory Committee and sustain the flow of PoC performance information to the GoA and other partners.

22. To address the 'one-sided' nature of PoC strategy and plans, the joint biennial work plans (JBWP) should be amended to include references to relevant line items, action points, and budgets of GoA sector plans and programmes.

The aim is not to duplicate GoA working documents, but rather to ensure transparent and actionable links between the two and encourage regular opportunities, such as during the joint visioning moment recommended above, to reflect on the linkages and validate that GoA-UN cooperation is as relevant and targeted as possible. This recommendation will become more important as the GoA-EU begin implementing sector budget support programmes.

Recommendations

23. To ensure adequate incentive and recognition of inter-agency communication efforts, every member of the UN Communication Team should have their responsibilities included in formal job descriptions and in annual performance appraisal instruments and reviews.

UN Comparative advantages in Albania

A UN One Programme or UNDAF aims to increase the effectiveness of the UN system's development cooperation at country level. According to guidelines, it should demonstrate the **comparative advantages** of the UNCT, and its strategic contributions for the achievement of national development priorities. This evaluation concludes that the preparation of the PoC did not include a formal, structured process to review and consider the UNCT's comparative advantages vis-à-vis those of other major partners working in Albania. The MTR background papers and process in 2014 did include analysis of UN comparative advantage but these mainly provided a description of mandates and past successful strategies. While important, these did not provide enough of the *comparative* element which is essential for a discussion of comparative advantage and to make a choice about strategic areas for programme cooperation.

To balance the conclusion, it is important to again cite the substantial achievements during the period 20120-2014 and the clear progress towards outcomes. This suggests that, broadly, the UN was working in programme areas where it had comparative advantages. A more focused attempt to analyse comparative advantages, including more objective feedback from development partners and an attempt to map and understand the advantages of other development actors, would likely have helped the UN and GoA to further sharpen PoC results and strategies.

Recommendations

As part of the preparations for the next PoC (2017-2021):

24. The UNCT, as part of its country analysis exercise, should use the services of a third party with knowledge of the PoC and current GoA priorities and sector programme approach to conduct a short review of the UN's comparative advantages in Albania.

This is not a stand-alone exercise, but should part-and-parcel of the planned country analysis exercise. The review can be done rapidly through interviews with key programme partners. The aim would be seek confidential feedback from GoA and donors on the UN's positioning and strengths for continued programme cooperation vis-à-vis other development partners. The review could also be used to gather frank advice from GoA partners on the role of the UN in sector programmes supported with IPA II resources.

The PoC as a framework for coordination and partnership

This evaluation concludes that the GoA-UN PoC was, and continues to be, an effective vehicle for coordination and partnership, with a high degree of knowledge and ownership of cooperation results amongst partners.

1. Work plans prepared by the multi-partner output working groups (OWG) are closely aligned with the POC results framework and strategies. This suggests that PoC is not a paper entity but rather a live programme instrument that drives day-to-day development cooperation;

2. In interviews, programme partners from government and civil society noted the flexibility of UN agencies and their ability to respond quickly to requests for specific technical assistance and to take advantage of new opportunities. This flexibility and resourcefulness was identified in the country-led evaluation in 2010 and continues to be a hallmark of cooperation in Albania[13].

3. The results demonstrate that some PoC results had real influence over the scope of draft or approved GoA legislation, sector strategies, and action plans (please see summary table in section 3.3). This suggests that PoC results and strategies are seen by partners as being connected and relevant to the priorities and business of the GoA.

4. As noted above, partners from both government and civil society were able to speak meaningfully and specifically about the role and contributions of the UNCT for the achievement of these programme results and how they helped to improve institutional performance. Three specific examples of this are PoC achievements related to: Addressing domestic violence, Advancing territorial reform, and improving services for Roma and other vulnerable groups.

5. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, feedback from PoC partners suggests that planning, management, and decision-making for the PoC at both strategic and technical levels is a joint affair, characterised by generally positive, open, and collegial relationships. Overall, the evaluation team noted the consistently high regard with which programme partners spoke of one another.

Recommendations

No recommendation. The conclusion above on coordination and partnership is closely related to conclusions on relevance, effectiveness, and capacity development. Please see related recommendations above.

Lessons

1. **This evaluation confirms that a successful one programme approach must involve joint programming by stakeholders, but it does not necessarily have to include joint implementation by two or more UN Agencies.** In addition, the joint biennial work plans (JBWP) provide a strong vehicle for joint programming by PoC partners, without the added transaction costs of having to develop separate joint programme documents.

2. The gender theme group played a major role to support gender mainstreaming in the PoC and gender equality results were a significant achievement. **This confirms the importance of a well-led and resourced inter-agency Gender Theme Group**. The approach of the gender theme group in Albania also highlights a niche for the UN to help the GoA and EU mainstream gender into sector budget programmes. This would involve policy advice and technical support to adopt and implement international and EU normative standards for gender equality, including special temporary measures.

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[13] COUNTRY LED EVALUATION, DELIVERING AS ONE ALBANIA, FINAL REPORT, 7 JULY 2010, 28.

3. The role of the UN to support the GoA's territorial reform agenda was important and confirms that the UN's neutrality and impartiality can be a major advantage when engaging in very complex and often sensitive, political challenges related to decentralisation. The territorial reform initiative also highlights **the enduring appeal of strong management and programme procedures**. International partners came to the UN for its perceived competence as a trustee of funds, and for its management capacity along with a solid track record of procurement and recruitment. These advantages are equally relevant for the sector budget approach being implemented by the EU and GoA.

4. GoA-UN programme cooperation focused strongly on legal and policy development based on international standards and on evidence. This depends on effective information and data gathering frameworks and analysis. These are also areas where beneficiary capacity is relatively weaker and resources are scarcer. **UN system support to develop statistical and other data gathering and analysis systems, aligned with GoA and EU accession priorities, will be highly valuable in the medium term**.

5. The GoA-UN PoC achieved significant results where there was clear alignment with national priorities and where there was strong ownership of the initiative by national authorities not only during the planning stage but also during implementation. **Country leadership of the programming process and the responsibility of senior and mid-level managers in Government for the achievement of results is an essential ingredient of success**.

6. For many UN Agencies capacity development has become a mantra. There is a danger that UN Agencies assume that their programme support is building the right kinds of capacity in the right ways without having been sufficiently diligent about understanding the actual capacity constraints and development needs that exist. **It is important that formal, structured capacity assessments are budgeted for and conducted as part of programme preparation**.

7. **The burden related to UN Agency work planning, monitoring and reporting is still very large and the expected simplification of procedures from a DaO approach has not yet happened**.

8. **Consolidation of results and indicators in one programme results frameworks should not come at the expense of clarity in the results chain and theory of change**. Knowledgeable external readers and reviewers should be able to trace a clear and compelling story line from the outputs expected of Government-UN cooperation thru to the outcome indicators and to specific policy priorities and indicators in the national development plan or targeted sector plans and programmes.

9. In middle and upper income countries where UN programme support is focused on the provision of expertise and policy advice rather than service delivery, **cash assistance to government does not appear to be an essential ingredient for effective partnership and programme ownership**. Caution is warranted in the use of this lesson without further review and study in other middle and upper income country contexts.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Country situation

Albania has made steady progress over the past decade to emerge as a stable democracy. It has sustained positive economic growth rates despite the ongoing economic crisis and recessionary dips in parts of the Eurozone since 2008[14]. Albania experienced sustainable rates of economic growth at an average rate of 5% annually, outperforming other Western Balkans economies in the 2005-2009 period. Macroeconomic imbalances persist, while domestic demand and investment have shrunk. Its openness to markets has encouraged private sector initiatives, although growth in the economy is mainly through the internal engines of construction and services. Expansion and sustainability of the economy over the longer term will depend on the growth of export industries, competitive import businesses, and sound business practices and fiscal policies. While declining, income disparities are still significant between Tirana and other urban centers and rural areas. Reforms have tackled all sectors of economy, aiming to improve the quality of public spending, as well as basic services such as education, health and social care, insurance and other protection systems. Unemployment rates soared in the first years of transition, reaching a peak of 23% in 1999. It remains relatively high at 17% in 2015.

Albania's human development index (HDI) value for 2013 was 0.716, placing the country at 95 out of 187 countries and in the high human development category[15]. Across the range of indicators that make-up the HDI, there was steady progress. Over the same period, there was impressive progress across a range of other social and economic indicators. Albania has ratified all nine core United Nations human rights treaties, including the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is committed itself to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and expected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The prospect of European integration has been one of the driving forces for the country's democratisation processes and implementation of domestic reforms. The government's first priority, as set out in the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) is the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) under European Integration, which was signed in 2006 and came into effect in April 2009. The SAA defines the main obligations that Albania needs to fulfil in accordance with the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership, in three main areas: i) Democracy and Rule of Law, including human rights and rights of minorities; ii) a functioning market economy, as well as iii) the gradual approximation of domestic legislation with the EU *acquis*, including the establishment and consolidation of administrative and institutional structures that guarantee its implementation.

Following the enactment of the SAA, Albania officially applied for EU membership in 2009. In June 2014, the European Council endorsed the decision of the General Affairs Council granting Albania candidate status. The EU integration process is accepted by all parties as the country's highest priority, and the SAA and the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013 (NSDI I), define the broad framework for medium and long term development of Albania. The Government of Albania is in the process of preparing the new NSDI II covering the period 2014-2020.

The strategic directions for economic development are based on the EU requirements for a competitive economy, through the balanced and sustainable use of resources. Priority is given to the further development of the country's infrastructure in order to increase access to markets as well as social and territorial cohesion. The government has committed to the creation of a favourable business climate, through the removal of administrative barriers, facilitation of market entry and promotion of foreign investment. However, the business climate still remains weak, undermined by

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[14] World Bank, Albania Overview, March 2015.
[15] UNDP, Human Development Indicators, January 2015.

a series of structural problems, including property rights, weak law enforcement, as well as poor basic infrastructure.

The Government of Albania has six top priorities for its overall programme: i) Integrated water management; ii) Competitiveness (including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and electronic governance; iii) Improved governance of public services; iv) Energy; v) Structural reform (including PFM, pensions and welfare) and vi) Land reform. These priorities are crosscutting for a number of sectors hence successful planning and implementation of reforms will require considerable coordination across governmental institutions and development partners.

The EU Country Strategy Paper (CSP) for Albania for the period 2014-2020 outlines the key areas for financial support to be provided to Albania under the new Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II) in line with political priorities defined in the EU's Enlargement Strategy. The CSP highlights Governance and Rule of Law as well as Competitiveness and Growth (environment, transport, SME development, social policy and employment, rural development and territorial cooperation) as key areas for reform.

Albania is one of eight countries selected in January 2007 to become a *Delivering-as-One* pilot country with a first One Programme for the period 2007-2011. A country-led evaluation in 2010 provided lessons and recommendations that shaped the current Programme of Cooperation (PoC), 2012-2016.

1.2 The GoA and UN Programme of Cooperation

The goal of the Government of Albania (GoA) and United Nations (UN) Programme of Cooperation (PoC), 2012-2016, is to '*promote sustainable and equitable development, social inclusion, and the adherence to international norms and fulfilment of international obligations, in support of the integration of Albania into the EU*'[16]. At the request of the Government, the PoC aimed to expand and deepen the [Delivering-as-One approach](#) of the United Nations with coordinated, harmonized arrangements for joint, coordination, planning, monitoring, and progress reporting, together with country partners. The aims of a DaO approach and a *one programme* such as the PoC are to provide tangible contributions for the achievement of national development priorities, in a manner that builds on the strengths and complementarities of participating UN agencies, enhances development effectiveness and efficiency, and reduces duplication.

In the context of an upper middle-income country such as Albania, a strategic framework for development cooperation necessarily puts emphasis on high level technical and policy advice to strengthen country capacities, systems, and procedures so that the government can carry out its functions more effectively, in keeping with international commitments and standards. Through the PoC, the GoA and UN also sought to enhance data collection and promote research to drive evidence-based policy making and strengthen the implementation and monitoring of existing and new national strategies, policies and plans, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the country's human rights commitments and other internationally agreed development goals and treaty obligations.

Finalized in October 2011 between the Government of Albania and 20 participating UN agencies[17], the PoC for 2012-2016 contains a results framework with 11 outcomes and 41 outputs, an indicative budget of USD $132 million, and a joint resource mobilization strategy.

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[16] Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016. October, 2011.
[17] For the evaluation, the term '**UN Agencies**' refers to the agencies, funds, and programmes, and bodies participating in the Programme of Cooperation 2012 - 2016. These are: (FAO) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, (IAEA) International Atomic Energy Agency, (IFAD) International Fund for Agricultural Development, (ILO) International Labour Organization, (IOM) International Organization for Migration, (ITC) International Trade Center, (UNAIDS) Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, (UNCTAD) United

The programme is operationalised with joint annual work plans (JAWP) which form an agreement between UN agencies and implementing partners on the use of resources. The JAWP identifies the deliverables, responsible parties, and a budget. The design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of joint annual work plans are coordinated by the output working groups, which are co-chaired by the Government and the United Nations. Regular joint programme reviews were used to monitor progress and make mid-course adjustments.

A Coherence Fund was established in 2007 to support the achievement of the PoC outcomes. Allocations from the Coherence Fund to implementing partners are based on the budgets in the signed JAWP. The Coherence Fund was intended to complement other funding sources such as the core or regular resources of individual UN agencies. In 2014, The Coherence Fund enjoys the financial support from the Governments of Sweden and the Switzerland.

The coordinating partner in government is the Department of Development Programming, Financing and Foreign Aid (DDPFFA), within the Prime Minister's Office. Key cooperation partners are GoA line ministries and thematic bodies, arms-length bodies for public oversight such as the offices of the Public Advocate and Commissioner for Anti-Discrimination, civil society and public and private media organisations, and the private sector.

Coordination and management arrangements for the PoC include:

» The GoA Government Modernization Committee responsible for high level policy coordination and decision-making authority over the programme;
» A Joint Executive Committee responsible for executive decisions related to implementation of the PoC, including annual reviews, planning, and the allocation of resources from the Coherence Fund;
» Outcome coordinators and inter-agency, multi-partner Output Working Groups (OWG) with technical responsibilities for day to day implementation, monitoring, review, and progress reporting; and
» Inter-agency advisory bodies, including:
    - the Operations Management Team;
    - the Communications Team;
    - the Gender Theme Group;
    - the HIV and AIDS Theme Group; and
    - the Results-Based Management Advisory Committee.

During the first half of 2014, the GoA and UN conducted a Mid-Term Review of the first two years of implementation. The new results framework, derived from this review, significantly reduced the number of outcomes (from 11 to 4) and outputs (from 41 to 15) and lifted the overall strategic level of each result. The new results framework has four 'pillars':

1. Human Rights;
2. Inclusive Social Policies;
3. Governance and Rule of Law;
4. Regional and Local Development.

The revised PoC results framework is shown in **Annex X**. The PoC is currently in its penultimate year of implementation.

Nations Conference on Trade and Development, (UNDP) United Nations Development Programme, (UNECE) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, (UNEP) United Nations Environment Programme, (UNESCO) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, (UNWOMEN) United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, (UNFPA) United Nations Population Fund, (UNICEF) United National International Children´s Emergency Fund, (UNHCR) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.(UNIDO) United Nations Industrial Development Organization, (WHO) World Health Organization, (UNODC) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and (UNV) United Nations Volunteers.

1.3 Structure of the report

Following this introduction:

» Chapter 2 describes the evaluation purpose and objectives, the scope and methodology, including the criteria and key questions. A complete evaluation matrix is provided in Annex A;

» Chapter 3 provides the findings and analysis. It is the core of the evaluation report and it is structured according to the objectives and the key evaluation criteria and questions.

» Chapter 4 offers the evaluation conclusions and recommendations, and lessons-learned based on the findings and analysis presented in chapter 3.

Annexes attached to this report are the complete evaluation matrix, the agenda of meetings with key Informants, a summary of reference materials for the evaluation, and the terms of reference.

Chapter 2. Evaluation purpose, objectives, and methodology

2.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

» Make conclusions about the progress of PoC implementation and demonstrate the UN's accountability to the GoA for its contributions to national development priorities,

» Identify important recommendations and lessons that can strengthen ongoing implementation of the PoC to the end of 2016 and the design of the next programme for the period 2017-2021.

Evaluation of the PoC meets the UN's statutory requirement for evaluation of UN development assistance frameworks once in their cycle. The PoC is currently in its penultimate year of implementation. The evaluation was scheduled for the start of 2015 in order to provide usable recommendations and lessons for the process to prepare the new PoC, which will begin from the last quarter of 2015. This means that the evaluation has a *summative* element focused on results achieved for the period 2012-2014 and a *formative* element that provides recommendations and lessons that are relevant for the remainder of the current PoC and for the preparation of the next.[18]

The terms of reference (see **Annex X**) also provides two objectives of the evaluation:

III. Assess the ***contribution*** of UN system to national development priorities through the actual results of the Programme of Cooperation (PoC). It will assess the effectiveness and efficiency by which PoC outcomes are being achieved, their sustainability and relevance to national priorities and goals.

IV. Assess the ***process*** of UN system support, through the PoC, to Albania's national priorities and goals. It will assess the processes, mechanisms and procedures in the light of effective and efficient contribution to the national development efforts and capacity building.

2.2 Scope

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[18] **Summative evaluation** is conducted at the end of an initiative (or phase of the initiative) to determine the extent to which anticipated outcomes were produced. It is intended to provide information about the worth of the programme. **Formative evaluation** intends to improve performance and is conducted during the implementation phase.

Based on the understanding of the objectives, the evaluation:

» Examined the **actual progress and constraints** in implementation of the PoC, against the planned results and strategies in the PoC results framework for the years 2012 thru end 2014, including their plausible contribution to outcomes and national development priorities and targets; and

» Examined the major **enabling factors** that went into programme cooperation that can help to explain the progress. As described above, these mainly concern: coordination and partnership, the use of programming principles, and efforts to make joint programming by the PoC partners more coherent and efficient.

The main intended users of the evaluation findings are: the GoA, UN Agencies, international donors, and other partners in civil society and the private sector. The results of the evaluation will also be of interest to stakeholders that follow closely the evolution of the DaO strategy and one programmes at country level, including the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), other pilot countries, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.

There are **two major issues** that affect the scope of the evaluation design.

1. The **mid-term review** (MTR) of the PoC in 2014 led to significant mid-course changes in the PoC results framework. Planned outcomes were consolidated and reduced from 11 to 4 and outputs from 41 to 15. Implementation against the new framework began in January 2015. Efforts to understand the extent to which planned results were achieved and their plausible contribution to national priorities (the summative element) are based on the original PoC results framework and only until end 2014. Recommendations to strengthen the formulation of results and indicators, implementation strategies, and coordination and partnership arrangements (the formative element) are directed towards the updated results framework.

2. The Government of Albania, elected in June 2013 is still in the process of preparing a **new national development plan**. The assessment of a plausible contribution of PoC results to national development priorities and targets will be made against the National Strategy for Development and Integration, 2007-2013. Recommendations are, as far as possible, relevant to the emerging shape of the new national development framework.

2.3 Approach, criteria, and key questions

The evaluation of the PoC is a strategic, programmatic evaluation. The evaluation used **contribution analysis** to understand and assess how the outputs achieved through programme cooperation have contributed to expected outcomes and influenced progress towards the achievement of national development priorities and targets. For this, it is understood that UN Agencies have direct control only over the completion of activities that they support within a development intervention[19]. With these activities, UN agencies and their implementing partners have *direct influence* over the achievement development outputs but only *indirect influence* over outcomes and eventual impacts. The evaluation also examined whether or not there was a clear theory of change, understood by all stakeholders, to explain how outputs supported by the PoC would contribute to expected outcomes and bring some level of influence to national development priorities and targets. The evaluation was conducted in a participatory manner, ensuring the involvement of key stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation.

To meet the objectives of the evaluation, the evaluation used the following criteria:

» **Relevance**. The extent to which the PoC expected PoC results and strategies were consistent with the vision, strategic priorities, and policies of the National Strategy for Development

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[19] UNDG, Results-based Management Handbook, 2011. 15.

and Integration, 2007-2013 and the commitments related to Albania's ratified treaties and international agreements.

» **Effectiveness**. The extent to which planned PoC results (mainly outputs) were achieved and how, if at all, they made a contribution to the expected outcomes and progress towards national development priorities and targets. The evaluation will also note any un-intended results and their effects on country development.

» **Efficiency**. The extent to which PoC results were achieved in an economic manner (i.e. avoiding waste and duplication) and with minimum transaction costs.

» **Sustainability.** The extent to which the PoC results are likely to continue beyond 2016 and how the complementarities and collaboration fostered by the PoC contributed.

The criterion related to **impact** was not required by the TOR. Given that the PoC is still in its penultimate year of implementation it was not appropriate for the evaluation design. The actual impacts of the PoC are not likely to be evident until after the end of the programme period.

The key questions are shown below according to the objectives of the evaluation and relevant criteria. The full evaluation matrix is provided in **Annex A**. It is derived from the terms of reference and it helped to make the evaluation process as transparent as possible.

Objective I. To assess the *contribution* of UN system to national development priorities through the PoC outcomes:	
Relevance	1. How relevant is the PoC to Albania's country priorities and international commitments?
Effectiveness	2. What were the UN's actual contributions to the achievement of the PoC outcomes and Albania's country priorities?
Efficiency	3. Were the PoC results achieved at reasonably low cost and were resources used appropriately?
Sustainability	4. How sustainable are the results that have been achieved?

Objective II. To assess the *process* of the UN system's contribution through the PoC for the achievement of country priorities [Focus on effectiveness and efficiency of processes, mechanisms, procedures to plan, implement, and monitor the PoC and report on progress]	
Effectiveness	5. How effectively were the UNDG's programming principles applied to the PoC?
	6. To what extent did the PoC employ the comparative advantage of the UN System in Albania?
	7. How effective was the PoC as a coordination and partnership framework?
Efficiency	8. To what extent did the PoC help to minimize transaction costs for the GoA and for UN agencies?

2.4 Information sources and data collection methods

The evaluation employed the following data collection methods:

» **Document review** focusing on the PoC planning documents, the National Strategy for Development and Integration (2007-2013), concluding observations and recommendations from human rights treaty body reports, major challenges and issues identified in National Plans and Strategies related to multi-lateral environmental agreements, such as the CBD and

FCCC, annual and mid-term reviews and progress reports, past programme evaluation reports, strategy papers, and national sectoral plans and policies.

» **Semi-structured interviews** with individual and small groups of key stakeholders including: senior GoA officials and technical partners, members of the UNCT, senior programme and operations staff from UN agencies, and representatives of donor organisations, and partners from civil society organisations and the private sector.

» **Focus group discussions** involving small groups and sub-groups of the stakeholders listed above.

The evaluation team used multiple questions with different groups of respondents in order to triangulate their findings and to ensure that the findings and conclusions are credible and convincing. As noted above, the evaluation was conducted in an open, participatory manner, and every effort was made by the team to ensure that respondents were treated confidentially and in a manner that was sensitive to gender, cultural, institutional and other factors.

2.5 Limitations

» **Attribution of results**
The evaluation team used **contribution analysis** to triangulate multiple information sources to determine if there was a tangible contribution of the PoC to the expected outcomes and whether these did indeed influence progress towards national development priorities. In document reviews and interviews, this involved a) use of 'before' and 'after' criteria to understand how behaviours changed or institutions performed before and following the PoC intervention; b) seeking alternative explanations for the changes identified and test their plausibility, vis-à-vis the PoC intervention; and c) probing with stakeholders to imagine what the situation might be without the PoC intervention. Despite these efforts, in a strategic outcome evaluation a direct attribution of change to the delivered activities and outputs of the PoC is difficult to prove. Rather, this evaluation examined whether there was a plausible case to be made.

» **Disaggregated data**

Given the time limitations of the evaluation exercise, the evaluation team was not able to do any primary collection of statistical data related to indicators in the PoC. It relied on data already collected and presented by PoC stakeholders in mid-term reviews, annual progress reports, and other studies and evaluations.

» **Efficiency of the PoC**
Efficiency is one of the evaluation criteria required by the ToR. However, in a strategic, outcome evaluation [as opposed to a project evaluation] it is a challenge to determine efficiency according to a conventional definition as this does not fully consider the benefits of programme partnership, advice, advocacy and other forms of 'soft' assistance. The question of efficiency will be addressed by triangulating the perceptions of multiple stakeholders about the extent to which programme results were achieved without waste and with a minimum of transaction costs, and the quality and timeliness of the actual programme outputs. An important question will be whether the actual outputs could have been delivered more 'efficiently' by other partners or with the use of other partnership approaches.

Chapter 3. Evaluation findings and analysis

This is the core of the evaluation report. It is structured according to the objectives and the key evaluation criteria and questions.

Objective I.

Assess the <u>contribution </u>of the UN system to national development priorities through the outcomes of the Programme of Cooperation (PoC)

The evaluation sought to understand the extent to which planned PoC results (mainly outputs) were achieved and how, if at all, they made a contribution to the expected outcomes and progress towards national development priorities, as expressed in the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013[20] (hereafter referred to as **NSDI I**).

As stated in UNDG guidelines, the outcomes of programme cooperation are *shared* and hence there is *mutual accountability* between stakeholders involved in the PoC for their achievement[21]. The UN funds, programmes, and specialised agencies at country level, both resident and non, form the UN Country Team (UNCT). The UNCT is accountable to the Government of Albania for its *planned contributions* to the achievement of the outcomes in the PoC. Outcomes, such as those in the PoC, and national development targets can only be achieved through the work and resources of multiple partners. And given their level of ambition, a direct attribution of change to the contributions of the UNCT, is difficult.

To address this challenge, the evaluation team used **contribution analysis** to understand and assess:
  » How the activities supported and outputs delivered through programme cooperation contributed to expected outcomes; and
  » How they influenced progress towards the achievement of national development priorities.

It is a given that through programme cooperation at country level UN agencies have direct control only over the completion of activities that they support within a development intervention[22]. With these activities, UN agencies and their implementing partners have *direct influence* over the achievement development outputs but only <u>*indirect influence*</u> over outcomes and eventual impacts.

The evaluation aims to show whether or not the PoC made a difference and why it made a difference. It does <u>not</u> offer definitive proof – rather it presents 'a case', based on the extensive document review and interviews and discussions with PoC stakeholders. The evaluation also examined whether or not there was a clear theory of change, understood by all stakeholders involved, to explain how outputs supported by the PoC would contribute to expected outcomes and bring some level of influence to national development priorities and targets.

The key questions addressed in this section are:

Relevance	1. How relevant is the PoC to Albania's country priorities and international commitments?
Effectiveness	2. What were the UN's actual contributions for the achievement of the PoC outcomes and Albania's country priorities?
Efficiency	3. Were the PoC results achieved at reasonably low cost and were resources used appropriately?
Sustainability	4. How sustainable are the results that have been achieved?

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[20] National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013, REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, March 2008.
[21] Results-based Management Handbook, UNDG, 2011. 3-4.
[22] Results-based Management Handbook, *Ibid.*, 15.

3.1 Relevance of the PoC

Relevance is defined as the extent to which expected PoC results and strategies were consistent with the vision, strategic priorities, and policies of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI I), 2007-2013 and the commitments related to Albania's ratified treaties and international agreements.

3.1.1 Relevance to NSDI I

While both UN and GoA stakeholders could *speak* to the relevance of planned PoC results and strategies to the strategic priorities and policies of the NSDI I, these were not described or linked *explicitly* with the 11 outcomes in the original PoC results framework. Nor are they linked in the updated framework agreed by stakeholders following the mid-term review (MTR) in 2014. Broad national development priorities were identified in the Common Country Programme Document (CCPD)[23] for three funds and programmes and in separate agency-specific results and resources frameworks (RRF), however, these did not appear to be consolidated and transcribed to the POC and its results framework.

The original PoC results framework also did not make explicit links with the excellent summary of NDSI I monitoring indicators[24]. While these did not include baselines or targets, they could have provided a useful starting point for making clear, measureable connections between the expected contributions of the PoC and national development priorities. For example, a comparison of the NSDI I and PoC pillars 1 and 2 (5 outcomes from 1.1 through 2.2) found that, of 8 indicators at the outcome level that could have been used in the PoC, only 2 were[25].

For these reasons, on the basis of the PoC narrative and results framework alone, it was a challenge to piece together the expected contribution or *theory of change* for how the results of the PoC were intended to contribute to specific NSDI I priorities. A compounding factor was the lack of outcome indicators in the original PoC results framework. These concerns relate to the practice of results-based management (RBM) and are addressed in detail below under Objective II (see **section 3.5.5**).

Despite these shortcomings, programme partners from government, civil society, and from donor organisations could respond to questions about the relevance of the PoC to national priorities. They could also describe in concrete terms how the results of programme cooperation had contributed positively to changes in institutional performance by the GoA and how these relate to national priorities. Most partners were able to point out specific examples of these contributions and changes. The many actual results and contributions, validated by partners, are described in detail below in **section 3.2** for each of the 11 outcomes.

Document review by the evaluation team confirms these concrete links. The vision projected by the NSDI I was of: *A country with high living standards, which is integrated in the European and Euro-Atlantic structures, is democratic and guarantees the fundamental human rights and liberties.* The following table illustrates the links between key terms of the NSDI I vision and the programme actions and implementation strategies of the PoC:

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[23] Common Country Programme Document for Albania, 2012-2016 (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF), 3 August 2011.
[24] National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013, REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, March 2008. Table 5.1, 92.
[25] These are: Corruption perception index (NSDI indicator 6 for anti-corruption and PoC 1.3.4 indicator 3); and No. trafficking victims (NSDI indicator 7 for organised crime and PoC 1.3.2 indicator 2)

Key elements of NSDI I Vision[26] (2007-2013)	Relevant text from GoA-UN PoC (2012-2016)[27]
The Albanian State will be a protector of the rights, freedoms and interests of its citizens, men and women.	To strengthen accountability, the PoC will: - Work to ensure that rights, policies, services, entitlements and complaints mechanisms are known to citizens and used, especially by the marginalized - Support the implementation and monitoring of international commitments and the mainstreaming of gender into legislation, strategies, policies, and budgetary processes.
Consolidation of national institutions will guarantee implementation of the law and respect for the fundamental principles of a democratic country	The PoC will support: - The work of public oversight bodies to make them more accessible - The engagement of civil society to monitor the status of human rights and access to justice.
…deepening of the decentralisation process…is decisive for consolidating democracy	The PoC will: - Support the implementation of the Decentralization Strategy, including effective fiscal decentralization and institutional consolidation. - Assist regional and local authorities [to strengthen] administrative and financial management and coordination between central and local governments.
The delivery of good quality social services… to ensure social cohesion… …Social policies will be oriented towards the respect of human rights, equality and non-discrimination.	The PoC will: - Support for national social inclusion strategy, to identify policy gaps and to monitor and review progress - Reform of the social protection system, monitoring of its impact on vulnerable groups… strengthening of social protection mechanisms - Develop capacity to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate data on poverty measurement, social protection, child protection and welfare, health, gender and population dynamics.
The lack of implementation of the laws becomes an obstacle for the functioning of society… The improvement of the quality and efficiency of the public administration to deliver services	- Develop the capacities of policy planners and national and local officials and support the professionalization of service delivery

In addition, each of the 11 PoC outcomes can be linked explicitly to no fewer than 3 strategic priorities and policies of the NSDI I (see **section 3.2** for detailed descriptions of these links). Many of these strategic priorities and policies were driven by EU accession requirements under the of the *acquis communautaire*. This enabled the PoC to play a constructive role in achievements that lay the ground work for the granting of EU candidate status to Albania by the European Council in June 2014.

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[26] NSDI I (2007-2013), Ibid. 11-12.
[27] Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016. October, 2011. 16-21.

3.1.2 Relevance to Albania's international commitments

> *The law drafting agenda in the coming years, which will include the approximation of legislation with the acquis communautaire and the adjustment of ratified international conventions into the domestic legal framework, will be enormous*
>
> – NSDI I, Democratisation and Rule of Law, 35.

Albania has ratified all nine core UN human rights treaties, including the optional protocols to CEDAW and the CRC, eight fundamental international labour conventions, and most major multi-lateral environmental treaties (MEAs). Document review shows that many PoC results and strategies aimed explicitly to help the Government of Albania to meet the country's human rights commitments and other internationally agreed development goals and treaty obligations. The following international development goals and treaty obligations were referred to specifically in the text and results framework of the PoC, or in subsequent PoC progress reports and reviews:

Human rights

» UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security
» UN Convention against Corruption (CAC)
» UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPD)
» UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
» International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol
» Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender and development
» International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD),
» Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

Labour

» Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87)
» Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98)
» Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111).

Environment

» UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)
» UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).
» UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

As described in section 3.2 below. UN agencies offered important support for the preparation of regular treaty body reports including for the: CEDAW, CRC, UNFCCC, and UNCBD. In addition, as described below in section 3.5.1, specific results achieved from 2012 through 2014, are linked concretely to many of the concluding observations and recommendations of UN treaty body reports.

3.2 Effectiveness of the PoC

Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which planned PoC results (mainly outputs) were achieved and how, if at all, they made a contribution to the expected outcomes and progress towards national development priorities and internationally agreed development goals and treaty obligations.

This section offers a performance story for each PoC outcome. Each story provides a detailed assessment of:

- » The links between each outcome and the strategic priorities and policies of the NSDI I;
- » The actual progress against available outcome indicators;
- » The actual achievement against the planned PoC outputs[28]; and
- » A judgement about the extent to which the outputs contributed to the planned outcomes and progress towards national priorities.

The main sources of information for the outcome stories are progress reviews and reports prepared by the UNCT, triangulated with findings from interviews with UN staff and partners in government, civil society, and from donor organisations.

Outcome 1.1 Public oversight bodies and institutions

Strengthen public oversight, civil society and media institutions, make authorities more accountable to the public and better able to enforce gender equality commitments in planning, programming and budgeting processes.

Outcome 1.1 aimed to strengthen public accountability bodies and mechanisms at multiple levels to ensure that rights, policies, services, entitlements and complaints mechanisms are known and used by people and especially vulnerable groups, such as Roma and disabled persons. The expected changes focused on strengthened public oversight, improved responsiveness and accountability of the Government of Albania for the protection and fulfillment of human rights commitments and standards from ratified treaties and, in particular, a focus on meeting gender equality commitments in national plans, programmes, and budgets. The main strategies described in the PoC and reported consistently by the UNCT involved:

- » Efforts to strengthen the capacities of key public oversight bodies, including the Parliament, the Central Elections Commission (CEC), the Office of the People's Advocate (Ombudsman), the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, and the Child Rights Observatories; and
- » Capacity development of selected civil society organisations (CSOs), including women's organisations and networks, and the media to strengthen their advocacy, networking, and fundraising abilities and strengthen their engagement with the law and policy-making process.

Links with NSDI I priorities

While neither the Programme of Cooperation (PoC) and its results framework nor subsequent progress reports described the specific NSDI strategic priorities and policies to which outcome 1.1

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[28] The outputs listed in the report are not comprehensive. The outputs highlighted by the evaluators were chosen because: (1) they have been validated during interviews by government and civil society partners, and because (2) they are strategic in that they offer clear causal links to the expected outcome and NSDI priorities. In sum, they were chosen because they help to make a case that there was a UN contribution to the achievement of planned outcomes. For a comprehensive listing of all outputs achieved please refer to annual PoC programme reviews and progress reports and to the Mid-Term Review Report of September 2014.

was intended to contribute, there are solid, verifiable links between the two. Based on document review, the main NSDI strategic priorities related to outcome 1.1 are[29]:

» **Democratisation and rule of law, focused on aims to '***consolidate the democratic system and observance of human rights and freedoms*', encourage '*active participation of non-government and other civil society organisations in decision-making*', and '*reach high standards in the respect and realisation of the rights of all minorities*'.

» **Justice and home affairs** with the policy to '*improve the mechanisms and legal procedures which … protect human rights in the system*'.

» **Gender quality and the prevention of domestic violence** with the 'integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of policy design and implementation and all nine strategic priorities, especially efforts to increase the representation of women and girls in decision-making processes, strengthen the economic position of women, and prevent domestic violence and trafficking of women and girls and offer victims social support and recourse through the law.

» **Accountability**, with the focus on 'actively seeking advice from non-government policy stakeholders including NGOs and citizen associations'.

Progress towards the outcome indicators

While the PoC results framework provided indicators at the output level only, the 2014 progress review and report offered a summary of key indicators per outcome. For outcome 1.1 two key indicators were reported:

1. The number of cases brought to the Ombudsman and Anti-Discrimination Commissioner and the proportion resolved; and

2. The proportion of women in elected bodies at central and local levels and in the judiciary

These indicators can be seen as proxies for the overall outcome: to show a change in the responsiveness and accountability of the Government of Albania for the protection and fulfillment of human rights and progress towards meeting its gender equality commitments.

The Office of the Public Advocate (Ombudsman) saw an increase from 110 cases in 2010 to 4,346 cases by the end of 2013. Of these, recommendations for 40% of the cases were accepted and acted upon by the GoA for the plaintiff. Moreover, the Ombudsman reported playing an increasingly active role in advocating for the human rights of especially vulnerable groups, including Roma, LGBT persons, and persons with disabilities.

From its establishment in 2010, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination (CPD) also saw a dramatic increase in the number of cases brought before it from 15 in 2011 to 206 in 2014. Of these, 22 were considered discrimination and followed-up successfully with either recommendations or sanctions.

At the same time, it was reported by the UN that the quality of investigative processes and recommendations emanating from the Ombudsman and CPD have improved. In this regard, the CPD reported that UN support had enabled the office to ensure that its recommendations are aligned strongly with decisions and practices of the EU Court of Human Rights and with the standards of ratified international human rights treaties. UN support has also enabled the CPD to engage more effectively with Local Government Units (both regional and municipal) to serve as a source of information for active cases and to support implementation of recommendations. Similarly, the Ombudsman reported that UN support was used effectively to enhance the office's engagement on matters of concerns to the Roma and LGBT communities, effective shadow reporting on the

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[29] See NSDI section 3.2, 23-25; section 3.3, 59-60; and section 5, 89.

implementation of CEDAW, and advocacy support for the establishment of the Children's Commissioner in early 2015.

With regard to the second indicator, following the national elections in 2013, women accounted for 21% of elected representatives in Parliament, up from 18%, and they made up a full third of cabinet posts. Women also increased their representation in the judiciary from 44% to 49% of District Courts, and from 13% to 35% of Courts of Appeal. There was no change in the Supreme Court or High Court of Justice.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs[30]

To contribute to the outcome, three outputs were expected from the PoC. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below, <u>as verified</u> during the evaluation by PoC partners from government and civil society:

Output 1.1.1 Public oversight bodies have increased capacity to implement policy frameworks for greater transparency and accountability

- » Establishment of an online gender-disaggregated database that enables the CPD to monitor and report on cases of discrimination and types of complaint
- » Development and dissemination of a resource guide that enabled staff in the CPD office to address cases of gender discrimination in the private sector
- » Support for the Office of the Public Advocate (Ombudsman) to prepare its first shadow report on CEDAW implementation that made recommendations to strengthen CEDAW monitoring
- » In Internal Functional Analysis Review of the work of the Office of the Ombudsman that identified areas where greater capacity and legal authority are needed to monitor and report on gender equality progress and violations
- » Support for the Office of the Ombudsman to enhance performance monitoring and assessment and training to effectively address the situation of vulnerable groups (poor, Roma, persons with disabilities, LGBT) in the office's advocacy plans and recommendations
- » The Central Elections Commission (CEC) with UN support led the preparation of a package of gender sensitive recommendations, including revisions to the electoral code related to stronger gender quota implementation, gender-disaggregated voter lists, family voting and gender sensitive data collection.
- » Support for a national study *Freedom to vote and family voting* enabled the CEC to strengthen its voter education strategy and materials for the upcoming local elections in June 2015.
- » Engagement with the women's caucus in Parliament created sustained advocacy and attention for a woman's agenda in politics and helped to shepherd the gender equality legal package prepared by GoA with UN support.
- » Increased capacity of the Parliamentary Commission on Population and Health to analyse and advocate for priorities related to the ICPD.
- » Support to establish the Parliamentary Child Rights Caucus in November 2014 as a platform to ensure that children's rights considerations are incorporated into new legislation and the policy-making process.

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[30] The actual outputs listed in the report are not comprehensive. The outputs highlighted by the evaluators were chosen because: (1) they have been validated during interviews by government and civil society partners, and because (2) they are strategic in that they offer clear causal links to the expected outcome and NSDI priorities. In sum, they were chosen because they help to make a case that there was a UN contribution to the achievement of planned outcomes. For a comprehensive listing of all outputs achieved please refer to annual PoC programme reviews and progress reports and to the Mid-Term Review Report of September 2014.

» Child Protection Units are now operational in 53% of local government units (under the old territorial division) with a dedicated social or child protection worker and work is ongoing to develop their capacities to effectively address child protection issues and follow up on individual cases.

1.1.2 Civil society and media facilitate public demand for human rights, gender equality, and access to justice

» The Child Rights Observatory (CRO) was supported to work with local government units to collect and analyse disaggregated statistical information about child health, education, and social protection services. A publicly accessible database[31] enables policy makers, local government authorities, the media, and users in the interested public to review data and progress for children in all of Albania's municipalities and communes.
» Introduction of Community Based Scorecards, via a network of partner NGOs, in 26 municipalities and communes from 7 of 12 regions. The scorecards enabled women groups to prioritise their needs and 'score' the response of their local governments and to meet with candidates and demand that gender priorities be addressed. The network partnered with local government, private businesses, women communities and other CSOs to establish four social enterprises in four regions of Albania.
» National CSO networks and gender advocates are more capable to promote accountability and influence policies and legal frameworks to ensure women empowerment and participation especially in leadership and decision making. Through national and regional joint actions they have worked on, advocated for and influenced a number of legal frameworks and actions supporting women leadership and participation in decision making. For example, advocacy campaigns in targeted areas to educate and mobilise women voters to support candidates with platforms and economic and social policies that were gender-sensitive and to minimize the phenomenon of '*family voting*'.
» Support for women's groups to monitor the entire electoral process in their communities and advocate with the electoral commissions and political parties that the requirement of a 30% quota for women in party candidate lists be implemented.
» Child rights were advocated on a pro-bono basis by private media companies, sharing child rights concerns to mass audiences, for example, during the 2014 World Cup.

1.1.3 National and local networks of civil society organisations participate in public policy-making

» Civil society organizations working with the UN actively monitored and performance of oversight institutions and issued thematic reports related to court decisions, domestic violence legislation, and shadow reports.
» Albanian CSOs played an active role in the Forum for Equal Opportunities, Democracy and New Challenges of Regional Development (FREJA). This forum provided a number of innovative recommendations to improve CSOs capacities in advocating for and supporting good governance and gender equality.
» An interactive Albania Women in Science Network was established in November 2012 to contribute towards improving the under-representation of women in basic scientific research and at higher decision-making levels of academic institutions.

Contribution to outcome and national development priorities

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[31] See: http://www.observator.org.al/odf-map/. The CRO is a non-governmental entity established in 2009 with UN support as a civil society network intended to monitor the situation of children in the country.

The major outputs described above, and validated by partners, demonstrate that there was substantial progress made towards the expected outcome: strengthened public oversight, greater responsiveness and accountability for human rights commitments on the part of the GoA, and important moves to address gender equality commitments.

Oversight bodies including the office of the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination (CPD), and the National Child Rights Observatory (CRO) and Child Rights Units at the regional level reported sustained engagement and effort to ensure the functioning of oversight processes, make recommendations, and provide information that helped to influence debate, public policy-making, and improve service delivery. For example, the CRO has produced situation reports, contributed to action plans for children at national and regional levels and in 2013 it produced the first comprehensive report on various dimensions of child poverty and deprivation in Albania. Advocacy by the CRO, using the unique database of child data for all of Albania's municipalities and communes, has resulted in enhanced local measures to address the needs of children and families from vulnerable backgrounds. For example, the CRO is one of three local NGOs leading a country-wide initiative: 'Every Roma Child in Kindergarten'.

Successful efforts to support changes to the Electoral Code and civic engagement initiatives to advocate for women's political rights showed impressive results. For example: implementation of gender-disaggregated voter lists, the introduction of a municipal scorecard system, the fact that areas targeted by UN-supported and CSO-led advocacy campaigns produced greater votes for women candidates in the 2013 elections, and that candidates adopted gender priorities from scorecards into their own political platforms[32]. As a result of advocacy initiatives, supported in part by the UN, most party lists had no less than 30% representation of women and the CEC imposed sanctions on those political organizations that did not respect the quota. And due to active monitoring of polling stations by women's groups, again supported by the UN, the CEC reported anecdotally that family voting has decreased.

The Women's caucus and Children's caucus in Parliament worked to make their issues and agendas more visible in the eyes of legislators and policy-makers. And in December, 2014 the Albanian Parliament adopted the Resolution "For Recognition and Strengthening the Role of Civil Society in the Process of Democratic Development of the Country" . It was developed with UN technical assistance and it is the first political document that recognizes and establishes concrete commitments in this regard

At the plan level there are solid, verifiable links between the planned outcomes and outputs and specific NSDI strategic priorities and policies. While these were not made explicit in the PoC and results framework, subsequent progress reports and stakeholder perceptions confirm that there has been a plausible contribution to national development priorities. There are 3 specific plausible contributions:

» With the increase in the number of cases being addressed by both the Ombudsman and the CPD, and the gradual take-up of recommendation from these oversight bodies, it can be fairly judged that oversight mechanisms and processes are working more effectively to identify and address cases of discrimination[33]. Through these mechanisms, 'due process' has been established, informed by international standards, and appears to be increasingly effective and are helping the GoA to progressively realise *the rights of minorities*.

» As noted above, greater strides were made towards gender equality in political participation. These demonstrate important institutional and behavioural change to promote women's political participation and leadership.

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[32] Many elected mayors signed scorecards publicly as a commitment to implement the gender priorities identified by the community.
[33] For example: There was a significant increase of the gender-based and other discrimination cases brought to the attention of her office is evidenced: from 104 cases filed in 2012 to 244 cases filed the following year. The share of those decisions issued in favour of the alleged victim of discrimination has also increased, from a mere 10% in 2012 to 31% in 2013

» Civic accountability has improved with concrete efforts to actively seek advice from non-government policy stakeholders including NGOs and citizen associations. Due to higher civic activism, candidates for the national elections of June 2013 as well as the local elected officials intensified dialogue with mixed groups of men and women, or with women groups, an approach rarely used in the previous general elections campaigns. Political parties held open dialogues with their constituencies to display their electoral platform on issues of GE, GBV and empowerment of women. As one key informant reported: '…*with UN support, women became a constituency*'.

Outcome 1.2 Public administration

Outcome 1.2: Public administration will be supported to enhance capacities, practices and systems for effective delivery of national development priorities and international obligations.

Outcome 1.2 was intended to develop and strengthen the capacities, practices and systems of the Albania public administration in order to effectively implement NSDI priorities and international obligations stemming from ratified international human rights treaties and other treaty obligations. Public administration reform (PAR) is one of the GoA priorities and EU priorities for accession.

The main strategies described in the PoC involved review and strengthening of public administration laws and policies, the introduction of new skills and systems for planning, budgeting, and public resource management, strengthening of data collection and analysis to ensure appropriate levels of disaggregation and to encourage the use of data for policy making and reporting, support for reform of legal and technical aspects of national ICT infrastructure, and efforts to strengthen national reports required by international treaty bodies and other treaty obligations.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Based on document review, there is a high degree of relevance between outcome 1.2 and the NSDI strategic priorities[34], as follows:

» **Democratisation and rule of law, focused on** *'…a well-functioning and stable public administration built on an efficient and impartial civil service*.' Key strategic priorities and policies include: Establishment and strengthening of effective structures for all public institutions; Deepening of civil service reform and changes to the civil service legislation; improvement of the performance management system; and Training as a strategic means for the development of the capacities of civil servants.
» **ICT** priorities and policies *relate to the p*reparation of the regulatory framework to implement the law on electronic communications by the Regulatory Authority of Telecommunications
» **Economic and social development:** improve and enforce the legal and institutional framework that guarantees gender equality and strengthen economic position of women
» Finally, the outcome should also make a contribution to the implementation of the f**ive-year programme of statistics and then need for s**ocial statistics based on individual and household data

Progress towards the outcome indicators

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[34] See NSDI section 3.2, p35-36; ICT, p 54-55; section 3.3 p59; Section 5.3 related to monitoring and statistics p94-95.

While the PoC results framework did not provide indicators at the outcome level, progress reports by the UN offer a number of important outcome measures to which the UN provided substantial technical and advisory support. These outcome measures were validated by partners in government:

1. Adoption by Parliament of a new Law on the Status of Civil Servants that professionalises the civil service and provides for stronger management and accountability practices;

2. Specific amendments to the criminal code were made to ensure that domestic violence, sexual harassment, and rape within marriage or other civil unions were criminalized[35], reflecting important recommendations from the CEDAW treaty body for Albania.

3. The establishment and operation of the Albanian School for Public Administration;

4. Implementation of the Decision by the Albanian Council of Ministers for Gender Mainstreaming in the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP);

5. The publication of important reports such as a comprehensive assessment of women's property rights, 'Women and Men', and 'Gender Perspectives in Albania' that offered a much clearer understanding of gender differences in Albania down to the household level, including the extent of gender-based violence;

6. The preparation and submission of the Beijing +20 National Report and the 4th periodic report on CEDAW;

7. The institutional launching of ROMALB: a centralized online system operated by the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth (MSWY) to monitor progress against the Roma Decade National Action Plan (NAP);

8. The approval of a legislative and regulatory framework for a national Geographic Information System (GIS) and geographic 'rights of way';

9. The preparation of the draft NSDI for the period 2014-2020 with strong gender analysis and indicators and the introduction of governance indicators and a governance monitoring framework.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

To contribute to the outcome, five outputs were expected from the PoC. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below, <u>as verified</u> during the evaluation by PoC partners from government and civil society:

Output 1.2.1 National Government has the technical and financial capacity to mainstream gender, social inclusion, population issues, children and Millennium Development Goals in policy development and implementation, as well as coordinate transparently the external resources

- » Support to GoA ministries and departments to analyse and draft sections of the National Strategy for Development and Integration (2014-2020) to address issues related to gender, women's economic empowerment, and social inclusion;
- » Drafting indicators for a governance monitoring framework in the new NSDI (2014-2020);
- » Policy options are developed for introducing child minders as a new regulated profession in Albania with clear recommendations for national and local level
- » CSOs were supported to facilitate the preparation of gender responsive budgets (GRB) with seven municipalities
- » Seven municpalities with were supported to integrate gender equality measures in their local development strategies or prepare Gender Equality Action Plans. All of the seven

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[35] Domestic violence, sexual harassment, and forced sexual intercourse within marriage or other civil partnerships were made criminal offences punishable by imprisonment for from 3 to 10 years (Law No 23, dated 01.03.2012 and Law No 144/2013).

municipalities have now full-time gender equality employees as required by the Gender Equality Law

» *Lezha* Municipality supported as a pilot to prepare a Regional Economic Development strategy with gender analysis, objectives, and indicators;
» Support for research, analysis, and drafting of Beijing +20 National Report and the 4th periodic report on the CEDAW;

Output 1.2.2 The public administration of Albania is equipped to attract, develop capacity of and retain high quality civil servants for improved performance, while ensuring equal opportunities for women and men

» Support to establish a Center of Excellence in the MFA to serve as a coordination hub to engage expertise related to EU accession matters;
» Performance Assessment Matrixes (PAM) drafted for 3 ministries and awaiting new public administration reform law.

Output 1.2.3 State institution and non-Government institutions have the capacity to manage the demand, supply and use of disaggregated data for policy-making, service delivery and reporting

» A range of important research initiatives and publications were developed to increase the availability of disaggregated data, for example: 'Women and Men' and 'Gender Perspectives in Albania' with INSTAT, a Women's Guide to the Security Sector Reform', Making workplaces safe from Sexual Harassment', and 'Women's property rights'.
» Design and development of the ROMALB data collection and reporting system to monitor progress against the Roma Decade National Action Plan (NAP).

Output 1.2.4 Legal and technical foundation for reform, innovation and Information and Communications Technology, including infrastructure and e-services, in place

» Drafting of a law and regulatory framework for a national Geographic Information System (GIS) and geographic 'rights of way'

Output 1.2.5 State institutions and local governments have the technical capacity to mainstream gender issues into legislation, strategies, policies and budgetary processes, and to implement a women's economic empowerment strategy

» Advocacy and technical support to integrate gender equality considerations into the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP) process
» Review and revision of eight budgetary programmes, for example on employment, vocational training, social protection, entrepreneurship, and agricultural subsidies and information, to incorporate gender objectives, indicators and gender specific budgetary allocations;
» Amendments to the law on registration of immovable properties adopted with provisions to strengthen women's property rights
» Criminal Code amended twice, with- gender equality and violence against women recommendations incorporated- reflecting most of CEDAW Committee's concluding observations
» An web-based index of international human rights and gender equality instruments developed

» Over 380 judges and other legal professionals (lawyers, bailiffs, medical-legal personnel) have new knowledge about legislative changes from the gender equality perspective and of international instruments and standards for women's rights and gender equality, such as CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. These legal professional are also demonstrating commitment to apply this knowledge in their everyday cases thereby establishing new practices that provide better guarantees for women's human rights and protection from discrimination and violence

» Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship supported to prepare a National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs (2014 to 2020)

» Ministry of Defence and Albanian State Police supported to conduct institutional gender self-assessments & adopt gender action plans which are now under implementation.

There was significant duplication between this output and output 1.2.1 (see above).

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

The outputs described above and confirmed by partners in government and civil society during interviews demonstrate a substantial contribution towards the intended outcome: enhanced public administration systems and practices and more effective 'delivery' against national development priorities and international obligations.

Advice, technical, and financial support provided by the UN helped to shape the Law on the Status of Civil Servants, now adopted by Parliament, establish the Albanian School for Public Administration, and the Center of Excellence in the MFA to identify and coordinate expertise on EU accession matters. Each of these represents an important institutional change. As per the NSDI I, they will '*deepen*' the civil service reform, enhance training and performance management, and they provide a basis for the establishment of a professional, more accountable civil service.

UN support enabled effective consultation processes at local level that brought influence to the shape of the new NSDI. And while the NSDI has not yet been finalised, the UN also helped to introduce a suite of governance indicators in the strategy, as part of a global exercise to position governance effectively in the framework of the Post-2015 development agenda

Partners in government and civil society confirmed observable improvements in the collection, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated data related to gender, the state of children, Roma, and disabled persons, child social exclusion data, and environmental data. Partners in government also confirmed that these new pieces of information were then used to shape the revision of new laws and policies, for example the Roma Inclusion Strategy and the National Disability Strategy.

The entry into force of the amendments to the Criminal Code, supported by the UN, have helped to increase the number of criminal proceedings against cases domestic violence from 867 in 2012 to 1,212 in 2013. It was reported that in Durres, the 2nd largest city of Albania, 1 in 4 or of 474 reported cases have been referred for criminal prosecution.

Finally, efforts to mainstream gender equality considerations into planning and budgetary processes took important, sustainable strides forward. The decision by the Albanian Council of Ministers[36] to mainstream gender in the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP) represents a significant institutional change. UN support was instrumental in advocating for, and developing, the system with detailed procedures for implementation. As a result, in 2015 9 of 84 MTBP programme submissions from 15 line ministries now include gender objectives and outputs. In addition, a National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs (2014-2020) has been established and funded up to USD$250,000. This represents 499 million Lek (@USD $390,000) of GoA budget allocations, or

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[36] No.465, date 18/07/2012.

approximately 5% of the total planned spending on these programmes[37]. For the next budget cycle, it will be mandatory for all line ministries. Partners in the Ministry of Finance confirmed that gender requirements and 'gender markers' now enable the GoA to measure the number of national programmes and the proportion of planned spending that are 'gender-responsive'. Importantly, in a world where '*what gets measured gets managed*', a baseline for gender mainstreaming in national programme spending has now been established.

One area that did not progress as expected was the development of a national coordinating mechanism and capacity for gender equality. This was attributed to changes in the governance layout for the Ministry for Social Welfare and Youth in charge of coordinating gender equality issues in Albania. This reduced the staff directly in charge of GE both in terms of numbers and seniority. This administrative change is perceived by programme partners as having the potential to reduce the focus on gender equality and the leverage on government policies, including outreach to other line ministries. The UN is advocating with the government to establish a gender equality facility that would act as a technical secretariat for mainstreaming gender equality issues across government.

Outcome 1.3 Juvenile justice, migration management, and fight against crime and corruption

Outcome 1.3: Government meets international obligations and standards for juvenile justice, managing migration and the fight against organized crime and corruption.

Outcome 1.3 is a complex result that combines four somewhat disparate results areas. It aimed to support Albania to meet international standards in law, policies, and institutional practices for: (1) a more child-friendly justice system; (2) a stronger response to organised crime with a focus on trafficking in persons and drugs; (3) more effective management of migration and asylum; and (4) the investigation and prosecution of corruption at national and local levels.

The main strategies described in the PoC and results framework involved changes to laws, including the criminal code, and policy frameworks, and efforts to strengthen and expand the quality of services and systems for monitoring and reporting on progress.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Based on document review, there are substantial linkages between the expected results areas of outcome 1.3 and NSDI strategic priorities[38]. All four results areas can be seen to contribute to democratisation and rule of law and efforts to 'restore transparency' and 'consolidate the democratic system and observance of human rights'. Specific linkages include:

» *Juvenile justice*
*Strategic justice system priorities and policies to o*rient the court system towards the best European practices, improve the mechanisms and legal procedures which protect human rights in the system, and improve the prison and pre-detention systems thus 'guaranteeing fundamental individual rights'.

» *Organised crime and* **Integrated Border Management**
Strategic priorities and policies to change legislation to guarantee that border agencies function as required by the EU, proceed with organisational and restructuring reforms, and strengthen procedures of border agencies with respect to personnel, training, and financing.

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[37] Based on email correspondence with Ms. M. Dhembi, General Budget Director, Ministry of Finance.
[38] See NSDI section 3.2, Justice p24-27; Integrated Border Management p30-31, Migration p32, and Anti-Corruption p29-30.

» **Migration**
Strategic priorities and policies to Improve the legal framework for migration, create an appropriate institutional structure to manage migration policies, and ensure equal treatment of citizens of other countries who legally reside in Albania through approximation of legislation and attainment of European standards.

» **Anti-corruption**
NSDI priorities to carry-out sector reforms and approximation of legislation, including: efficient prosecution; strengthen administrative measures to investigate and punish corruption and ensure effective application of regional and international anti-corruption instruments, particularly the UNCAC.

Progress towards the outcome indicators

While the PoC results framework did not provide indicators at the outcome level, several output indicators were ambitious enough to be considered outcome measures. Progress reports by the UN, subsequently validated by partners in government and civil society, provided additional outcome measures:

1. Probation and mediation services are operational in 12 districts and in 2014 67% of juvenile offenders were given probation or community service sentences

2. The criminal code was amended to strengthen the prosecution of human trafficking and systems to identify and refer victims of trafficking are working more effectively with a 13% increase in the number of victims identified between 2011 and 2014

3. Operationalisation of a container control programme in the Port of Durres among police and customs officials contributed to an 80% increase from 2013 in the number of seizures of drugs and other illicit goods

4. By 2013, there had been a 40% increase from 2011 in the number of returnees registered and accessing reintegration services, and 300 asylum seekers had enjoyed adequate protection and services in Albania, up from 150 in 2011.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

Four outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been <u>verified</u> during interviews and document review:

Output 1.3.1 A child friendly justice system has the capacity to serve juveniles in conflict with law, victims and witnesses of crimes and children under the age of criminal prosecution

» Support to expand and improve the quality of probation services and victim–offender mediation services for juveniles in 12 districts, 22 local offices with the capacity to follow-up 500 cases
» GIS mapping of all organisations accepting juveniles who are sentenced to community works rather than detention or imprisonment was launched and includes more than 60 organisations
» Development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MES) to address quality education for juveniles held in detention and incentives for teachers.

Output 1.3.2 State institutions have the capacity to ensure a unified response to organized crime in line with international standards

» Amendments were researched and drafted for the criminal code (Law 144/2013) to advance the identification of victims of trafficking and prosecute traffickers
» A new country strategy on the fight against trafficking in persons developed, approved, and launched by government in December 2014
» Capacities of CSOs and local governments have improved for the identification of victims of trafficking
» Piloting of a Container Control Programme (CCP) in 2014 to develop the capacities of border, police, and customs agencies to better identify instances of illicit trafficking in narcotics.

Output 1.3.3 Key line ministries have the capacity to efficiently manage migration and asylum

» Support to research and draft a new law on aliens (108/2013) that conforms with the EU acquis and international migration and asylum standards
» Ongoing support to revise the Laws on Integration of Refugees and Asylum
» Support to design, target, and implement 'employability measures' to discourage the out-migration of young people from Albania
» Measures to support migrants in Albania were successfully incorporated into the National Strategies for the period 2014-2020 on Employment and Skills and for Business and Investment Development
» Preparation of the country's extended migration profile for the year 2013 was supported
» Dialogue initiated between GoA and EU member states on joint actions to prevent irregular immigration of Albanian citizens into the EU under the visa-free regime.

Output 1.3.4 Local government and state institutions have the capacity to establish appropriate frameworks for full and effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption

While UN supported work on anti-corruption showed modest results in terms of conferences, training, and events such as the international anti-corruption day, the office of the Minister of State for Local Government emphasised valuable UN support since 2014 on four key results:

» Technical support and advice for the preparation of the National anti-corruption strategy and action plan for the period 2015-2020;
» Assistance to the GoA to prepare a first national report on chapters 2 and 3 of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)
» Research, analysis and technical assistance to help draft a new law on 'Whistleblowers' to ensure that it address the concerns of women, migrants, and people in conflict with the law; and
» Design and launching in February 2015 of an on-line, inter-ministerial data base and monitoring tool to track the status of the nearly 5200 corruption cases which are currently under investigation. This is an important measure for public accountability and for EU accession

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

Overall, the evidence above suggests important contributions were made through UN cooperation towards the outcome, particularly in the areas of juvenile justice, migration management and provision of asylum protection, and efforts to address organised crime.

Probation Service handled some 300 probation sentences for young law offenders in 2014, compared to 109 in 2009 when it was established. In total, across all ages, the service has processed more than 11,000 cases with probation sentences since 2009 and in 2014 67% of juvenile offenders were given probation or community service sentences. This was a demonstration of stronger mechanisms and legal procedures to protect human rights in the judicial system. Much of this strengthened institutional response was due to UN programme cooperation. However, as UN reports note, revisions to the criminal code for juvenile justice are still a work in progress, as are the periods of detention for juvenile offenders under investigation. For example, the UN reports that in 2013, of the 234 juveniles awaiting trial in pre-detention in 2013, 68% were detained in prison for more than 90 days and 46% for more than six months. In addition the availability of only six court sections for juveniles across the entire country has created a bottleneck in the judicial process for juveniles and their families. The UN will continue to advocate for the establishment of a section for juveniles in all first instance courts as well as in courts of appeal.

By 2013, there had been a 40% increase from 2011 in the number of Albanian returnees registered and accessing reintegration services supported by the UN, and 300 asylum seekers had enjoyed adequate protection and services in Albania, up from 150 in 2011. These demonstrate enhanced migration and asylum management practices.

Criminal code amendments advocated by the UN and other partners to strengthen investigation and prosecution of human traffickers were adopted and systems to identify and refer victims of trafficking are working more effectively with a 13% increase in the number of victims identified between 2011 and 2014. The establishment of the container control programme in the Port of Durres among police and customs officials was a major institutional result that has strengthened border and customs procedures. It contributed to an 80% increase from 2013 at the port in the number of seizures of drugs and other illicit goods.

The one area of the outcome that did not proceed as planned was for anti-corruption. However, the new government has renewed efforts in this direction. And the UN support for UNCAC reporting, the ongoing development of Whistleblower legislation, and support to track anti-corruption cases were reported by GoA partners to have greatly improved traction in 2015.

Outcome 2.1 Economic governance

Outcome 2.1 Government, trade organizations and the private sector support inclusive and sustainable economic growth through enhanced regulatory frameworks, trade facilitation and investment promotion

Outcome 2.1 is focused on generating inclusive and sustainable economic growth in Albania by enhancing regulatory frameworks, trade facilitation, and investment promotion. A broad range of partners were identified and engaged to work towards the outcome including: the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Entrepreneurship, the Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA), the Competition Authority, the Bank of Albania, the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), private sector firms, and consumer protection associations.

The main strategies described in the PoC involve efforts to: (1) Attract greater foreign direct investment (FDI) in Albania[39] and understand its effects on job creation, particularly for women, (2) Promote competitiveness of the MSME sector, (3) Strengthen the trade and business climate through the establishment of one-stop-shops at border customs stations and a 'single' window for

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[39] Over the period of the PoC, the World Bank reports that FDI in Albania increased from USD$ 1.05bn in 2011 to USD$1.25 bn in 2013. The main sectors that attract FDI are industry, the financial sector, telecommunications, and power generation (hydropower plants and wind farms), NSDI II (draft June 2013), p8.

exchange of trade information and customs operations, and (4) Promote corporate social responsibility and strengthen the capacities and performance of consumer protection associations.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Based on document review, the main NSDI strategic priorities related to outcome 2.1 are concentrated under economic and social development, specifically [40]:

» **Economy:** Foreign direct investment and export promotion, legislative measures to harmonise laws and rules related to the financing, production, and sale of goods made in Albania according to European Union and World Trade Organisation standards, including 'one-stop shops'

» **Consumer protection and market surveillance:** Protect the economic interests of consumers on issues of price, choice, quality, diversity, affordability and safety and provide consumers with modern and transparent market surveillance; and

» Strengthen the **performance and credibility of customs administration.**

Corporate social responsibility was not a strategic priority or policy in the NSDI.

Progress towards the outcome indicators

Progress reports by the UN, and validated by partners in government provided the following outcome measures:

1. Consensus on a national framework to measure CSR performance among GoA, private sector, and civil society stakeholders and the publication of a first national report on CSR, aligned with the provisions of the Global Compact, in June 2014

2. The first National CSR Awards launched in May 20142.

3. Reorganisation and strengthened performance of AIDA, particularly in terms of the organisation of trade fairs and exhibitions to promote FDI in Albania

4. Approval of the National policy and action plan for Women's Entrepreneurship In Albania, 2014-2020.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

Four outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been <u>verified</u> during interviews and document review:

Output 2.1.1 Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy and other state institutions have the capacity to collect, produce and communicate data related to Foreign Direct Investment, including the data on gender implications of Foreign Direct Investment

» Establishment of the inter-governmental FDI team, comprising the MoEDTE, MoF, Central Bank, INSTAT, and MoEn

» Support to analyse and formulate needed management and structural reforms for AIDA, including its organisational vision, functions, and job descriptions, and training needs

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[40] See NSDI section 3.3, p39, Economy, p50-51, Consumer protection p53, and Customs administration p50.

Output 2.1.2 State institutions have the capacity to promote competitiveness of enterprises, supply chain integration and investment

» Research, analysis, and technical support to prepare the national policy to promote Women's Entrepreneurship in Albania and its action plan for the period 2014-2020.
» The Inter-ministerial Advisory Group of Women entrepreneurs was established and is currently functional and a process of self-evaluation by GoA of indicators for the advancement of women entrepreneurs was conducted and launched.

Output 2.1.3 State and non-State institutions have the capacity to empower associations for consumer protection

Nearly all results under this output relate to CSR:
» Development with GoA, private sector, and civil society stakeholders of a national framework of indicators to measure CSR performance
» Support to compile a first national report on CSR performance
» Development of CSR award guidelines and support for launching of first National CSR Awards
» Knowledge and capacities of 86 businesses and business associations were strengthened on CSR topics such of occupational health and safety, environmental protection, and community engagement.
» Effective convening and follow-up by an inter-ministerial working group on the National Action Plan on CSR and an Albanian network of companies on corporate social responsibility, hosted by Vodafone Albania.

Output 2.1.4 Governmental trade control agencies and the business community enabled to simplify, harmonize, and automate trade information gathering and customs operations through the Single Window

» Development of a one-stop shop at AIDA for prospective investors in the Albania textile and garment industry

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

Progress towards outcome 2.1 was less than for other outcomes in the PoC. Based on the original expected results there were substantial gains in terms of establishing working mechanisms within both government and the private sector to promote and reward CSR, helping AIDA to become functional, and promoting and shaping policy initiatives for women's entrepreneurship.

However, the major planned results did not emerge, especially the establishment of an FDI database and e-portal, regular production of 'knowledge products' related to flows of FDI and their effects on job creation for vulnerable groups, concrete changes to the regulatory framework for investment promotion, and the design and adoption of market surveillance measures, in cooperation with consumer and business associations.

With regards to the development of a '*single window*' for exchange of trade information and customs operations (output 2.1.4), partners in the Ministry of Economy reported very good, strong support from the UN but blamed funding and un-even 'political' support and attention for the lack of movement. It was reported that funds were budgeted for the single window initiative in 2014.

In the area of support for MSMEs (output 2.1.2), there was also a lack of progress despite this being a relatively strong area for UN system engagement. Partners in the Ministry of Economy pointed to a very crowded field for MSME support including the EU with sizeable pre-accession funding, the

Italian Government with a credit guarantee for enterprise development in the amount of €50 million, including €1.5m for technical assistance, GIZ with a programme of support to ensure harmonization of competition and innovation laws with the EU acquis, and USAID working primarily with the private sector on trade promotion. Prospective partners include SDC with a focus on young people and SMEs and the Austrian Government which aims to support vocational education.

The lack of progress was acknowledged in reports by the UN and attributed to poor overall strategy and results and lack of funding. Following the Mid-Term Review with GoA and other partners, efforts related to economic governance are concentrated under new outcome 3 related to governance and rule of law.

Outcome 2.2 Environment

Outcome 2.2 National authorities and institutions, the private sector and the general public protect, preserve and use natural resources more sustainably, with consideration to the impacts of climate change and to the achievement of European environmental standards.

Outcome 2.2 is about supporting Albania to protect, preserve, and use natural resources more sustainably, adapt and adjust to the current and expected impacts of climate change, and comply with EU and international environmental standards. The prospect of EU accession drives the pace and progress made to approximate legislation and policy, but inter-institutional coordination, lack of enforcement, and insufficient implementation are ongoing constraints.

The outcome was ambitious with were several inter-linked strategies described in the PoC and results framework: Changes to environmental laws and regulatory mechanisms, support to mainstream environmental considerations into the policy and regulatory work of other sectors, analysis of climate change risks and mitigation of negative environmental impacts with Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA), the promotion and development of legal and other measures and incentives for energy efficiency, mainly in residential areas, and increasing the capacity of national and local administrations to assess disaster risks and develop disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies and plans.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Based on document review, there are substantial linkages between the expected outcome and NSDI strategic priorities[41]:

» **Environment:**
  - Adopt European Community legal standards and enforce environmental legislation through strengthening of the Regional Environment Agencies and inspectorates;
  - Invest in environmental protection to ensure EU standards, especially for wastewater treatment, solid waste management, and rehabilitation of contaminated land and sources of pollution;
  - Manage environmental resources through a clear legal framework implemented through a well monitored and enforced permit system;
  - Protect forests, maintenance of biodiversity and development of eco-tourism and improve communication and awareness.

» **Energy**:

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[41] See NSDI section 3.3 Economic and social development: Environment, p46-48; Energy, p42-43.

Establish an effective institutional and regulatory framework, encourage the efficient use of energy both in the exploitation of energy sources and the reduction of electricity consumption, and increase the use of renewable energy sources.

Progress towards the outcome indicators

Progress reports by the UN, and validated by partners in government provided the following outcome measures:

1. Declaration of the *Ohrid–Prespa* trans-boundary biosphere reserve with Macedonia. The reserve will be governed by a Watershed Management Committee created by a ratified agreement between the Albanian and Macedonian parliaments

2. Approval of a national law for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and by-laws for environmental impacts assessment (EIA) procedures, public participation, and EIA in a trans-boundary context (Law No. 91/2013);

3. Declaration of a two-year moratorium on hunting, with a national action plan for conservation

4. Since 2012, a successful small grants scheme for solar power generation at municipal level has reduced greenhouse gas (Ghg) emissions by an estimated 595,000 tons of CO_2.

5. Re-structuring of national machinery for environmental management and establishment of two inter-ministerial committees on waste management and climate change for coordinated policy implementation

6. Since 2013 an estimated 1.26 km²have been certified as free of unexploded ordinance (UXOs)

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

To contribute to the outcome, five outputs were expected from the PoC. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below, as verified during the evaluation by PoC partners from government and civil society:

*Output 2.2.1 The National Government has **legal and regulatory mechanisms** ready for implementation and ensures **compliance with Multilateral Environment Agreements and the Rio Principles***

» The National Strategic Plan for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas prepared and linked to tourism and urban planning processes in the coastal areas and to the National Biodiversity strategy[42]

» A management plan developed for a first marine protected area - *Karaburun–Sazan* - and two more marine areas, *Porto Palermo* and *Kepi I Rodonit,* are being assessed for designation

» Support for restructuring of the National Environment Agency and the National Inspectorate of Environment, Water and Forests. Moreover and establishment of two inter-ministerial committees on waste management and climate change for coordinated policy implementation

» Drafting of a national law for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and by-laws for EIA procedures, public participation, and EIA in a trans-boundary context;;

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[42] http://www.mjedisi.gov.al/al/programi/biodiversiteti-dhe-zonat-e-mbrojtura/biodiversiteti

» General Guidance on SEA was developed and Strategic Environment Assessment of Tirana Regulatory Plan was piloted and completed Capacity development and support for new technology have improved compliance with article 35 of the Euratom Treaty, related to effective monitoring of radioactivity in air, water, and soil

Output 2.2.2 Relevant line ministries have the organizational, technical and financial capacity to **mainstream environment into national policy frameworks***, ensure participation and expansion of the education for sustainable development in schools and implement public awareness on environment*

» Climate change adaptation measures incorporated into local development plans for the Lezha region:
  - Coastal sand dunes restoration pilot implemented in the *Drini-Mati* River Delta showcased an ecosystem-based approach to adaptation for local communities and ecosystems
  - A monitoring system to detect climate change impacts on ecosystems and an early warning system is operational.
» Climate change adaptation is included as a cross-cutting strategy in the draft NSDI II[43]
» Adaptation measures incorporated into ecosystem development plans for the *Drini-Mati* River Delta.
» A two-year moratorium declared on hunting along with a national action plan in cooperation with state institutions to ensure further implementation
» Technical and advisory support provided to develop of the *Ohrid–Prespa* transboundary biosphere reserve with Macedonia.
» Environmental education in schools enhanced with a national curriculum for grades 1 to 5, and 3,600 teachers accredited to deliver the new curriculum.

Output 2.2.3 Key state institutions and sub-national stakeholders have the capacity to manage a number of public projects in such a way that the **negative impact on the environment and human health is reduced**

» A list of Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), in line with the EU sector approach, is prepared and two prioritized NAMAs have been developed: (1) The National Energy Efficiency Plan and establishment of a financing mechanism for energy efficiency investments in public buildings, and (2) Replacing fossil fuels with non-hazardous waste in the Albanian cement industry. Registration of the NAMAs is ongoing.

Output 2.2.4 National government and state institutions have the capacity to **promote energy efficiency** *and make informed decisions on the use of greenhouse gas free energy resources, including the analysis of climate change risks*

» Under the framework of the UNFCCC, he National greenhouse gas inventory and development of climate change scenarios and potential adaptation measures are finalised
» Promotion of legal and market-based approaches to increase the use of energy efficient and innovative solar water heating technology and introduction of a small grants scheme in 6 municipalities
» A new law on renewable energy, in compliance with EU directives, was drafted with a prominent focus on solar energy. A proposed tariff for renewable energy promotion aims to

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[43] http://erc.undp.org/evaluationadmin/manageevaluation/viewevaluationdetail.html?evalid=6977

help Albania meet a target of 38% of energy generated from renewable sources, excluding large hydro, by 2020

*Output 2.2.5 State institutions and local governments have the capacity to **manage disaster risk preparedness and prevention**, and integrate specific plans for the national heritage sites*

» Contributed to the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014–2018
» Capacity building activities have been associated with the development of a system for flood risk exposure, maps and three different dam failure scenarios for the area of Lake Shkodra. In addition, an end-user committee has been established, aiming at developing an early alert system for flooding around Lake Shkodra interfaced with current operating systems
» Enhanced monitoring of the pine processionary moth (PPM) that has infested and damaged a large area of black pine forest for control and forest restoration initiatives
» With regard to the urgent need[44] to address surplus ammunition and unexploded ordnance (UXO), financial contributions in 2014 enabled the Albanian Mine and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO) to resume the coordination and monitoring of clearing UXO hotspots, under supervision of the Ministry of Defence
» Upgrading and alignment of UXO disposal and clearance standards with international humanitarian standards

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

The outputs described above show some contributions towards the intended outcome and NDSI priorities. The National Strategic Plan for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas, the detailed management plan for *Karaburun–Sazan* , the *Ohrid–Prespa* trans-boundary biosphere, and progress to address the pine processionary moth infestation all make significant strides towards the maintenance of biodiversity and protection of natural resources and heritage. The biosphere reserve also offers a model in the region for cross-border cooperation and investment in sustainable development

UN support for restructuring of the national machinery for environmental management and protection and the development of two NAMA will support the GoA to gain traction in implementation of environmental policies and regulations that are aligned with the EU requirements.

In terms of legal and policy work in the energy sector, the UN played a pivotal role in the development of the draft renewable energy law and related action plans for renewable energy and energy efficiency, including required sub-acts and regulations. The subsequent delays in their enactment and review by the current government in no way diminish their importance in terms of an effective institutional and regulatory framework, aligned with EU and international standards. In addition, the 6 municipality pilot initiative on solar power generation produced clear measureable results for future replication.

Efforts to improve disaster risk assessment and preparedness at both national and local levels (output 2.2.5) were less effective. The National Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Civil Protection 2014–2018 is yet to be adopted and no disaster preparedness and response plans had been prepared at local level. UN and donor respondents noted that the lack of progress on national strategy and implementation for disaster risk reduction initiatives is explained partly by ongoing

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[44] According to estimates from the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE), since 2011 there have been at least 971 abandoned explosive ordnance casualties(143 killed and 828 injured) all over Albania.

confusion over the division of roles and responsibilities amongst ministries and a general lack of interest and priority being attached to it by GoA partners.

Outcome 3.1 Regional development, agriculture, tourism and cultural heritage

Outcome 3.1: Institutional capacities, frameworks and policies meeting international standards promote equitable and sustainable regional development focusing on land use and livelihoods for women and men, agriculture, tourism and cultural and natural heritage management

Outcome 3.1 aimed at supporting the government institutions in formulating a regional development policy and strategic approach to absorb EU IPA funds for regional development; providing technical support to strengthen institutions and policymaking in the agriculture area. This outcome was also intended at promoting sustainable tourism for economic development through strengthening institutional capacities and developing legislation for the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

The main strategies described in the PoC involved efforts to strengthen the capacities of institutions in strategy development and implementation; support for legislation and policies and harmonisation with EU legislation; and advice and capacity development for national institutions. The programme intervention also included measures for small-scale investments in public infrastructure; debt financing and vocational training grants for rural businesses and households.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Based on document review, there is a high degree of relevance between outcome 3.1 and the NSDI strategic priorities[45], in particular under section **Economic and Social Development**, focused on '…*balanced, harmonious and sustainable development and the Lisbon agenda of growth and jobs*.' Key strategic priorities and policies include:

- » **Urban, rural and regional development** focusing on new policy making and implementation structures for the absorption of EU funds; the need to ensure access in rural areas to services that will sustain economic activity and promote economic diversification; as well as an integrated approach for sustainable tourism.
- » **Regional development** priorities *relate to* the preparation of an efficient regional management framework, including the institutional governance structures
- » **Rural development** priorities relate to the   need to increase the competitiveness of the agricultural and agro-processing sector; to protect and enhance the environment through the sustainable management of natural resources in rural areas and to improve the quality of life and promote diversification of economic activities in rural areas to create new jobs**;** and to develop capacities of local institutions to effectively manage rural development programmes
- » **Agriculture**: increase financial support to farms and improve the level and quality of technologies, information and knowledge applied by farmers and agro-processing businesses
- » **Culture**: Protect cultural heritage and promote cultural tourism and Tourism; aiming at increasing the rate of special interest tourism in the country.

Progress towards the outcome indicators

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[45] See NSDI section 3.3 – Economic and Social Development p.71 - 80.

While the PoC results framework did not provide indicators at the outcome level, progress reports by the UN offer a number of important outcome measures to which the UN provided substantial technical and advisory support. These outcome measures were validated by partners in government:

1. Support for the development of the cross-cutting Inter-sectoral Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (ISARD) 2014- 2020, in line with the framework of Europe 2020 strategy, within the context of specific development needs of the agriculture and rural areas in Albania was finalized.
2. A package of quick measures aiming at improving the business climate and relaxing the fiscal burdens to agriculture operators for promoting production and exports was identified and finalized.
3. Training and capacity development for restoration professionals and support for the restoration of the *Marubi* museum collection

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

To contribute to the outcome, three outputs were expected from the PoC. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below, <u>as verified</u> during the evaluation by PoC partners from government and civil society:

Output 3.1.1. National Government and state institutions have the capacity to coordinate and manage long-term programming of EU pre- accession funds for regional development and domestic regional development policy

» Support to GoA on the development of a domestic Regional Development
» Support to GoA capacity development for management of EU IPA funds in regional development.
» Support for the redesign of the Regional Development Fund for allocation of national resources in line with the domestic regional development policies

Output 3.1.2 State institutions and decentralized regional offices have the capacity to formulate and implement gender sensitive policies and programmes for sustainable economic growth, rural development, land resources management, and rural poverty reduction, aligned with European economic integration requirements and programmes

» Support to the formulation of the Inter-sectoral Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (ISARD) 2014- 2020 in line with the strategic vision of the EU CAP and the context of developments in the agriculture sector in Albania
» Fiscal package to reduce burden on agriculture operators and promote growth
» Support for access to markets of rural communities in the Northern Albania, with an emphasis on increasing productivity and agricultural products value chains through small credits to farmers, training and infrastructure improvements
» Institutional capacity development for the Agricultural Technology Transfer Centres and Extension Services for Rural Diversification Projects

Output 3.1.3 Legal institutions have the capacity to effectively manage and promote cultural and natural heritage, as well as tourism

» New restoration and preservation techniques and capacity development for the Centre for Restoration of Monuments functioning as a department for the Institute of Monuments under the Ministry of Culture.

» Support for training of 12 national experts in the field of restoration of cultural monuments, objects and artefacts

» Support for the National Historical Museum strategy and visitor experience; restoration of the *Marubi* museum; *Kadare* house

» Work under way for the development of the cultural strategy and development of indicators on culture impact

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

The outputs described above and confirmed by partners in government and civil society during interviews demonstrate the contribution towards the intended outcome: *equitable and sustainable regional development focusing on land use and livelihoods for women and men, agriculture, tourism and cultural and natural heritage management*

The main contributions under this outcome are realised in the area of agriculture, where the lion-share of resources was concentrated. UN successfully supported the formulation of the ISARD strategy aiming at aligning the national policies for development of the rural and agricultural sector with the opportunities and strategic vision of the EU Common Agriculture Policy. During 2014, UN supported the development of legislation aimed at reducing the fiscal burden on agriculture operators in order to promote production and exports.

Other interventions have included support through technical assistance and capacity building services in the areas of agricultural extension services and technology transfer centers. The government that came into office in September 2013 is however considering comprehensive institutional changes in the governance mechanisms and structures in the agriculture sector, with the aim to enhance private sector participation and services. It is unclear to what extent this will imply a reshuffle in the agriculture extension services and/or undermine the results achieved so far.

The regional development objective output 3.1.1 has not been fully achieved. The UN supported the development of the regional domestic policy document and further supported preparations for the regional development policy in the EU context, in order to develop EU- IPA funding in the regional development field. However, national commitment with regard to domestic RD was low and a formal framework for RD was never adopted. Strong national commitment was in turn evident as regards development of the policy and institutional structures for RD in the EU perspective; but work in this area did not develop further due to the changing framework for IPA assistance and the new financial framework 2014 – 2020 of the EU (IPA II) which introduced a new funding and implementation approach.

Outcome 3.2 Decentralised services

Outcome 3.2 The public, including marginalized groups and communities, better receive equitable, inclusive and accountable decentralized services from regional and local governments

Outcome 3.2 is intended at improving the quality of the services provided to citizens and promoting local economic development through better local governance and coordination. The emphasis has been on better resource allocation as well as a re-organization and clarification of functions and responsibilities of different levels of governance.

The main strategies described in the PoC and results framework involved technical assistance to regional and local authorities with an emphasis on innovation and gender issues; support for the

design and implementation of local legislation and policies as well as contribution to participatory frameworks to ensure access to services in particular for marginalised groups.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Outcome 3.2 is closely linked with the NSDI strategic priorities[46], with all three output areas contributing to democratisation and rule of law and efforts to (i) build a democratic system; (ii) ensure good and effective governance for citizens; (iii) exercise power and deliver services at a level close to citizens; (iv) attract and ensure citizen participation in decision making; and (v) contribute in an active way in the process of integration into the Euro-Atlantic structures through cross-border, inter-communal, and inter- regional cooperation. This outcome is also linked with the social and economic development strategic priorities in terms of ensuring easier and equitable access to all categories of the population to improved public services at the local level. Specific linkages include:

» ***Decentralisation***
Strategic priorities linked with the regulatory framework for decentralization include the *need* for strengthening of the first level of local government through institutional strengthening of municipalities and communes and administrative structures; Improvement of effectiveness, predictability, fairness in resource allocation between local government units, transparency and accountability; as well as improvement of the administrative-territorial division.

» ***Gender equality and prevention of domestic violence***
Strategic priorities and policies are linked with the support to vulnerable women and girls through the strengthening of public structures that treat victims of violence and trafficking, particularly in rural areas, and of programmes aimed to reintegrate them; prevention of domestic violence through social and education services for early detection; offer social support to the victims through services for victims and perpetrators; establishing a 24-hour support line at local government units; creation of a coordination system to establish a good practice between institutions/organisations working against domestic violence

» **Social inclusion**
Strategic priorities and policies to raise the income generation opportunities of individuals; to facilitate access to services and to assist vulnerable groups, in particular children, Roma and people with disabilities

Progress towards the outcome indicators

The PoC did not include outcome indicators, however some of the output indicators may be representative of the outcome achievements overall. According to UN progress reports and interviews with government and other stakeholders, the major outcome achievement in this area is related to the support to the country's territorial–administrative reform process, through the management and coordination of the multi-donor fund known as STAR (Support to Territorial and Administrative Reform), resulting in a new administrative and territorial layout for the country which was assisted through technical assistance for studies and public consultations by the UN.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

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[46] See NSDI section 3.2, Decentralisation p 36-38; NSDI Section 3.3. Economic and Social Development Gender equality and Domestic Violence p. 59 – 60; Social Inclusion p. 62 - 64, Migration p32, and Anti-Corruption p29-30.

Four outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been <u>verified</u> during interviews and document review:

Output 3.2.1 Central government has the capacity to implement an approved decentralization strategy as well as undertake local governance and fiscal reforms

- » The law on territorial reform drafted and endorsed by Parliament
- » Operational tools for actual transfer to new local governments under development
- » Work on the new decentralization strategy started during 2014 with support from multiple development partners and some UN support.

Output 3.2.2 In support of a high quality system of decentralized administrative services local governments have the capacity to ensure accountability by introducing cost-effective tools including inter-municipal cooperation schemes

- » A scheme of cooperation for mountainous tourism and development of '*Alberghi Diffusi*' in Shkodra region being developed

Output 3.2.3 Marginalized groups are adequately targeted by local and regional government and these groups have equal access to basic and social services

- » Achievements under this output are overlapping with output 4.1.2 and have been reported in the relevant section

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

Achievements in this outcome are quite significant and in line with the national development priorities particularly on improved decentralisation frameworks; better and more accessible services as well as territorial reform. The PoC did not itself include a specific objective on territorial reform, although the latter was specifically suggested by the NSDI as early as 2007. However, the UN proved instrumental in designing a clear technical assistance project and mobilising funding through a multi-donor trust fund, which ensured that the government was equipped with the necessary human and financial resources to carry out this important reform. The UN had the necessary neutrality and technical competence that ensured credibility for the delicate process of the territorial reform carried out by the Government of Albania and it facilitated a long process of technical and analytical studies combined with extensive consultations at the local level to meet the constitutional requirements for the territorial reform. Work is undergoing to make the territorial reform operational in preparation for the June 2015 local elections that will institute the 61 new local governments for the first time, and equip the new administrations with the necessary tool for an easy transition. Work on the decentralisation strategy has also started, but UN's support to the process has been limited due to a division of responsibilities between the major development partners. Work on financial resource allocation; fiscal decentralisation and assignment of responsibilities is expected to be completed within 2016.

Other important achievements have been realised in the other areas of the outcome, particularly related to the gender sensitive policies at the local level and mechanisms to prevent and fight domestic violence as well as ensure social services for vulnerable groups at the local level. However, there is considerable overlap within the original Results framework between Outputs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 and the outputs under Outcome 4 Social Inclusion. The concrete achievements in these areas have been addressed under the following section. It is worth noting that activities under outputs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 have been quite limited in the 2012 – 2014 period, with the exception of some contribution to

inter-municipal cooperation to support tourism development in the Shkodra area. Contributions to these outputs have however been achieved indirectly through the work under Outcome 4.

Outcome 4.1 Social Inclusion

The rights of disadvantaged individuals and groups are equally ensured through legislation, inclusive policies, social protection mechanisms and special interventions

Outcome 4.1 focuses on the rights of the disadvantaged individuals and groups and seeks to ensure that their rights are equally granted through legislation, inclusive policies, social protection mechanisms and special interventions. This agenda includes the protection of the rights and wellbeing standards of the most vulnerable social groups including children, women, those who live in poverty, the elderly, the disabled, Roma and Egyptian minorities, victims of human trafficking and other key population such as youngsters. The main strategies described in the PoC and reported by the UN and other stakeholders include:

» Support to the development of strategies, policy papers and legislation to strengthen the capacity of key public institutions including the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, Ministry of Health, State Social Service, local governments, child protection units, domestic violence units.

» Capacity development for the government's monitoring& evaluation frameworks, including development of tools, statistics and data collection systems; including secondary studies based on such statistical frameworks to support evidence-based policymaking

» Capacity development for local governments and civil society organisations for planning and budgeting of services to ensure equal access and inclusive social policies

Links with NSDI I priorities

As stated above, the Programme of Cooperation does not state explicit references to the NSDI strategic priorities, although the links between the intended outcome and NSDI strategies priorities are clearly verifiable in NSDI Section 3.2 and 3.3 and as below[47]:

» **Democratisation and rule of law, focused on aims to '***c**onsolidate the democratic system and observance of human rights and freedoms*', encourage '*active participation of non-government and other civil society organisations in decision-making*', and '*reach high standards in the respect and realisation of the rights of all minorities*'.

» **Gender quality and the prevention of domestic violence** with the 'integration of gender perspectives in all aspects of policy design and implementation and all nine strategic priorities, especially efforts to increase the representation of women and girls in decision-making processes, strengthen the economic position of women, and prevent domestic violence and trafficking of women and girls and offer victims social support and recourse through the law.

» **Social care** reform, intended to decentralise social services in order to ensure that planning, provision and delivery of services happen closer to the beneficiaries; aiming moving to deinstitutionalization and community based services as well as larger involvements of the non-public sector in service delivery

» **Social inclusion** aiming to assist vulnerable individuals, families and groups in the community so that they are able to operate on their own, to be self-sustaining and to have the same rights as other members of society.

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[47] See NSDI section 3.3 Economic and Social Development, Social Policy p. 55-25; section 3.3

Progress towards the outcome indicators

The PoC results framework provides indicators at the output level only. However, the review of progress achieved suggests that important contribution towards the intended outcomes have been made in this area in particular as regards policy and institutional capacity development.

These indicators provide a comprehensive framework to monitor improvements in the country's social protection and inclusion policies. UN support to the GoA efforts in this area has focused extensively on legislation and policy development in the 2012 – 2014 period. A number of important legal acts and policy documents have been drafted with UN contribution, including the law on the rights of people with disabilities and relevant bylaws transposing the norms of the international convention into the national legal framework; amendments to the criminal code on trafficking in human beings and gender based violence (also reported under output 1.2.5), adoption of laws institutionalizing the profession of social worker and psychologists. UN has worked closely with MSWY on the development of the new strategic and policy framework for 2015 – 2020, namely the development of the new Social Protection Strategy and Social Inclusion Policy Document; the Roma Action Plan and Youth Action Plan. Some steps have been taken to build and reform social protection systems with a special focus on children, child support services to build parental capacities, prevent abuse and institutionalization and to develop alternative family based care.

Efforts have concentrated on institutional capacity development for evidence-based policymaking through support for the institution of data collection and monitoring frameworks, such as the ROMALB and the REVALB (GBV) that are managed by MSWY and collect data across different level of governments and the non-public sector. The UN reports in 2014 that the number of cases reported has increased from 400 in 2013; to 900 in 2014; of which more than one third originate from the municipalities with a fully operational CCR. Work on data and strengthening policy research was complemented by a series of secondary analytical studies on the vulnerability profiles for Roma, people and children with disabilities, national study on children in street situation, gender disaggregated data in the women and men publication; and pattern for reproductive health and sex selection at birth.

The UN approach in this outcome area has combined policy level work with direct assistance to vulnerable communities. It is reported by the UN that the number of victims of trafficking cases reported has increased from 93 in 2012 to 125 in 2014; six local governments have received support for the formulation of social inclusion plans and families from minorities and vulnerable communities have received assistance through training, income generation support and improved access to services.

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs[48]

To contribute to the outcome, five outputs were expected from the PoC. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below, <u>as verified</u> during the evaluation by PoC partners from government and civil society:

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[48] The actual outputs listed in the report are not comprehensive. They outputs highlighted by the evaluators were chosen because: they are strategic, they have been validated during interviews by government and civil society partners, and because they offer clear causal links to the expected outcome and NSDI priorities. In sum, they were chosen because they help to make a case that there was a UN contribution to the achievement of planned outcomes.

Output 4.1.1 Gender sensitive social protection policies and legislation reformed to ensure that the rights of the vulnerable groups are met

- » Support for the development of the Law on the status of Social Worker (issued in December 2014) and the draft law on Psychologist
- » Support to the MSWY for the development of the Social Protection Strategy 2015 – 2020, with the costing and Plan pf Action and a M&E framework
- » Support to the MSWY for the development of a reform plan for a functional system of social care services.
- » Support to MoSWY's to define the roles and functions of the new Municipalities in planning, budgeting and delivering social care services
- » Support to the MSWY for the development of the Roma Action Plan
- » Legal framework development including the law on the status of social workers in Albania
- » Child education and health conditionalities linked with Social Assistance poverty alleviation scheme to promote child access to basic services for vulnerable families
- » Capacity development support to the line ministries and other institutions for the development of monitoring frameworks through online data monitoring systems, including the ROMALB database
- » Analytical studies to support evidence based policy making, such as the survey on Roma settlements, electronic birth registration, availability of gender disaggregated data, secondary analyses of census 2011 data on elderly, youth, people with disabilities, victims of trafficking, unaccompanied minors, gender monograph, as well as the social exclusion profile of elderly.
- » A national **multi-sectorial Action Plan** for the socio-economic integration and reintegration of women victims of trafficking is drafted for a period 2015-2017, in accordance with the National Strategy against Trafficking in Human Beings 2014-2017
- » Development and publication of the first Manual on reporting cases for trafficking and violence against women

4.1.2 Capacities of the government and relevant partners, including civil society, strengthened to plan, monitor and evaluate, including from a gender perspective, the implementation of improved social inclusion policies

- » Support GoA in drafting the Social Inclusion Policy Document 2015 – 2020
- » Support GoA and Ministry for Urban Development for the formulation of the Strategy on Social Housing
- » Studies and research for evidence based policymaking, including the secondary analysis of the 2011 Census data on PwD and Roma population outlining the level of functioning and their socio economic indicators
- » Review of the Disability Assessment System in Albania and facilitated the approval process of the Law on Inclusion of and Accessibility for PWD approved by the parliament in July 2014, transposing the provisions of the UNCRPD into the national legislation focusing on the requirements with relevance to inclusion and accessibility as well as support to the regulatory framework for the implementation of the law
- » Support for the operation of an ALO 116 helpline for children – operated by a local NGO with UN support. During 2014 the helpline has received 25, 486 phone calls

Output 4.1.3 Reformed policies and mechanisms in place to ensure child care system in accordance with best international standards and protection of boys and girls from abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation and harm

» Child Protection Workers in place in 52% of the current 373 local governments, having managed 1407 cases of children at risk or victims of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation for 2014

» Childs Rights Observatories established and operational throughout the country in charge of collecting and monitoring data on children

4.1.4 Policies and measures improved and implemented to ensure the rights of Roma are promoted for their social inclusion and sustainable livelihoods

» Providing technical assistance and MSWY and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to prepare the Initial Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was finalized in April 2015. This report will be submitted by Albanian Government to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

» Support to local governments' efforts in active inclusion of Roma & Egyptian communities through detailed plans and budgets for Roma community early inclusion

» 9 social infrastructure development benefitting R&E communities in *Berat, Korca* and *Vlora* to improve access to services and vocational training and income generation assistance for 100 R&E households

» Direct assistance and support to Roma families for economic empowerment, legal and administrative proceedings

» Development of the basic package of primary health care services

4.1.5 Action taken at national and local level to implement improved legislative and policy framework on combating gender- based violence

» Community Coordination Mechanism (CCR) in place and operational in 26 of the 65 current municipalities/fully effective in 7 municipalities

» REVALB Online database on gender based violence operational and collecting information from main institutions

» A Protocol on Child Protection approved by the Ministries of Social Welfare and Youth, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Interior in February 2015, outlining details of institutional cooperation on special protection measures

» A roadmap and costing of the Istanbul Convention developed to guide the Government of Albania in taking concrete actions in compliance with Convention and human rights deriving obligations.

» Costing of the Protection Orders (highlighting costs of Police, Courts and the survivors of violence) as well as costing of the Community Coordinated Response mechanism at the local level.

» Development and adoption of the National Action Plan for involvement of men and boys as partners and allies for gender equality and eradication of gender-based violence.

Contribution to outcome and national development priorities

The outputs described above indicate that the UN Programme support has provided valuable contribution to the achievement of the national development priorities in the areas of social protection and social inclusion. As government acknowledged the increasing importance of strengthening the framework for social protection and social inclusion in the country and ensuring equitable access of all communities to public services the UN gradually allocated increasing efforts to

policy development and institutional strengthening in these areas in the 2012 – 2016 programming cycle.

UN contribution has been substantial in the formulation of basic policies and national development objectives in the areas of protection and inclusion as well as in the architecture of the social protection system itself through its work in providing technical assistance to the government to develop plans for major reforms, such as the reform of social care services, defining clear accountability lines for the different levels of the government in planning and budgeting for social care services, establishing and building capacities for child's rights officers, domestic violence and anti-trafficking referral mechanisms; professionalization of social workers.

Whereas UN's contribution in strategy development is highly values and acknowledged by government and non-government partners, it is still early to comment on the extent to which these interventions have contributed to a change in government practices or actual impact in the livelihoods of vulnerable communities as the majority of the documents have just been adopted or are still awaiting formal endorsement. The establishment of sustainable models for alternative care services for children and vulnerable people is still lagging behind although UN has supported service delivery and has worked with communities extensively. Nevertheless, issues of social protection and inclusion have received increased public and government attention in the recent years. The UN has contributed to increased awareness and demand creation for social protection policies also through its support and capacity building for community groups and CSOs.

Outcome 4.2 Education

Outcome 4.2 Boys and girls over the age of 3 (including youth), especially from marginalized groups, participate in quality formal and informal education

Outcome 4.2 focuses on providing assistance to the government institutions in promoting early childhood development and inclusive education for ensuring quality and access to education, coverage and quality of curricula.

The PoC indicates that it will achieve results in education through working with the Ministry of Education in promoting inclusive education with a focus on vulnerable families and integration with social protection mechanisms such as the development of financing models; schools that are more welcoming and supportive of all children; early childhood development models as well as strengthening capacities for schools management and integration of human rights, health (comprehensive sexuality education) and cultural heritage in teacher training curricula.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Outcome 4.2 is clearly linked with NSDI strategic priorities in the education sector, although neither the PoC and its Results Framework nor the progress report explicitly establish the national policies to which the outcome is intended to contribute. Based on document review the NSDI strategic priorities related to outcome 4.2 are:

» **Pre-University Education** focusing on strengthening policymaking, management and decision-making capacities at the central and regional/local level; streamlining authorities for school management at the central and local level and implementing schools autonomy; education management information system and curriculum modernisation for pre-university education; increased financing for basic education and expand pre-school education in particular for children from vulnerable communities.

» **Social Inclusion** with strategic priorities and policies to raise the income generation opportunities of individuals; to facilitate access to services and to assist vulnerable groups, in particular children, Roma and people with disabilities

» **Gender equality and domestic violence**, with strategic priorities related to eliminate gender gaps in education through equal access for girls and women in quality education and improvement of teaching programmes and textbooks to promote gender equality

Progress towards the outcome indicators

The PoC results framework provides indicators at output level only, the 2014 progress review and report present outcome measures to which the UN provided substantial technical support and contribution as validated by partners in government:

1. Education law and policies incorporate child friendliness principles
2. % of out-of-school children (boys and girls) in sample areas that are considered to be especially affected by inclusive education policies (dropout rates, enrolment in pre-school)

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

Three outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been verified during interviews and document review:

Output 4.2.1. Policies and practices in place to ensure inclusive participation and completion of pre-university education

» UN supported the development of the new strategy on pre-university education 2015 – 2020
» Government has decided to amend the Law on pre-university education to make pre-primary year of schooling mandatory for early inclusion and childhood development
» Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of Education, Health and Interior to establish an information system as an early warning system to track children school dropouts especially from vulnerable communities
» UN supported the development of the education MIS trough review of the quality and group of indicators to be tracked and monitored
» Preparation of a comprehensive set of national ELDS standards, to be followed by a comprehensive re-design of the entire pre-school curriculum following technical agreement and action plan developed with the Institute for Development of Education
» UN supported the analysis of the costing& financing scenario for the introduction of the mandatory year of pre-school
» Two improved ministerial instruction were issues in 2014 on compensation of textbook and transportation costs for children from vulnerable families
» Other achievements include the introduction of comprehensive sexuality education modules in the school curriculum and promotion of an approach based on life skills and competencies.

4.2.2. Schools and communities ensure an appropriate environment for boys and girls to participate and thrive as citizens

» "Community school" initiative supported through UN for standard development, manuals and curricula
» Capacity development for teacher and school management officials for friendly schools through trainings for staff in 4 of the 12 regional education directorates and school psychologists
» Direct support to 2 out of the 68 schools included in the initiatives with programmes aims at inclusive education in the more isolated areas of the country

» COMBI indicators (model on reducing violence against children in schools) included in the new draft pre-university education Strategy

4.2.3. Organized quality early childhood development is accessible for vulnerable children and families

» UN support to "Every Roma child in kindergarten" and increased Roma children enrolment to from 312 in 2012 to 921 in 2014, of which 298 in the pre-primary school year
» Roma settlement study supported targeted efforts in work with Roma communities and families to wards early childhood development

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

Evidence suggests that the UN made significant contribution towards the outcome, particularly in the areas of early childhood development and early inclusive education.

UN supported the development of the new Strategy on Pre-University Education, which sets a series of ambitious targets for the government such as the introduction of the pre-primary year of school as mandatory for all children, as well as the increase in the share of financing for the pre-school year as a measure to promote early childhood development. Important contributions were made in the regulatory framework for inclusive education, such as the revised guidelines on textbook compensation and students' transportation to school, which are expected to increase the coverage of the programme. UN also advocated with government to include cash incentives for children school attendance and immunisation in its cash transfer programme for poor families (economic aid). These new policies and by-laws were supported through several background studies and assessments such as the financing and costing scenarios for the pre-school year as well as direct assistance for the development of standards and unified curricula in line with the international Early Learning and Development Standard (ELDS) standards through cooperation with the Institute for Development on Education. UN has also supported the revision of curricula in the pre-university system to include knowledge and awareness of children at a young age on a range of issues including reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, healthy nutrition and human rights. An innovative communication for behavioral impact programme has been integrated in teachers' practices as a new discipline approach to reduce violence against children in the school setting

Important contributions have been made in the area of increasing institutional capacities for data collection and monitoring. UN advocated for and supported the education MIS system as well as a tripartite agreement between the Ministry of Health, Education and Interior to report and monitor data on children drop-outs and those at risk of dropouts. Official statistics currently report that 92% of children are enrolled in basic education, however these statistics refer to children enrolled in the beginning of the school year. UN supported studies such as the Roma settlement studies have proved important in as it has enabled the government target specific areas with enhanced efforts.

Direct assistance has been provided by the UN to efforts in inclusive education for all, through important participation for the development of standards for the School as Community Center pilot initiative and direct support to 2 out of the 68 pilot schools focusing on a range of issues such as inclusion of minorities, accessibility for children with disabilities, etc. Capacity building has been provided to teacher staff and the psychologist service for schools in 4 out of the 12 regions of the country.

Overall UN's contribution to the pre-university education sector and early childhood development has been significant in the 2012 – 2014 period, in particular as the number of international partners

working in the area is modest as compared to those focusing on vocational education or higher education. The interventions have been well concerted with each other in order to achieve the intended outcome and are also closely linked with interventions in the area of social inclusion.

Outcome 4.3 Health

Outcome 4.3: Health insurance is universal and quality, gender sensitive and age appropriate public health services available to all including at-risk populations

Outcome 4.3 focuses achieving more effective and sustainable health reform processes in Albania, including the promotion of evidence based policy making and improved institutional capacities to provide quality healthcare services and identify and plan services for the most vulnerable.

The PoC intends to achieve this outcome by providing contributions through technical assistance and capacity building activities for policymaking particularly in the area of attainment of the objective for universal health coverage, improvement of healthcare services for the whole population and vulnerable communities in particular as well as the early prevention, detection and control for non-communicable diseases. Community based interventions have complemented work with government partners to increase awareness and participation.

Links with NSDI I priorities

Outcome 4.3 is clearly linked with NSDI strategic priorities in the health sector, although the PoC and the Results Framework do not contain specific references. Interventions in this outcome area are however also linked with other strategic priorities of the NSDI, such as social policy and inclusion, youth and gender equality. Based on document review the NSDI strategic priorities related to outcome 4.2 are:[49]

> » **Health**, with the strategic priority of ensuring that the public health system will offer a basic, good quality and effective service for all through managerial improvements and encouragement of the private initiative; increasing the capacity to manage services and facilities effectively; improving health services management; increase the possibility to receive effective health services by ensuring access and a network of services and free essential public services; improving governance and financing of the health system, accountability and health information systems.
> » **Social Inclusion** with strategic priorities and policies to raise the income generation opportunities of individuals; to facilitate access to services and to assist vulnerable groups, in particular children, Roma and people with disabilities
> » **Gender equality** and domestic violence, with strategic priorities related to improve the response of the health system and increase awareness in the population related to health needs of women/girls and men/boys; promote measures that will address health risks at an early stage
> » **Youth**, with strategic priorities focused on economic strengthening of the youth, through promotion of youth employment and training for the acquisition of necessary qualifications, use of the intellectual energies of young Albanians who live and study abroad, provision of opportunities for young people who want to open a business, and education of young people as responsible consumers

Progress towards the outcome indicators

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[49] NSDI Section 3.3 Economic and Social Development p. 39; Health p. 66 – 67; Youth p. 58 – 59;

The PoC results framework provides indicators at output level only, the 2014 progress review and report present outcome measures to which the UN has provided technical support and contribution as validated by partners in government:

» % of blocks included in health insurance package
» % of estimated cases diagnosed and treated per year for cancer and cardiovascular diseases through quality of care services
» % of use of growth monitoring charts in mother visit to health centers (in target areas)

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

Three outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been verified during interviews and document review:

4.3.1 Health insurance coverage increased by expanding benefits, simplifying procedures and enhancing information for all

» Support to universal health coverage through providing advice on the health financing law and health financing scenarios to ensure sustainability
» Support for the revision and costing of the basic healthcare package resulting in increase in number of visits at the primary care level
» Support to strengthening health information systems through assistance for the introduction in Albania of the European Common Health Indicators (ECHI) and updating to the new standard of ICD10 indicators (International Classification of Disease)
» New prevention packages included in basic package of PHC service delivery such as child screening for vision and hearing and support for the screening for population 40-65yrs
» Support for the mid - term revision of the National Contraceptive Security Strategy
» Advocacy around Total Market Approach: Strengthen social marketing sector; Reduce barriers for private sector; Quality improvement initiatives at the primary health care level

4.3.2 Demand for, equitable access to and utilization of quality health services increased, especially for children, young people and elderly, and other vulnerable or at risk groups

» Improved access to healthcare services through support for planning and implementation of check-up for 40–65 year-olds,
» Increased access to and utilization of quality maternal and newborn health services through the implementation of Effective Perinatal Care model in two regions of Albania
» Support for development of new standards and protocols for Mother and Child Healthcare services
» Strengthened surveillance and monitoring for issues related to healthy behaviours of school children, child nutrition, tobacco consumption among youth has helped to address issues of public health importance.
» 435 Health care providers in 6 districts in the north of Albania and the peri-urban areas of Tirana upgraded their skills in child growth monitoring and nutrition counselling using a comprehensive training package accredited by the National Center for Continuous Medical Education.
» Support to specialised care for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of non-communicable (i.e. cancer and cardiovascular) diseases through training for ten key professionals, upgrading of specialist equipment and provision of technical guidance of international experts.
» Strengthen national response to prevention and control programs on HIV/AIDS and STIs: Support the implementation of the national action plan on the prevention of Vertical

Transmission of HIV; Support the implementation of the national action plan on the prevention and control of Syphilis.

» Establishment of a national cancer registry in cooperation with the Mother Teresa Hospital
» Strengthen national response to prevention and control programs on cervical cancer at every level of health care provision.
» Assistance and support to the ongoing reform on cash transfers for disability benefits, revision of protocols and standards in cooperation with other partners

4.3.3 Prevention measures and Promotion of Public Health enhanced through multi-sectorial dialogue and community participation

» UN support for establishing a stronger system of monitoring enforcement of the anti-tobacco law, accompanied by public awareness campaigns.
» Increased awareness for breast cancer and organisation of the Conference on Breast Cancer
» Continued assistance in awareness for reproductive health, child nutrition protocols
» Awareness campaigns on nutrition, RH field, environmental pollution

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

UN support in this outcome area is strategically positioned to provide key technical assistance and expertise and cooperate with the Government in order to ensure that reforms are aligned with globally accepted objectives and frameworks.

UN assistance has achieved important contributions towards the overall outcome of universal health coverage and accessible and quality healthcare services for all, including vulnerable communities. Despite progress, the health sector still faces important challenges including in achieving real universal health coverage and sustainability of the healthcare financing scheme. The UN has played an important role, in cooperation with the government and other development partners in reviewing the standards and protocols as well as costing for basic healthcare packages in order to increase effectiveness and efficiency of basic services. Fully endorsed and owned by national policy makers and health practitioners, the standards and protocols for mother and child health care services combine e preventive public health care approach with elements of child protection, probing the front line care providers to look at the wellbeing of the child in a holistic way. New elements of care by these new standards were introduced to the revised basic package of PHC services, which was approved by a decision of the council of ministers in early 2015. As a result, the number of consultations in basic healthcare services has increased by 8% in 2014 and the average number of doctor visits per day has increased by almost 10%, as reported by the National Health Insurance Institute. Important contributions have been made in establishing information systems in the health sector, through the revision of a national framework of health indicators in line with the ECHI and the assessment and preparations for the graduation to ICD10 indicator framework, from the current standard of ICD9 Albania is employing.

Specialised assistance has been provided in a number of technical areas, including support and procurement of medical equipment for non-communicable diseases (cancer) and training and equipment for nuclear medicine; training of regional medical staff on maternal and child health protocols and introduction of child well-being standards in cooperation with the National Center for Quality Control and Accreditation. Continuous monitoring indicates that efforts should be continued in terms of providing assistance and ensuring standard enforcement in health services across the country: for example, following introduction of new child growth monitoring charts evidence suggest that only 73% of healthcare specialists at the regional level were using them in 2014 as opposed to 73% in the year following introduction (baseline was 52%).

Outcome 4.4 Employment

Outcome 4.4: All people better realize fundamental rights at work, have greater and inclusive employment opportunities, and can engage in a comprehensive social dialogue

Outcome 4.4 involves UN support to the Decent Work Agenda, including employment, social dialogue and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Contributions to this outcome have been made through support for policy/strategy and legal development in the areas of labour market governance, vocational and education training and integration with social protection measures. Work with government has been complemented by a number of initiatives engaging with the private sector, and civil society organisations.

Links with NSDI priorities

Outcome 4.4 is clearly linked with NSDI strategic priorities in the employment sector. Interventions in this outcome area are however also linked with other strategic priorities of the NSDI, such as social policy, employment, vocational education training, youth and gender equality. Based on document review the NSDI strategic priorities related to outcome 4.4 are:[50]

» **Employment,** with strategic priorities focusing on the consolidation of the employment service across the country through the improvement and unification of working methods, including the upgrading of the skills of staff in regional offices; more effective employment promotion programmes with particular focus on vulnerable groups such as women in need, and the Roma, primarily in the direction of opportunities for professional training; development of legislation on health and safety at the workplace in line with European Union policy; strengthening social dialogue, and improving the vocational education and training system for increased mobility; curriculum modernisation to meet market needs.

» **Social Inclusion** with strategic priorities and policies to raise the income generation opportunities of individuals; to facilitate access to services and to assist vulnerable groups, in particular children, Roma and people with disabilities and to improve the conditions for the employability of youth and people with disabilities through job protection and inclusion in vocational training programmes.

» **Gender equality** and domestic violence, with strategic priorities related to strengthen the economic position of women through an increased number of women entrepreneurs – by offering more opportunities for access to property, capital and credit, especially in rural areas – and special programmes to promote female employment

» **Youth**, with strategic priorities focused on encouraging young people to lead a healthy life through their inclusion in education activities for the prevention of negative phenomena and risky behaviour

Progress towards the outcome indicators

The PoC results framework provides indicators at output level only, the 2014 progress review and report present outcome measures to which the UN has provided technical support and contribution as validated by partners in government:

1. Number of Active Labour Market Measures (ALMM) implemented
2. Number of effective and efficient Youth Employment Services established
3. Number of relevant recommendations made by the National Labour Council
4. Existence of policy and legislative framework around Occupational Safety and Health

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[50] NSDI Section 3.3 Economic and Social Development p. 39; Employment p. 56 – 57; Youth p. 58 – 59;

5. Vocational Education and Training policies elaborated with special orientation toward lifelong learning and equal opportunities

Achievement against the planned PoC outputs

Four outputs were planned as a contribution to the outcome. The major results achieved against these outputs are listed below. These have been verified during interviews and document review:

4.4.1. Key state institutions and social partners are capable to develop and implement, in a fair and inclusive manner, employment policies and programmes that meet international standards

» Revision of the ALMM governance system, including improvements aiming at allowing a larger participation from SMEs, relaxing some of the requirements for participation
» Support for the Scoring-card system designed for evaluating and selecting applicant enterprises for ALMMs, to increase transparency and accountability of the process
» National Employment Staff in 36 district employment offices trained on revised ALMMs implementation procedures and scoring system
» Support for increased awareness through information sessions with business community in 12 regions of the country to increase enterprise participation in ALMMs and employment fair
» Improvement in employment services through New Employment Service Model adopted and operational in NES regional offices with a more client-oriented and effective approach and revamping of 10 regional employment offices
» Capacity building support to Labour Inspectorate through revision of functional organisation, trainings and drafting of an action plan
» Technical expertise provided to INSTAT on labour indicators employed in national Labour Force survey
» National Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurs 2014–2020, which accompanies the government's Strategy on Business and Investments 2014–2020 finalised
» Support to women entrepreneurs for access to markets, networking, through organized local fairs in several regions, including cluster formation support for rural women
» Three Action Plans on gender sensitive employment promotion measures (outreach and dissemination) are in place in Vlora, Shkodra, Tirana
» Capacity building of MoEDTTE technical staff to elaborate programs for women entrepreneurs and a Plan of Action on women's economic empowerment jointly developed and disseminated with UN Agencies.

4.4.2. The National Labour Council has the capacity to develop active social dialogue among the government, workers' and employers' organizations (Social Dialogue)

» Support for the adoption of new Occupational Safety and Health Standards in the Albanian legislation, transposing 21 EU directives and regulations into the national legislation
» Capacity building for more effective mechanism for labour disputes through tripartite constituents trained in the prevention and settlement of labour disputes – dialogue between social partners in the workplace promoted).

4.4.3. Key state institutions have the capacity to draft the gender sensitive Life Long Learning (LLL) strategy and establish the Life Long Learning system, in line with EU education and training policies

> » Support for the formulation of the new National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014 – 2020 and relevant Action Plan, including gender mainstreaming Development of the Skill Needs Analysis national surveys to inform vocational training and labour market policies
> » Support to the VET Law revision and related sub-legal acts (amended in 2014, by the Parliament)
> » Support to national authorities and NAVETQ in revising vocational education and training curricula to adjust to labour market requirements

Contribution to PoC outcome and National development priorities

UN programme made important contributions to this outcome area during the 2012 – 2014 period. Employment and vocational education training became a high priority of the government's agenda following the 2013 parliamentary elections, leading to the creation of a more fertile ground for the achievement of sectoral objectives.

Important contributions have been made with the employment promotion programmes, with the revision of the existing ALMMs with a focus to increase participation and lower administrative burden for applicants. UN provided support in the design of a new scoring system for the evaluation of applicant enterprises in ALMM programmes, as well as organized training workshops for staff and information sessions for potential business applicants around the country. These interventions together with intensive awareness campaign trough the traditional and social media led to a fivefold increase in the number of application to the NES employment promotion programmes in 2013 – 2014. Important results have been achieved in improving services provided by NES, with the enforcement of a new service model that is oriented toward the client and aims at reinforcing the mediation function of the labour offices; together with the refurbishing of ten public employment offices.

Vocational training and skill development strategies were brought closer to the labour policies in 2013, with the transfer of the authority for vocational education and skills development to the Ministry of Welfare and Youth, in charge of labour policies. UN provided significant support in assisting the government develop its new National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020 and Action Plan. UN provided a number of important interventions in the area, including the Skills Needs Analysis survey to support policies to bring skills and labour market demand closer to each other as well as worked with NAVETQ to revise training curricula on a number of courses. An important gender focus was embedded in interventions in the employment area in line with the objective of NSGE-GBV&DV for a prioritized professional education and training for women and girls. Studies and awareness raising activities were carried out on women economic rights and economic empowerment the place hold by women in the formal and informal labour market and assessment of employment policies and practices (gender stereotyping, promotion at work and performance evaluations at work) including wage gap.

The UN played an important role in supporting the government align its policies with international standards. During this period, the UN programme supported the government and Labour Inspectorate, in cooperation with the social partners in revising health and safety standards at work. As a result, a number of legislative amendments to the Labour Code and other related legislation have been proposed, transposing 21 EU directives and regulations in the area of occupational safety and health[51], of which at least 11 have already been adopted and the remaining are still pending approval, including compliance with the EU gender acquis and CEDAW. Albania has ratified the majority of ILO conventions, of which the most important conventions in the OSH area have already

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[51] The remained two directives had been transposed into national legislation before 2012.

been ratified. Two ILO conventions were ratified during 2014, on Promotional Framework for Occupational safety and Health; and Safety and Health in Construction.

Achievements in the area of Output 4.4.2 Social Dialogue have not been as effective as intended. The UN programme has continued work to promote social dialogue between government, employers and workers organisations and provided capacity building and advisory role to the non-government partners in particular. Some improvements were achieved during 2014 with the revamping of the National Labour Council, which has convened regularly during the last year. However, concerns remain with regard to the internal organization and representativeness of the employers' and workers' organisations and the extent to which democratic principles are the basis for their functioning.

3.3 Sustainability of PoC results

Sustainability is defined as the extent to which the PoC results are likely to continue beyond 2016 and how the complementarities and collaboration fostered by the PoC contributed to these results.

Normally, key indicators or evidence that an initiative is being sustained are:

- » Adoption of related laws, policies, and regulations for implementation;
- » Allocation of government budget to continue major initiatives beyond the period of the programme;
- » Assignment and funding of government or other personnel outside the UN with responsibilities to implement major initiatives; and
- » Public statements by political figures as to the importance and commitment of government to sustain the initiative.

As noted in part 1, this evaluation is focused on actual progress against the planned results and strategies in the PoC for the years 2011 thru end 2014. Implementation, albeit with a revised results framework, will continue until end 2016. As such is it difficult to make conclusions about the sustainability of PoC results described above in section 3.2. Evidence that major initiatives supported by the UN are to be sustained will often only become available after the end of the programme period.

Despite this limitation, across all outcomes there are several results which are already showing signs of being sustained by government and civil society partners:

- » Contributions for the achievement of a significant **legal and policy advocacy agenda** (see box at right)
- » In 26 of 61 municipalities, there are working mechanisms for the identification, reporting, and referral for services of

Box. Approved Government of Albania Laws and Policies that benefitted from substantial UN programme support (2012-2014):

Laws:
- » Criminal code amendments related to domestic and sexual harassment and violence
- » Criminal code amendments to strengthen the prosecution of human trafficking
- » Revisions to the electoral code related to the gender quota, gender-disaggregated voter lists and data collection
- » Law on the order of social workers
- » Law on aliens (108/2013) that conforms with the EU acquis and international migration and asylum standards
- » Law on territorial and administrative organisation (115/2014)
- » Law for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and by-laws for EIA procedures, public participation, and EIA in a trans-boundary context (Law No. 91/2013)
- » Fiscal package for agriculture activities – legal amendments and bylaws
- » Occupational health and safety legal amendment to labor code and related legislation conforming with EU acquis & ILO conventions
- » Ratification of UNCRPD and Law on Inclusion and accessibility for PwD transposing UNCRPD provisions into national legislation
- » Amendments to Tobacco Control Law
- » Law on economic Aid

Policies, Strategies, Action Plans:
- » Decision by the Albanian Council of Ministers (CoM) to mainstream gender in the medium-term budgetary programme (MTBP)
- » Decision by the CoM to finance primary health care services
- » Roma inclusion strategy and action plan
- » National youth action plan
- » Strategy for social protection system – embodies a 'care' perspective
- » Strategy for pre-university education 2015 - 2020
- » National Strategy for Contraceptive Security
- » Basic Package of Primary Health Care services
- » Inter-sectoral agriculture and rural development strategy (ISARD) 2014- 2020
- » National employment and skills strategy 2015 – 2020
- » National action plan for women entrepreneurs 2014 – 2020 in business development strategy
- » National Action Plan for Men and Boys.

situations of domestic violence. The representative of a donor organisation commented that, with these services, there was '*real case management happening at local level*'

» Mediation and probation services for juveniles with 67% of court sentences given as probation or community service
» Territorial reform moving forward
» Gender equality measures and metrics in the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP, 2014-2017)
» Numerous public statement by the Minister of Social Welfare and Youth that indicated greatly increased recognition and 'ownership' of vulnerability in Albania , particularly for groups such as Roma, LGTB persons, and victims of domestic violence. These statements were follow-up with concrete actions such as the announcement of new GoA strategies and actions plans.
» Concrete actions being taken in the area of employment and skills development strategy with government and stakeholders working on adjustment of labour market supply and demand through revision of TVET system and barriers to employment
» More transparent and client-friendly procedures being employed in the employment offices and increased interest in ALMMs
» Government committed to early learning and development standards based on clear assessment of cost implications, inclusion of targets in new strategy
» The Government is committed to targeted interventions for vulnerable communities in particular Roma and Egyptian minorities through early inclusion in education (i.e. community schools pilot initiative), facilitation of registration procedures and improved framework for textbook compensation and school transportation

The question of **complementarities in the PoC** and how, if at all, these have contributed to future sustainability is more complex.

Based on document review and interviews, a one-UN approach appears to have been vital for the achievement of *some* PoC results, including: gender equality results in outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 3.2 and 5.1, and social inclusion results under outcomes 4.1 thru 4.4. However, other equally important results, while planned as part of the PoC, were mainly realised through programme cooperation between GoA and one UN Agency. Examples of these are: (1) the expansion of the Child Rights Observatory and Child Protection Units, (2) the achievement of the Territorial Reform initiative, (3) the establishment of the gender-based Mid Term Budgetary Process (MTBP), (4) revisions to the Occupational Health and Safety Standards, and (5) the Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development.

At the time of the evaluation, there is no evidence to suggest that PoC results that were achieved mainly through the work of one UN Agency have any greater or lesser sustainability than those resulting from the work of two or more UN Agencies. In discussions, the RC and UNCT have emphasised that a DaO approach is based on a joint programming process with country partners during which problems are analysed, priorities are selected, and a division of labour is carried out. Under this process, single agency initiatives are no less valid or important than multi-agency ones, and information-sharing during implementation, monitoring, and review helps to enhance their inter-linkages. In addition, the RC, UNCT, OWG, and the Communications team make clear efforts to give a *one UN persona* to all PoC results.

Overall, the sustainability of a programme result has less to do with the number of UN Agencies involved and much more to do with the extent to which there is alignment with GoA priorities and plans and budgetary room for adoption and scaling-up.

3.4 Efficiency of the PoC

Efficiency is the extent to which PoC results were achieved in an economic manner and with a minimum of transaction costs. In a strategic, outcome evaluation, in contrast with a project evaluation, it is often difficult to quantify efficiency according to a conventional definition[52]. For example, the costs and benefits of policy influence are very difficult to quantify and efforts in this direction often do not fully grasp the benefits of programme partnership, advice, advocacy and other forms of 'soft' assistance. Moreover, as described above in 3.1, outcomes are shared results for which there is *mutual accountability* among partners. This often makes it impractical to attempt a strict economic valuation of inputs vis-à-vis results.

3.4.1 Partner perceptions of programme efficiency

During data collection, key informants from government, civil society, and from donor organisations were asked to reflect on the *efficiency* of programme partnership with the UN mainly in terms of their *perceptions* about whether results were achieved with a minimum of waste and duplication. Follow-up lines of questioning involved asking informants about the quality and timeliness of the actual cooperation results, or if the results might have been achieved more efficiently by other partners.

Overall, **there was near consensus in the perceptions of government and civil society partners that the results of UN cooperation had been achieved with little waste and duplication**. Moreover, partners were keen to emphasise the flexibility and adaptability of UN agencies both during planning and implementation. For example, informants made the following statements with regard to the efficiency of cooperation with the UN through the PoC:

> *'The joint annual work plans are a very good practice. They stay in line with national priorities and still give us flexibility'* - Ministry informant

> *Previously the work of the UN was scattered - the one programme has produced real efficiencies* - JEC informant

> *The one UN has worked. There is more coordination and less duplication and their procedures enable rapid action* – CSO informant

> *The UN has shown itself to be responsive, flexible, and quick [...to develop new programme opportunities]* – Ministry informant

> *Setting priorities [with the UN overall] has been very strong* – Ministry informant

> *'We are lucky with the UN here'... 'They had the right people in the right place and could engage on issues where we could not'... 'This provided real value for money'... If we had to do it over, would we do it with the UN in the same way? – Absolutely.'* – Donor informants.

It is also important to note that the generally positive perception of the UN's efficiency through the PoC was also accompanied by more critical statements about the role of the UN vis-à-vis CSOs and the balance between the achievement of programmatic results and development of sustainability capacity amongst programme partners. These concerns are described more fully below in section 3.5.4 on **capacity development** and section 3.7 on **partnership**.

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[52] Efficiency: A conventional definition of efficiency is the *ratio* between the value of a result and the value of the factors that made it possible. Often this ratio is then compared with a benchmark or best possible ratio for organisations in the same industry. The calculation of efficiency depends on the ability to quantify both the result and all input factors.

3.4.2 Budgetary efficiency[53]

The One Budgetary Framework provides a financial overview of available funds, both core and non-core, to support delivery of the PoC (2012–2016) as well as funding gaps. The framework is updated at the end of each year when UN agencies provide information about progress compared with planned results and actual expenditures. Of the non-core resources, the One UN One UN Coherence Fund (CF) is a vehicle, established in 2007, to pool resources for implementation in a common fund.

PoC budget, 2012-2016
USD $ 132,942,737

Total available budget 69% (USD $92.2 m)

Total funding gap 31% (USD $40.1 m)
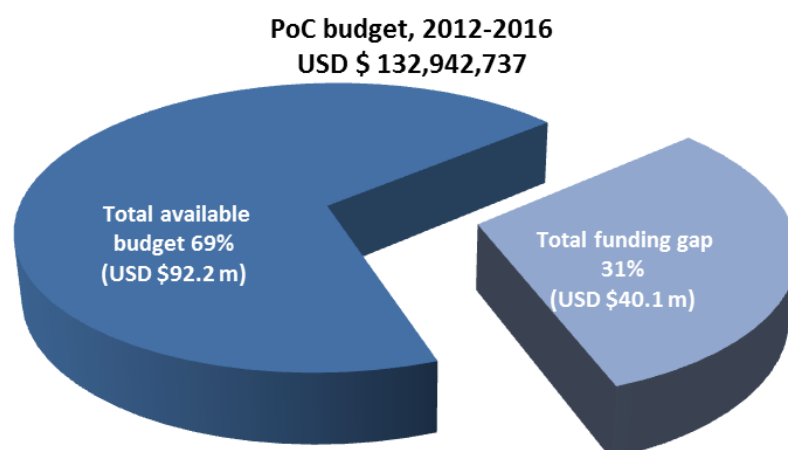
The section provides an overview of major budgetary trends for the PoC from 2012 to 2014, as well as projected figures for the period 2015-2016. It then offers some broad findings on efficiency-related matters.

The PoC has a total planned budget of over USD $132 million. As of June 2015, the total amount of funds available to support

implementation, both actual and projected, for the programme period is USD $92.2 m. This creates a total funding gap for the PoC of USD $40.1 m or 31% of the total (see chart).

In terms of trends, from 2012 thru to the end of 2014, the available budget declined by 32 percent and the funding gap remained mostly stable. This suggests that, despite efforts to better align the PoC budget with a challenging funding environment, the un-funded portion of the programme

Trends in available budget and funding gaps, 2012-2014
($ USD millions)

— Total available budget   — Total funding gap

$ 27.97

$ 22.61

$19,09

$ 6.98

$ 5.79

$ 6.58

2012   2013   2014
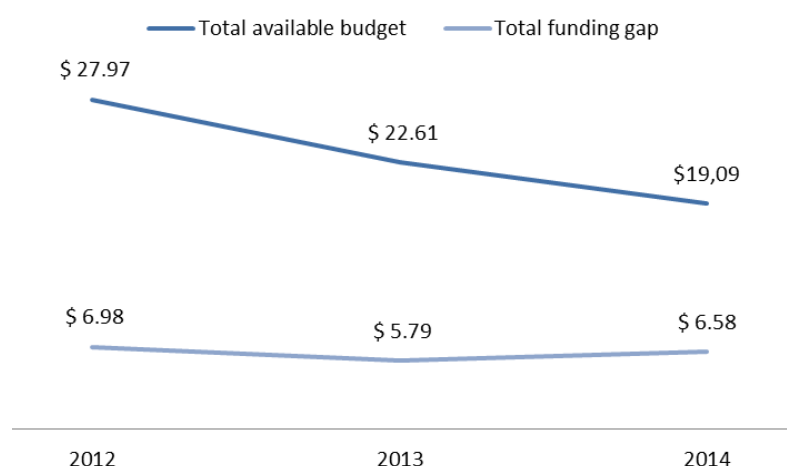
remained largely un-changed (see chart). For the period 2015 and 2016, the projected funding gap increases dramatically to USD $17.2m and $4.2m respectively. Intensive resource mobilisation is ongoing and the UNCT expects the eventual gap to remain consistent with previous years.

The charts on the next page show the actual funds available and funding gaps by outcome, as well as the funding gaps as a proportion of the total gap for the period 2012-2014.

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[53] Budget figures are provided by the RCO. All actual budget figures for 2012-2014 and all projected budget figures for 2015-2016 are as of June 2015. Due to time constraints, the evaluation team could not independently validate the budget figures provided.

These figures reveal a diverse story. Two outcomes, 3.1 Regional and rural development and 4.1 Social inclusion together accounted for nearly 50% of the total available budget. The largest funding gaps as a proportion of the total gap were for outcomes: 2.2 Environment, 1.1 Public oversight, and 2.1 Economic governance.

Available funds and gaps (2012-2014): Actuals by outcome

Available Funds and Funding Gaps, 2012-2014 (actual)

Funding gaps (as % total gap)
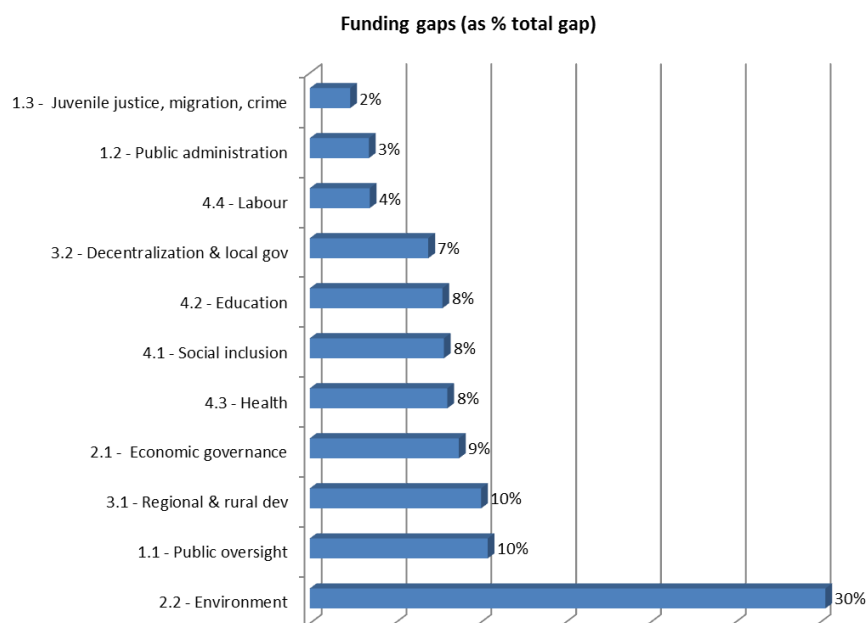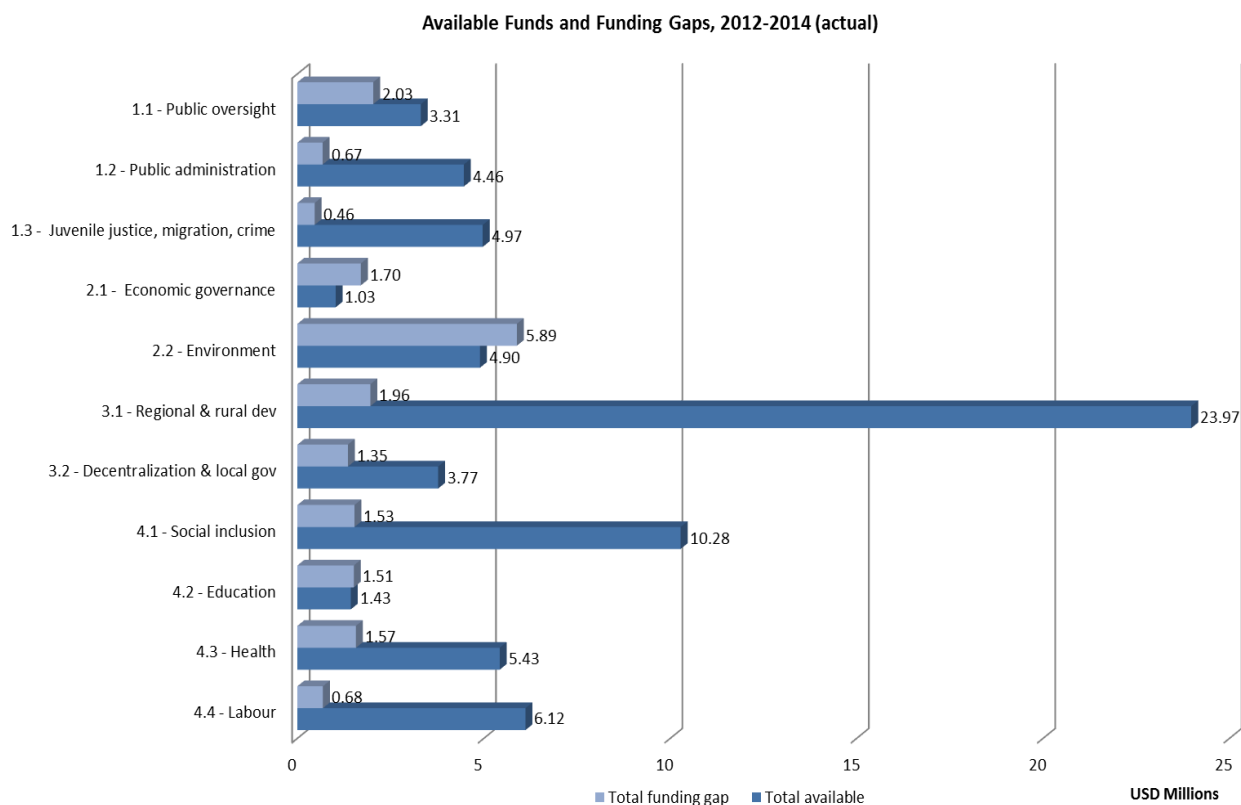
The next charts show the projected funds available and funding gaps by outcome, as well as the funding gaps as a proportion of the total gap until the end of the programme period. For the next two years, the un-funded portion of outcome 3 and outcome 4 account for nearly 70% of the total funding gap of USD $21.4 m.

Available funds and gaps (2015-2016): Projections by outcome

Available Funds and Funding Gaps, 2015-2016 (projected)

Funding gaps (as % total gap)
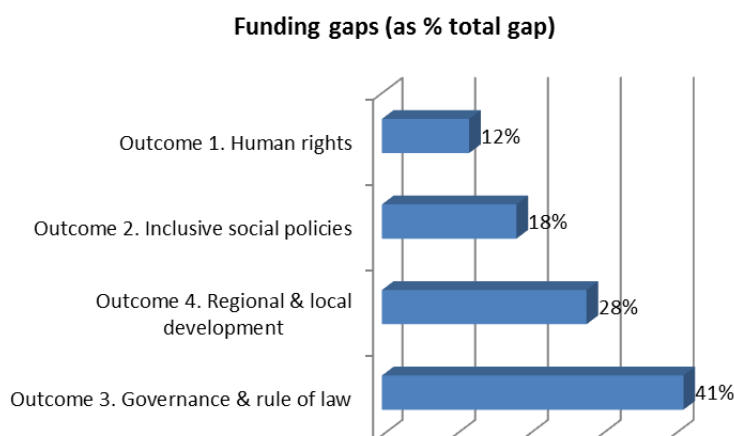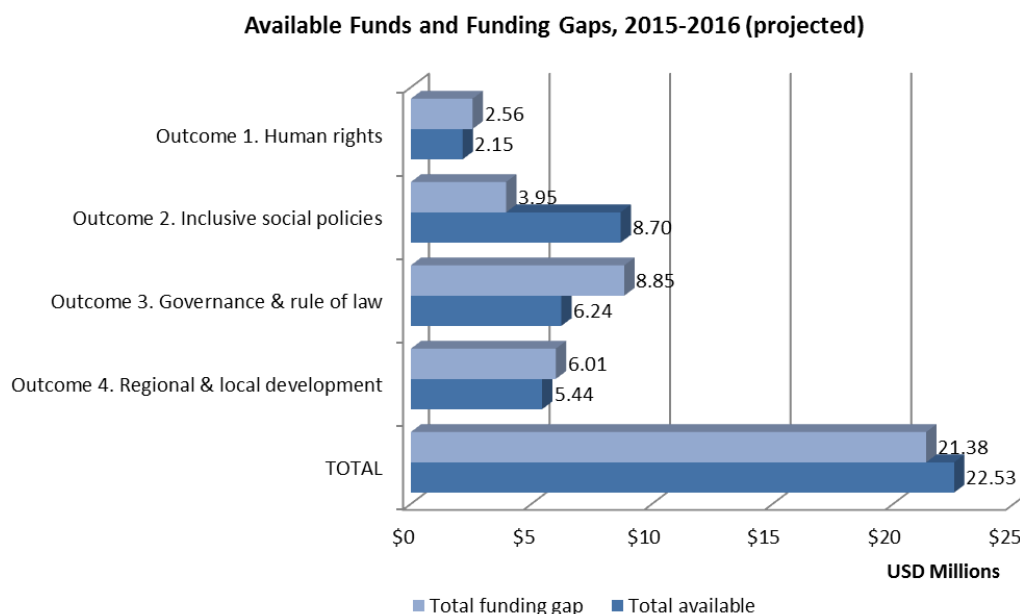
Alignment with national budget process

Joint Annual Work Plans (JAWP) were prepared by OWG and implemented with the active participation programme partners: 40 in 2012, and 38 in 2013. It was reported by both the UN and GoA that the JAWP were aligned with the planning and budget cycle used by GoA ministries and departments. The Ministry of Finance also reported an agreement with the UN to organise regular dialogue on the annual and mid-term budgeting process and to explore possibilities for how to link the preparation of PoC work plans more effectively with the national programming cycle[54].

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[54] 2013 Resident Coordinator's Annual Report (RCAR), 8; 2012 Resident Coordinator's Annual Report (RCAR), 5. Key informant discussions with the Budget Office of the Ministry of Finance.

Coherence Fund

As noted above, the One UN Coherence Fund (CF) is a vehicle to pool resources for PoC implementation. Normally donor contributions to the CF are un-earmarked enabling greater flexibility to allocate the resources to priority areas and emerging programmatic opportunities in line with the NSDI priorities and PoC outcomes. Since its formation in 2007 until present, donor partners have provided USD $32.8m for the CF. Sweden is the largest contributor (22.5%) followed by Spain (12%), and the Netherlands and Switzerland (>11.5% each).

In 2014, the coherence fund made up 19% or USD $3.54m of the total available budget for PoC implementation. Of the total funding gap, less than 1% was expected from the coherence fund. Coherence fund contributions reached a peak in 2009 and fell steadily until 2013. In 2014, following the mid-term review and the introduction of a more focused results framework, contributions increased, mainly based on USD $1.5m from the UNDG Delivering Results Together Fund and USD $ 2.7m from Sweden. These new CF resources represent 16% of the total funding gap for 2015-2016.

Coherence Fund partners contributions 2007–2014
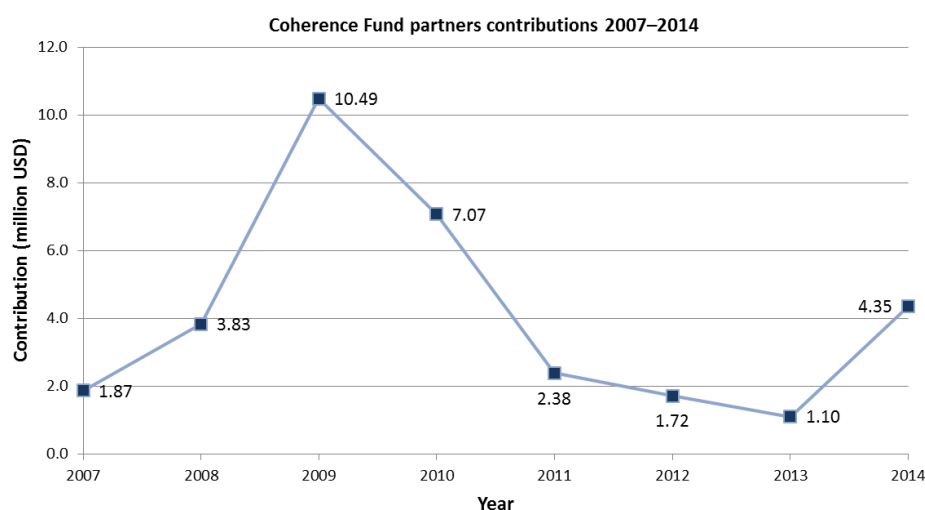
Coherence fund contributions, 2007-2014

On the surface, it seems contradictory that contributions to the coherence fund in Albania declined steadily during a period when, as this evaluation has shown, tangible results were being achieved. Moreover, the up-tick in CF contributions in 2014 is mainly due to the UNDG Delivering Results Together Fund. This situation suggests that the performance of the coherence fund is ***de-linked*** from programme performance. The trend in CF contributions from 2009 to 2013 can be explained by several factors:

1. Over the same period, all DaO countries experienced a similar trend of declining resource commitments to one programme funds[55]. In the arena of ODA, this also reflected an increasing move back to earmarking of donor resources for greater accountability and visibility at the component programme and project level.
2. Many donors made multi-year commitments at the start of the PoC in 2012, and waited to see results before making decisions to allocate additional resources.
3. Greater flexibility in the structure and management of one programme funds and the introduction of soft earmarking, meant less of a distinction between the modalities of one programme funds and direct funding of the non-core budgets of UN agencies.

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[55] The share of "One United Nations"funds as a proportion of total UN system development-related expenditures dropped from 14% in 2011 to 9.7% in 2012. Contributions to one funds in more than one third of DaO countries averaged less than $1 million per participating UN Agency. The report concludes that the success of one programme funds has been 'modest'. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system Report of the Secretary-General, 6 February 2014, A/69/63 E/2014/10. 48-49. Information shared by UN-DOCO also shows that only 11 of 23 one funds are currently active.

Both UN staff and partners reported that the drop in CF funding resulted in greater competition between UN Agencies. GoA partners perceive the CF as a real asset as the un-earmarked funds provide greater flexibility and they have reported that they want to continue promoting the CF with donors. What seems clear is that **the CF is only one of several channels** for development assistance. Donors will use it when it makes sense to channel multiple sources of funding for agreed priorities, such as was done for the work on gender equality and social inclusion.. Beyond these opportunities, and given the shift in donor attitudes and funding constraints, large future commitments to the CF are not likely without a sustained effort to promote it.

PoC Expenditure and Delivery (2012-2014)

On the delivery side of the PoC budget, delivery rates have increased to 79% in 2014 from 67% in 2012 and delivery rates by outcome in 2014 showed very good performance, with only 2 outcomes 1.1 Public oversight and 3.1 Regional and rural development below a 60% delivery rate.

PoC Expenditure, 2012-2014
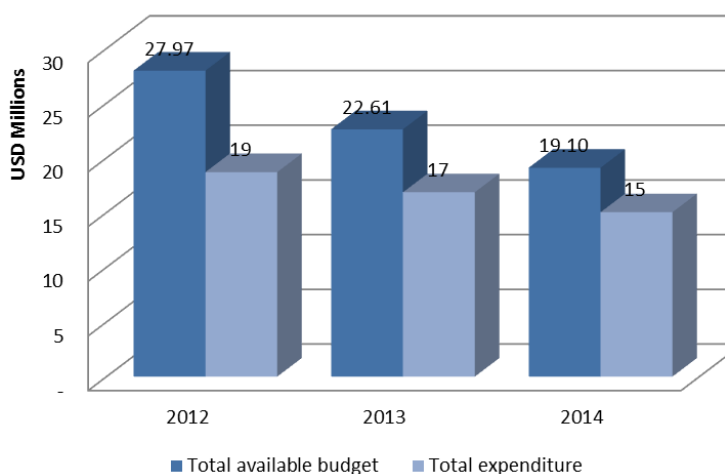
PoC delivery rates, 2012-2014
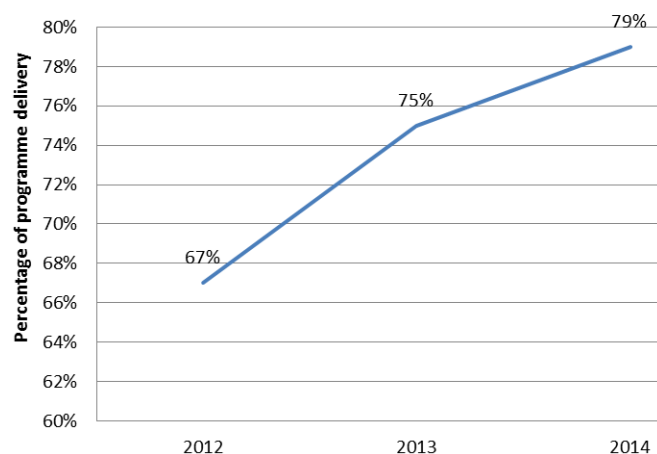
PoC Delivery rates by outcome, 2014
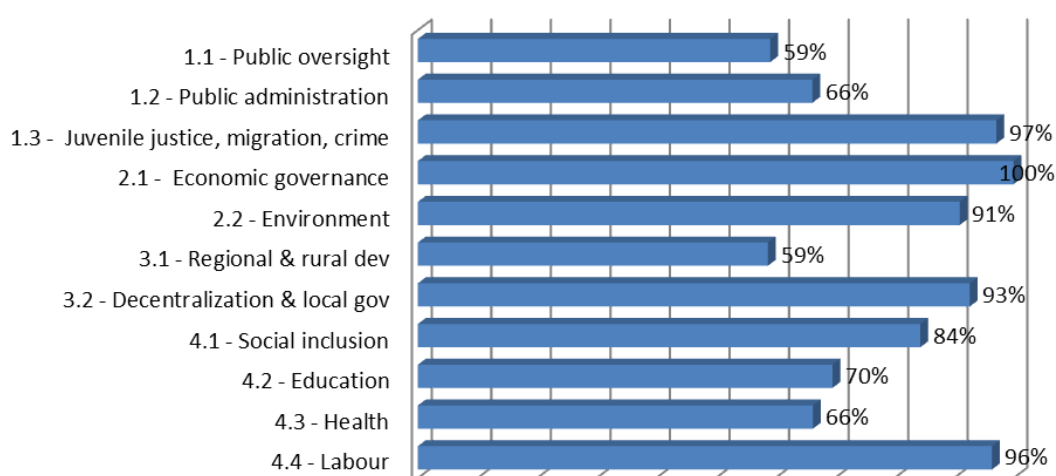
For the remainder of the PoC, the **estimated funding gap of over USD $21 million is substantial and worrying**. The granting of EU candidate status to Albania in 2014 and the delivery of substantial EC IPA II funds will likely put further downward pressure on external resources available to the UN system for development cooperation. But this does <u>not</u> necessarily mean that future EU-funded programmes will take on some the core programme areas of the UN such as human rights, social protection and inclusion, health and education as they are not directly linked with EU accession objectives.

From the standpoint of efficiency it is notable that, with a funding gap of nearly 1 in $3, there were many substantial and sustained results achieved over the period 2012-2014 (see section 3.1 and 3.2). It is conjecture to imagine what else *might* have been achieved with those missing resources. But given the achievements of the PoC so far, it does suggest that the original outcome budgets *may* have been excessive. And with the large projected funding gap for 2015-2016, it may be wise to further review and rationalise outcome budgets. In addition, and given the constraints in external donor resources, the GoA and UN must discuss ways for greater cost-sharing by the GoA in programme achievement.

3.4.3 Programme-Operations efficiency

In a DaO country effective, efficient business operations make an important contribution to overall programme performance is. To support programme delivery, the UNCT in Albania requested the Operations Management Team (OMT) to review and recommend ways to harmonize business operations, introduce common services, promote efficiencies, and generate cost-savings. To streamline procurement activities, UN agencies in Albania have entered into common Long Term Agreements (LTAs) with suppliers and service providers. These are intended to:

> » Reduce transaction costs (time and labour) costs from the processing of multiple, overlapping procurement procedures for goods and services commonly used for programme delivery; and
> » Generate actual cost-savings through discounted volume purchasing.

An inter-agency procurement committee was established in 2006 to implement the common procurement strategy. Procurement teams, based on common categories of goods and services, initiate joint tendering processes with a lead agency to manage each process according to its own procurement rules and procedures. Recommendations from the procurement committee and OMT are submitted to the UNCT for approval. This practice, developed in Albania, was subsequently incorporated into the Standard Operating Procedures for DaO.

At the end of 2014, LTAs are in operation for nine areas: 1) communications, 2) travel services, 3) interpretation, 4) translation, 5) fuel consumption, 6) event management, 7) banking, 8) office stationary, and 9) security services. Vehicle fleet management and maintenance is under review.

The cost-benefit analysis carried-out by the OMT revealed that common LTAs enable operations staff to avoid transaction costs, on average, of 446 hours of processing time compared with procurement agreements negotiated separately by each UN agency for itself.

Volume purchasing and discounts averaging 14% for 6 categories of goods and services: cellular services, travel, fuel, printing, event management, and translation have enabled UN Agencies to realise an estimated cost savings of USD $166,268 since the LTAs came into force. A subcommittee of operations managers regularly monitors and evaluates the performance of common service providers and the satisfaction of clients in the UN and GoA.

In human resources, the OMT has put in place:

» A common recruitment process and salary scale for general services staff and service contract holders;

» Common rates for translation services;

» A common approach for announcing and advertising UN staff positions internally among UN agencies.

In finance: Initiation of a macro-assessment of the public financial management system and micro-assessments for common implementing partners, to prepare the ground for implementation of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT). And in IT, the launching of a One UN Albania website

The One UN House, established in November 2013 and hosting 10 UN agencies, including one agency in a satellite office, is also expected to generate cost savings on rents and from common services, and additional working efficiencies. Ongoing constraints identified by the OMT for more effective, harmonised business operations include:

» Inconsistencies and delays in data entry and processing from multiple ERP systems used by UN agencies

» Different UN agency standards discourage common LTAs for procurement of computer software and hardware

» Harmonization of rules and procedures such as DSA breakdown rates, different systems for performance appraisal, and approving limits for agency procurement committees.

The UNDG's Monitoring and Evaluation (ME) framework for business operations harmonization at country level enables UNCTs and OMTs to plan, monitor, report, and evaluate the progress using key performance indicators (KPIs)[56]. The success of harmonization efforts depends on the commitment and leadership of the RC and UNCT to set-up of effective working arrangements and incentives for the OMT and its subsidiary working groups. One KPI is a scored indicator that counts the number of **good business operations practices applied at country level out of 10.** The 10 practices consolidate the good management practices of business operations pilot countries and those identified by the UNDG/HLCM. They relate to: Leadership, working arrangements, incentives, and use of analysis and evidence.

During discussions with the Albania OMT, the evaluation team did an assessment of business operations practices. **The OMT scored 8 out of a possible 10**, which is excellent. The points lost were because: (1) the OMT is not chaired by a head of agency (1 point), (2) cost-savings form volume procurement have been tracked and reported annually for only a portion of common LTAs (½ point), and (3) while OMT capacity development is a part of the OMT work plan, it is not based upon a full, structured capacity assessment (½ point).

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[56] UNDG, Business Operations Harmonization at Country Level, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Reporting Process, FINAL DRAFT, 11 June, 2014. 7-8.

Objective II

Assess the <u>process</u> of the UN system's contribution through the PoC for the achievement of national priorities

Objective II of the evaluation helps to elaborate the performance story above under Objective I by focusing on the **enabling or explanatory factors** that went into programme cooperation. These concern processes such as coordination and partnership, the use of programming principles, and efforts to make joint programming by the PoC partners more coherent and efficient.

The key questions addressed in this section are:

Effectiveness	5. How effectively were the UNDG's programming principles applied to the PoC?
	6. To what extent did the PoC employ the comparative advantage of the UN System in Albania?
	7. How effective was the PoC as a coordination and partnership framework?
Efficiency	8. To what extent did the PoC help to minimize transaction costs for the GoA and for UN agencies?

3.5 Application of UNDG programming principles

The UNDAF Guidelines[57] identify 5 programming principles: a Human rights-based approach, Gender equality, Environmental sustainability, Capacity development, and Results based management. The principles bring value to country analysis and they help to identify results and strategies for more effective UN-supported programme cooperation. They also help to balance the pursuit of international norms and standards with the achievement of national development priorities[58].

3.5.1 Human rights-based approach (HRBA)

HRBA is a normative principle. It is used to further the realization of human rights and ensure that human rights standards and principles guide all phases of development cooperation. It focuses on the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights.

Based on the achievements described in sections 3.1 and 3.2 (above) it is clear that PoC results and strategies were driven or at least informed by the standards and principles of Albania's ratified human rights treaties. Specific results and strategies, both in the original plan and as implemented from 2012 through 2014, are linked concretely to many of the concluding observations and recommendations of UN treaty body reports. Moreover, there are concrete examples of the application by the UNCT and implementing partners of the three 'operational' principles of a HRBA: non-discrimination and equality, participation and inclusion, and accountability and the rule of law.

Examples are shown in the table below:

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[57] UNDG, How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams, UN, Nov 2009. 3-4. See also: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams
[58] UNDG, Guidance Note: Application of the Programming Principles to the UNDAF, January 2010.

Treaty Body Recommendation[59]	Relevant PoC result
CCPR (2013) HRC, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (**ICPR**), Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Albania, CCPR/C/ALB/CO/2, 22 Aug, 2013.	
- …achieve equitable representation of women in Parliament, the Government, and Judiciary (rec 7a) - …ensure proper implementation of pre-screening procedures…to ensure that persons in need of international protection are identified and referred to the asylum procedure (rec 13) - … identify victims of trafficking and take necessary measures to ensure that victims are provided with medical, psychological, social and legal assistance (rec 14)	- Revisions to the electoral code related to the gender quota, gender-disaggregated voter lists and data collection (outcome 1.1) - 300 asylum seekers had enjoyed adequate protection and services in Albania, up from 150 in 2011 (outcome 1.3) - Criminal code amended to strengthen the prosecution of human trafficking; System to identify and refer victims of trafficking working more effectively with a 13% increase in number of victims identified btw 2011 and 2014 (outcome 1.3)
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW/C/ALB/CO/3, 16 Sept, 2010.	
- …use temporary special measures including the allocation of additional resources to accelerate the achievement of de facto or substantive gender equality (rec 23) - sanction and criminalize acts of domestic violence …ensure that all cases of violence against women are swiftly prosecuted and punished…ensure that female victims of violence have immediate protection, effective recourse to a shelter and access to free legal aid and counselling - … systematize data collection on violence against women (rec 27)	- Eight budgetary programmes (e.g. employment and vocational training, entrepreneurship) incorporate gender objectives, indicators and gender specific budget allocations (outcome 1.2) - Domestic violence, sexual harassment, and forced sexual intercourse within marriage or other civil partnerships were made criminal offences punishable by imprisonment for from 3 to 10 years (Law No 23, dated 01.03.2012 and Law No 144/2013).Over 380 judges and other legal professionals have knowledge about the legal changes and international standards (outcome 1.2) - Availability of disaggregated data on gender-based violence in INSTAT publications: 'Women and Men' and 'Gender Perspectives in Albania'
Convention on the Rights of the Child (**CRC**), Concluding observations the combined second to fourth periodic reports of Albania, CRC/C/ALB/CO/2-4, 7 Dec 2012.	
- …set up a comprehensive data collection system…analyse the data collected…to assess progress in the realization of child rights (18) - …establish an efficient multi-sectoral child protection system… and define procedures and mechanisms for the identification, reporting, investigation, treatment of cases of children victims of violence (Rec 44 b,c) - …ensure that [pre-trial] detention is a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time, (Rec 84 b,e);	- A public database of disaggregated statistics about child health, education, and social protection in all municipalities (outcome 1.1) - Child Protection Units operational in 53% of local government units with a dedicated social or child protection worker (outcome 1.1) - Probation and mediation services operational in 12 districts and in 2014 67% of juvenile offenders were given probation or community service sentences (outcome 1.3)
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (**CESCR**), Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of Albania, E/C.12/ALB/CO/2-3, 18 Dec 2013.	
- …undertake regular, systematic assessments, against clear indicators, of enjoyment of all the economic, social and cultural rights of most	- ROMALB data collection and reporting system to monitor progress against the Roma Decade National Action Plan (NAP) (outcome 1.2)

[59] The recommendations have been edited for length. Please refer to the original report for complete recommendations.

Treaty Body Recommendation[59]	Relevant PoC result
disadvantaged and marginalized groups (8a) - …enhance the effectiveness of measures to combat corruption in the government and the public administration (10) - …overcome prevailing discrimination of Roma in access to employment and housing… ensure that the nationally agreed priorities on Roma are communicated to the local authorities (12)	- Preparation of National anti-corruption strategy and action plan (2015-2020) and national report on UNCAC; Drafting of new 'Whistleblowers' law; Inter-ministerial data base and monitoring tool to track the status of corruption cases - Preparation of Roma Inclusion Strategy
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - … to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, …, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas.	- UNCRPD convention ratification (2015) - Review of the Disability System in Albania and accessibility of public institutions (outcome 4.2) - Law on Inclusion of and Accessibility for PWD (outcome 4.2)
Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (**ILO C155**) and Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (**ILO C187**)	- Revision of Labour legislation on occupational health and safety standards for compatibility with international standards and EU directives (outcome 4.4)
Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (**ILO C087**), and Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (**ILO C098**)	- Development of effective Labour Dispute Resolution System (outcome 4.4)

In addition to the examples described above, following the MTR the updated outcome 1 has a renewed focus on efforts to support the GoA to implement recommendations and to strengthen periodic reporting to treaty bodies. It includes a result and key qualitative indicator on the level of integration and implementation of treaty body recommendations in in national laws, policies, and action plans (output 1.1). This was a gap in the original PoC results framework.

However, and despite the achievements and links described above, there is no evidence of a systematic or sustained application of the HRBA process itself during the preparation of the PoC, during subsequent annual reviews, or in the 2014 MTR process[60]. This requires at least 3 steps, carried out jointly with programme partners[61]:

1. Structured causality analysis of major development challenges, to understand the root causes of non-fulfillment of human rights;
2. Role and pattern analysis to make clear the expected duties of the state to respect, protect and fulfill human rights obligations towards specific rights holders, in line with ratified treaties; and
3. Capacity gaps analysis for both duty bearers and rights holders to identify the specific capacities that will enable sustained action.

Overall, this suggests that the end result of the programming process was indeed informed by, and responded, to human rights standards, principles, and concerns in Albania, but that the process to arrive at that point was not based on a structured, purposive application of the entire HRBA approach and steps.

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[60] During interviews, neither UN staff nor partners in GoA or civil society could recall the use of, or point to, examples of the 3 HRBA steps described above for any of the PoC outcomes during preparation or subsequent monitoring and review.

[61] How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams, UNDG, 2010. 22-23. See also HRBA Common Learning Package

3.5.2 Gender equality

The goal of this normative principle is to ensure that priorities in the national development framework reflect the country's commitments to achieving gender equality and that programme results and strategies contribute to these gender equality goals. Gender mainstreaming is a key strategy to examine how women and men experience problems differently, and how they relate to one another and the societal forces that shape power relationships. This focus on gender gaps and gender-based power is intended to inform all steps of the programming process.

The output working groups, with the support and advice of the gender theme group, played a major role to support gender mainstreaming in the PoC. Across most pillars and outcomes of the PoC programming and results for gender equality from 2012-2014 represented a significant achievement. The UN made important contributions to:

> » Legal and criminal code amendments on matters related to domestic violence and sexual harassment and anti-trafficking provisions
> » Effective 'get-out-the-vote' campaigns during the 2013 national elections and the introduction of gender-disaggregated voter lists and a municipal scorecard system for gender priorities;
> » The development of a gender-sensitive budgetary process (MTBP);
> » The adoption of Gender Equality Action Plans in 7 municipalities; and
> » Research and publications that greatly increased the availability of disaggregated data;
> » Standards and protocols for reproductive health services and maternal care, including increased awareness for family planning and breast cancer
> » Governance framework and direct support for referral mechanisms in anti-trafficking of human beings (12 regions) and gender based violence (26 municipalities)
> » REVALB database for reporting and tracking gender based violence at the national level

These major gender-related results were informed by gender analysis, responded to concluding observations and recommendations from the CEDAW treaty body report of 2010, the Beijing Platform, and Istanbul Convention, and built-upon or encouraged the use of temporary measures. As a part of PoC work planning and reporting, it was reported by the Gender Theme Group that there are clear expectations to reflect on how programme cooperation will affect women and men and to incorporate gender dimensions into work plans and to disaggregate data. This is reflected in the updated results framework. Overall, UN support for gender equality achievements was mentioned by programme partners from government and civil society more often than for any other topic.

3.5.3 Environmental sustainability

This is also a normative principle. It aims to:

> » Promote an understanding of the linkages between environment and development,
> » Support country partners to mainstream environmental considerations into the national development framework using the goals and targets of the MDGs, SDGs, and ratified Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), such as the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change[62]; and
> » Anticipate environmental opportunities and constraints as early as possible in programme cooperation.

UNDG guidelines identify 15 specific entry points and related actions and tools for mainstreaming environmental sustainability into programme cooperation. Two are particularly important: (1) Screening for environment during country analysis to get an understanding of any critical

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[62] There are 700-plus Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in 3 broad clusters: climate, biodiversity, chemicals.

environmental issues, how they relate to national development priorities, and (2) Preliminary environmental review of draft UNDAF results to flag potential environmental opportunities or constraints and their implications for results

In the PoC, environmental considerations including efforts to identify and address disaster risks were addressed mainly under outcome 2.2. As described above in **section 3.2**, the UN made several important contributions to help *'…protect, preserve and use natural resources more sustainably'*. For example: the approved National Strategic Plan for Marine and Coastal Protected Areas, the launching of *Karaburun–Sazan*, as a first marine protected area, and the *Ohrid–Prespa* trans-boundary biosphere reserve with Macedonia, and the drafting of the renewable energy law.

However, many of the achievements are sectoral rather than relating to broader environmental mainstreaming. Notwithstanding the contribution to the national law for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and work to draft the renewable energy law, mainstreaming efforts proceeded more slowly and work in this area appears to have occurred more as a *silo* compared with the other principles. This can be explained by several factors. The Ministry of Environment is not a standing member of the Strategic Planning Committee, headed by the Prime Minister. As such, inter-sectoral coordination on environmental matters may have lower priority. An inter-institutional working group on environment helped to prepare elements of the draft NSDI II (2013-202) the issuance of which has been delayed for further review by the current government. And from the UN side, the environment area did not benefit from an organised inter-agency theme group, such as that for gender equality.

The MTR background paper on environment[63] set out the challenges in a clear manner, emphasised the inter-dependence of economic growth and environmental sustainability, and highlighted the sectoral coordination challenges. It was a solid, important piece of analytical work, especially given the importance of environmental matters for EU accession[64]. Two priority engagement areas were: (1) Promotion of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental management and protection in all relevant sectors; and (2) Support to line ministries, in coordination with Ministry of Environment, to establish environmental targets in their sector strategies and plans. However, rather than re-assert this mainstreaming agenda the updated PoC results framework is more modest in scope. Environmental mainstreaming does not appear in the results and indicators place emphasis on the expansion of protected areas and the adoption of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

3.5.4 Capacity development

Capacity development is an enabling principle. As part of programme cooperation, it supports country partners to better lead, manage, achieve and account for their national development priorities. The main steps involved are to: Assess capacity assets and needs for the achievement of national priorities, design and conduct capacity assessments, and develop capacity development strategies together with partners and ensure that they are reflected in programme results and indicators.

Following the introduction of new laws, policies, and action plans under the former One UN Programme, the PoC recognised that *'…capacity within the Government for their implementation has not always been sufficient, and budgetary commitments have fallen short.'* The PoC aimed to *'…intensify efforts to strengthen the capacity and accountability of the Government for*

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[63] Environment: Albania's legislative and policy framework on environment aligned with the EU acquis communautaire and other international standards - "Protecting Albania's natural resources", GoA-UN MTR Background Paper, 2014.
[64] It is estimated there are over 200 pieces of EU environmental legislation that must be approximated into national legislation and a track record of implementation established. Discussions with GoA and UN informants.

implementation'[65]. Capacity development cuts across the PoC and new 'capacity' was included in the formulation of 23 of 41 original PoC outputs.

The results achieved with UN support (see **section 3.2**) and the sustainability of some of those results (see **section 3.3**) suggest that the UN played an important role to develop new institutional capacities in many GoA ministries, bodies, and amongst CSO partners. Interviews also indicate that capacity constraints were discussed on a frequent, informal basis with government and civil society partners as a part of day-to-day programme management. Capacity issues were also raised and discussed during annual reviews and the MTR.

However, there is no evidence that more formal, structured capacity assessments were conducted as part of the PoC preparation, during implementation, or for the MTR. Related to this are three findings that emerged from interviews with programme partners. It is important to stress that while these do not represent majority views, they were raised enough times to be considered relevant:

» Some government respondents reported that UN agencies have, in some areas of cooperation, tended to take on too much of the actual programme delivery rather than '*hand-over*' more responsibility to country partners for implementation. There was a request for greater willingness to '…*let government make mistakes and learn by doing*'.

» Government respondents also urged UN agencies to place even greater emphasis on capacity development, with a particular focus on in-service training and advisory support related to current government work assignments, particularly the approximation of laws and policies with the EU Acquis and for implementation at local, municipal level. There is a desire for training and for knowledge transfer, but these interventions should be made as technically relevant as possible to the specific tasks at hand and they should produce actionable results, such as policy recommendations, draft regulations, codes, and the skills to see them implemented. As one informant reported: '*Workshops and seminars are for the past*'. Nevertheless, positive examples of capacity development through government institution engagement and leadership have materialised during the programming cycle, as has been the case with the interventions in the areas of employment promotion programmes.

» Third, perceptions amongst CSOs are that the UN has placed too much emphasis on consultancies at the national level and not enough on capacity support for local and community-based organisations for implementation. There was also a sense that the UN had, in some instances, *encroached* on the 'delivery' responsibilities of CSOs rather than building their abilities to deliver. CSOs also requested that the UN lengthen the duration of partnership initiatives to ensure enough transfer of skills to sustain local service delivery initiatives[66].

3.5.5 Results-based management

Results-based management (RBM) is another enabling principle of programme cooperation. The essence of RBM is planning and managing so that the processes, products and services of development cooperation contribute to the achievement of desired results: outputs, outcomes and impacts which are aligned with national development priorities. The main elements[67] are: (1)

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[65] Government of Albania and United Nations Programme of Cooperation, 2012-2016. October, 2011. 15.

[66] This is a complex issue. The MTR background paper on Social Inclusion cautions '…not to inadvertently undermine government accountability for the welfare of its citizens by financing NGOs to deliver a service that is meant to be provided by the state (including through outsourcing such services to NGOs or the private sector)'. Inclusive Social Policy, Social support for the most vulnerable; protection and access to public service "Every Person Counts", MTR Background Paper, 2014.20.

[67] UNDG RBM Handbook and Concept, principles, and tools of Managing for Development Results (MfDR)

[67] Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities for development.

Organisational commitment to manage for results; (2) An agreed logical framework of expected results and indicators, including underlying assumptions; (3) Operational systems to monitor, measure, and report effectively on performance against expected results and to identify lessons and good practices; (4) Use of performance information to learn, engage, and to make adjustments to strategy, results and resources.

The PoC results framework (2012-2014)

The original PoC results framework contained 11 outcomes and 41 outputs. The outcomes and outputs were generally well-formulated, used consistent 'change' language, and avoided the wordiness that is often associated with results formulation in multi-stakeholder settings. The major weakness was that none of the 11 outcomes were accompanied by indicators, baselines, or targets. And while this was addressed in the updated PoC results framework that followed the MTR, the lack of an outcome monitoring framework weakened monitoring and reporting efforts. The original PoC results framework also did not make explicit links with the excellent summary of NDSI I monitoring indicators[68]. These could have helped to make clear, measureable connections between the expected contributions of the PoC and national development priorities[69]. In addition the framework did not mention any major assumptions or risks that underpinned the programme design.

Overall, PoC annual progress reports were good, well-structured, and readable. But the weaknesses described above meant that the contribution analysis was either missing or implied[70]. In addition, some parts of the reporting were still too process-oriented and there were some inconsistencies in the narrative, data, and table elements of reports[71].

In any country, a plausible argument can be made that the UN has made a significant contribution to expected outcomes and to national priorities when:
1. There is a theory of change for how the outputs of programme cooperation will contribute to the expected outcomes and national priorities;
2. There is verifiable evidence that outputs have been achieved;
3. Outcome indicators are showing movement towards the expected institutional performance changes
4. There are credible 'contribution stories' about the role of UN programme cooperation in the changes; and
5. The assumptions behind the design have held true.

The structure of the original PoC results framework and subsequent reporting focused mainly on point 2 (the output level). This meant:

» There was no explicit *theory of change* for how the results of the PoC were intended to contribute to the expected outcomes and to specific NSDI I priorities[72];

» There was no basis for measuring the change; and

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[68] National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013, REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. Table 5.1, 92.
[69] For example, a comparison of the NSDI I and PoC pillars 1 and 2 (5 outcomes from 1.1 through 2.2) found that, of 8 indicators at the outcome level that could have been used in the PoC, only 2 were These are: Corruption perception index (NSDI indicator 6 for anti-corruption and PoC 1.3.4 indicator 3); and No. trafficking victims (NSDI indicator 7 for organised crime and PoC 1.3.2 indicator 2)
[70] This is not surprising as the UNDG and many agencies have not provided guidance to staff about how to carry-out and write-up a contribution analysis.
[71] For example: Annex IV of the 2014 Progress review did not include reports for outputs 1.2.3, 1.2.5, 1.3.4, outcome 2.2, and the achievements related to GBV and the CCR mechanisms were not included in the text. The table summary of key achievements and challenges excluded outcome 1.3, 2.2.
[72] It is important to note that during interviews with UN programme staff and PoC partners there was certainly an implicit understanding amongst some stakeholders of the expected contribution of cooperation results to national priorities. However, there was no formal plan or map, as such.

> » Reports could not fully tell a compelling story about the benefits and value of UN cooperation, in terms of progress towards national development priorities.

Despite these weaknesses, this evaluation shows that there were indeed many concrete, sustainable contributions to PoC outcomes and to NSDI I priorities. And country partners can speak to how these contributions have positively influenced institutional performance (sees **section 3.2**). This could only have been improved with a stronger theory of change, an outcome monitoring framework, and efforts to tell contribution stories.

The *revised* PoC results framework (2015-2016)

The successful mid-term review (MTR) of the PoC in 2014 led to significant mid-course changes in the results framework. Planned outcomes were consolidated and reduced from 11 to 4 and outputs from 41 to 15 (see updated PoC results framework in **Annex D**). Implementation against the new framework began in January 2015. Based on interviews, both UN staff and country partners perceive the updated framework to be more focused and less cumbersome for implementation, monitoring and reporting. GoA partners expressed satisfaction with the consolidated results framework reporting that it was: '*less scattered*' and provides a '*better picture*' of connections between the work plans and expected results.

However, there are still no explicit links to the priorities and indicators contained in the draft NSDI II[73], and having *fewer* outcomes does not always translate into *more focused* outcomes. Based on document review the evaluation team found that the former framework was, in some respects, stronger than the new one. This is because the expected outcomes were more specific and it was easier to connect the expected results and indicators to specific strategic priorities and policies in the NSDI I. The consolidated, updated framework, as a stand-alone document, does not always offer a clear, coherent enough story about where and how the GoA and UN are planning to make a difference (*i.e.* the dots are not as well connected). Four examples:

1. Under the original results framework, juvenile justice results ('a child-friendly justice system') were set out clearly as outcome 1.3, output 1.3.1, with excellent indicators[74]. Under the current framework, these important results[75] are split between outcome 1 (human rights) and output 1.2 (access to justice), and outcome 3 and output 3.3 (rule of law) and none of the indicators from the previous framework are included. To an outside observer, a review of the 'big picture' PoC framework would suggest that juvenile justice has disappeared. This situation is ameliorated by the Joint Biennial Work Plan (JBWP) for the period 2015-2016. It provides a longer list of 6 indicators, including the excellent indicators from the previous framework. However, it is a problem for planning, strategic decision-making, and communications that the clearest picture of intended results is only available at the work plan level.

2. Unemployment in Albania is a serious problem, particularly for young people. The draft NSDI II targets a decrease in general unemployment to 9.8% (ages 15-64) and to 20.5% for young people (ages 15-29)[76]. Output 2.3 of the PoC includes initiatives and measures related to

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[73] This can be attributed to the change in government in 2013 and that fact that the NSDI II (2014-2020) is still being reviewed by the new government. However, the GoA has made clear its 6 priorities and the EU has identified 5 priorities for accession. Identification of preliminary priorities, based on the above and the draft NSDI II is both possible and important for the overall logic of programme assistance.

[74] PoC results framework, p50. Indicators: % juvenile offenders diverted; length of pre-trial detention; functioning monitoring system. These indicators are included in the JBWP for output 1.2 for the period 2015-2016.

[75] The urgent need for a new approach to juvenile justice procedures was confirmed during a field visit to the House of Colours – a successful community outreach centre and half-way house for Roma young people and other vulnerable groups.

[76] National Strategy for Development and Integration 2014-2020 (NSDI II), REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, Draft, 2013. 3.2.8. 27-28.

targeted active labour market measures and improved TVET programmes. However, there is no related measure at the outcome level that would connect these results to the draft NSDI II priorities and targets. For example: % of young people employed after completion of TVET programs or proportion of ALMM beneficiaries that are employed. In other words, the theory of change related to employment ends at the output level and offers no way to connect it to the outcome and draft NSDI II targets.

3. Related to environmental sustainability the inclusion of environmental mainstreaming under governance and rule of law and related to 'public goods' is sound but the output indicator is restricted to the coverage of protected areas and there is no measure for mainstreaming under outcome 3. As noted above (see **section 3.5.3**), this does not convey the GoA-UN strategy identified during the MTR to promote an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental management and protection or support to GoA to establish environmental targets in sector strategies.

4. The successful introduction of the Territorial Reform (see **section 3.2, outcome 3.2**) means that the focus will increasingly shift to implementation at local level. This has a prominent place in the updated PoC results framework and new output 4.2 and indicators for the performance of local government units are very strong. Yet the single binary outcome indicator (Decentralisation strategy adopted and commences implementation) is of lesser ambition and does not sufficiently convey the larger performance changes expected.

With less than 18 months for implementation and focus beginning to shift to the preparation of the new PoC, it would be impractical and unpopular to make changes to the PoC results. One way for programme partners to reassert some of the value of the former framework and to ensure a clearer theory of change for their programme cooperation is to include some additional outcome indicators.

Management arrangements for the PoC

At inception, the programme of cooperation established management arrangements as follows:

» The GoA Government Modernization Committee is responsible for high level policy coordination and decision-making authority over the programme;
» A Joint Executive Committee (JEC) responsible for executive decisions related to implementation, including annual reviews, planning, and the allocation of resources from the Coherence Fund;
» Outcome coordinators and inter-agency, multi-partner Output Working Groups (OWG) with technical responsibilities for day to day implementation, monitoring, review, and progress reporting; and
» Inter-agency advisory bodies, including the:
  – Operations Management Team;
  – Communications Team;
  – Gender Theme Group;
  – HIV and AIDS Theme Group; and
  – Results-Based Management Advisory Committee, comprising 11 outcome coordinators.

For the period 2012-2014, the programme was operationalised with joint annual work plans (JAWP), normally 1 per PoC output, which form an agreement between UN agencies and implementing partners. The JAWP identify development activities, planned deliverables, responsible parties, and a budget. Implementation, monitoring, review, and reporting against JAWPs are coordinated by the OWG. Regular joint programme reviews were used to monitor progress and make mid-course adjustments.

Co-chairing arrangements were agreed at two levels where 'legal' documentation is signed off by both parties:

> » the Programme of Cooperation (strategic)
> » the Joint Annual Work Plans (technical, output level)

These arrangements were used to address constraints identified under the previous 'one programme':

> » Excessive work load with regard to work planning and reporting;
> » Lack of involvement of line ministries; and
> » Lack of ownership for joint implementation.

Following the MTR and the consolidation of the PoC results framework, the following changes were agreed by the GoA and UN:

> » A reduced number of outputs meant JAWPs and fewer output working groups (OWG). And while the OWG TOR was unchanged, the consolidated, more 'strategic' nature of the outputs meant increased risk and required greater time and commitment from GoA-UN co-chairs to lead and coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the JAWPs.
> » JAWPs are to be biennial in scope, becoming Joint Biennial Work Plans (JBWP), and enabling a shorter updating process at the end of each year of implementation.
> » Implementing partners from GoA and civil society were asked to take on greater responsibility for the coordination and implementation of JBWPs.
> » The inter-agency advisory bodies (see above) were unchanged, except for the Results-Based Management Advisory Committee. With the reduction from 11 to 4 outcomes and the assignment of a head of UN agency as the outcome coordinator, the need for a separate RBM advisory body was removed. The new outcome coordinators, already a part of the UNCT, provide regular updates and advice to the UNCT on performance against the PoC.
> » Last, the sequence of full, formal mid-year and annual reviews was changed to an 'internal' mid-year review by the OWG and outcome coordinators with the preparation a shorter status report. This allows greater focus on implementation and on the annual review process.

Revised PoC Management Structure
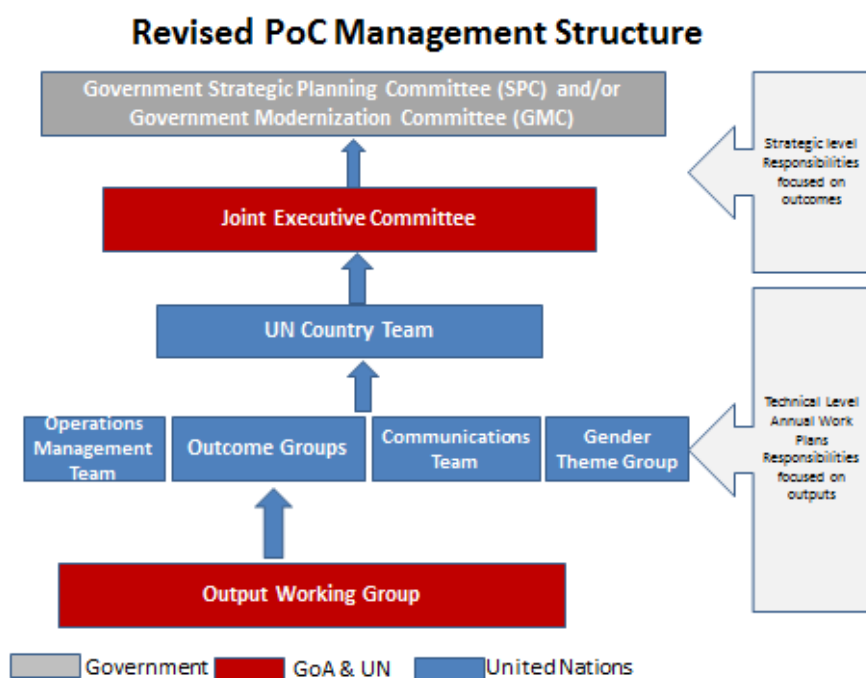
The revised PoC management structure for the period 2015-2016 is shown at left (see figure)[77]. It complies with the standard operating procedures for DaO[78].

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[77] UN Albania, Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), 2015.
[78] Standard Operating Procedures for Countries Wishing to Adopt the Delivering as One Approach, UNDG, March 2013.

Overall, country partners at the strategic level expressed satisfaction with the management arrangements. They reported that the mechanisms perform well, offer opportunities for frequent and strong engagement of programme partners, and provide a consistent flow of performance information from OWGs to the JEC to inform decision-making. The MTR process and report offers good evidence of this: It shows a systematic process that monitored and reported on actual results, lessons, and constraints, and that used that information to make adjustments to strategy, results and resources.

Joint Biennial Work Plans

The joint biennial work plans (JBWP) prepared for the period 2015-2016 are of very high quality. They:

» Offer clear, verifiable links with the updated PoC results framework and indicators (at output level);
» Identify the specific UN Agency, GoA, and other partners to be involved in implementation;
» Provide the available budget, source of donors funds, and gap for both years;
» Most importantly, the JBWP identify the *un-funded* deliverables for the period, providing the clearest possible view of what results will <u>not</u> be achieved for lack of funding.

Overall, the JBWP offer a signed, statement of commitment and partnership for the achievement of joint results. They also provide a strong vehicle for joint programming by PoC partners, without the added transaction costs of having to develop separate joint programme documents. Building on the findings above related to RBM, two elements missing from the JBWP are outcome indicators and a clear connection to the strategic priorities and policies from the draft NSDI II.

Communications

The inter-agency UN Communications Team was established under the previous One Programme to develop and carry-out joint communication initiatives. Under the current PoC, the work of the team is guided by a joint communication strategy[79]. It aims to help UN Agencies to communicate together in a more coordinated way to explain the work of the UN in Albania, demonstrate results, support policy advocacy and resource mobilization, and help raise awareness about key development challenges in Albania. The strategy emphasises that join communications aim to '*…showcase the varied comparative advantages each individual UNCT member has, to contribute to national development priorities through the new Programme of Cooperation*'[80].

The chair of the team attends UNCT meetings which have a standing agenda item on communications. During the period 2012-2014, the following major initiatives were conducted by the UN Communications Team to complement the achievement of PoC results:

» A video documentary Youth of Albania Speak Out was produced and shared widely across the country to advocate for inclusion of youth priorities in the Post-2015 development agenda. The '*Show Your Selfie'* Campaign generated over 3,000 selfies as a petition to call for the inclusion of youth priorities in the Post-2015 development agenda.
» UN day in 2014 was dedicated to the lives of young people and over a thousand gathered to discuss the Post-2015 agenda.
» Large segments of Albanian society were engaged in the second phase of consultations called *Voices from Albania: Monitoring for Accountability*. These examined participatory monitoring and ways to strengthen the voices of citizens as a feature of the national

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[79] 2012 – 2016 'COMMUNICATING AS ONE' COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY ALBANIA, UN Albania, July 2012.
[80] Communication Strategy, Ibid.,

development agenda. The UN deployed several communication channels including traditional and social media, media briefings and interviews. Social media accounts registered more than 15,000 visitors per week,

» Using a partnership with Vodafone in Albania, Albanian citizens were asked to choose their priorities through an Albanian version of My World Survey. Approximately 3,500 people voted for better healthcare, a good education, better job opportunities and an honest and responsive government.

» To commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the CRC, around 200 young people from seven regions of Albania participated in consultations to discuss: '*Is Albania now a better place for children?*' A Parliamentary plenary session was convened by the speaker to celebrate the convention. During the event the establishment of a Child Rights Caucus was announced.

» Thousands of youth were engaged in a conversation related to The International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 with a focus on human rights.

» Civil society joined the UN SG's campaign Unite to End Violence against Women. The campaign turned into a solidarity movement to engage men and boys, women and girls to change attitudes towards gender discrimination and domestic violence, as well as to inform citizens of their rights pursuant to gender equality and domestic violence legislation.

The Communications Team also established an impressive digital face for GoA-UN cooperation in Albania. Along with regularly updated website, facebook, and twitter accounts, major advocacy and information pieces included:

» 'People in Focus' a compilation of stories from GoA-UN programme cooperation[81]
» We the People of Albania
» Youth of Albania Speak Out
» Public Consultations on the Post 2015 Agenda

In addition to the strategy, the Communication Team develops an annual work plan. The following performance indicators and achievements were reported for 2014:

UN Communications: Indicators	Achievement in 2014
% increase in Facebook audience	180%; Weekly total reached on average 5000 people
% increase in Twitter audience	200%
No. visits to UN website	227,286; A 20% increase from 2013
No. events and articles published on UN website	60

Challenges identified by the Communications Team include:

» The tendency for last minute requests for communications support;
» The need for enhanced involvement of the Communications Team in annual work planning by OWGs
» A still constrained communications budget, which is allocated to outcome budgets on a proportional basis by contributing UN Agencies, and
» For some Communications Team members, that inter agency responsibilities are still not spelled-out explicitly in job descriptions and performance appraisal instruments.

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[81] See: Facebook:https://www.facebook.com/UnitedNationsAlbania?ref=hl; Twitter: https://twitter.com/UN_Albania; You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/user/UnitedNationsAlbania; People in Focus: http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/People%20in%20Focus%20brochure.pdf; We the people of Albania: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q57Mc7ICCy8; Youth of Albania Speak Out: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0PTAm5QgSc; Public Consultations on the Post 2015 Agenda: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k72ft7iB9_Y

With regard to communications work, the UN and some partners in GoA have noted the highly partisan and divisive practices of some national media outlets. They identify the need for greater capacity development in investigative journalism and balanced, source-based analysis and reporting.

For management arrangements overall, the following challenges and constraints were also identified:

1. It was perceived by both UN and GoA partners that the work plans and the day-to-day working of the OWG are still too '*one-sided*' in the sense that they mainly deal with the UN's contributions. The contributions of the GoA are, on the whole, missing or assumed. Clearer links in work plans are needed to specific GoA sector plans and budgets.

2. A few GoA partners expressed concern that the RBM advisory committee was being disbanded. It was reported that the 11 outcome coordinators had been a key conduit for conveying information about PoC performance and implementation constraints, and providing options and advice. While the rationale for disbanding the RBM AC is clear, the functions previously played will need to be sustained by the 4 new outcome coordinators who are also UN heads of agency.

3. While GoA, civil society, and donor partners are broadly satisfied with the PoC management arrangements, UN agencies are less so. Several senior UN staff reported that the transaction costs of the PoC are '*still huge*'. The biggest concern for UN programme staff is, by far, **the burden related to work planning, monitoring and reporting**. Despite the PoC being a 'one programme' some agencies continue to prepare and report against linked but separate work plans that are aligned with their agencies' corporate strategic results frameworks. This situation has been described in previous reports including the Albania country-led evaluation in 2010[82].

4. Feedback from UN staff indicates that preparation of UN agency-specific work plans often precedes that for the OWG JBWP. This means that JBWP preparation is more of a consolidation of UN agency work plans rather than a joint work planning process with partners. It is not clear that the JBWPs actually do reflect a joint visioning between the collaborating UN agencies and country partners.

5. Finally, some UN staff report that lessons identified through the annual and mid-term review process have not always been fully incorporated into strategies and work plans. While it was not possible for the evaluation team to do a full review of all lessons-learned from 2012-2014, a rapid scanning of the MTR report suggests that some lessons may not have been fully incorporated into the results and indicators of the updated PoC results framework.

   For example, the evaluation team could not find specific results, indicators, or strategy descriptions related to[83]:
   » Outcome 1.1 Public oversight
   - Create an enabling environment for CSO empowerment
   - Strengthen coordination for national women's networks
   - Reinforce media understanding of human rights and the importance of accurate and informative reporting, monitoring and advocacy
   » Outcome 1.2 Public administration

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[82] The CLE identified four types of reports from the UN system: Agency annual reports for Headquarters in pre agreed and rigid formats; One UN report; Project level reports for each project/programme; and Administrative Agent reports on financial performance, which also used narratives and financial summaries. COUNTRY LED EVALUATION, DELIVERING AS ONE ALBANIA, FINAL REPORT, 7 JULY 2010, 241-242. See also: Results Based Management at country level: Systemic issues that prevent good UNDAF results and the use of UNDAF results information, A report to the UNDG's, September 2008.

[83] MTR MID TERM REVIEW Report, Government of Albania - United Nations Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016, 15 Sept 2014, 26.

- Respond to GoA innovation and ICT agenda with expansion of e-services
  » Outcome 2.2 Environment
    - Build systems to monitor and ensure full compliance with MEA and EU environmental standards
    - Strengthen coordination mechanisms to avoid duplication and promote mainstreaming.
  » Outcome 3.2 Decentralisation
    - Capacity development for increased accountability and effectiveness of local decentralised services

3.6 Comparative advantages of the UN in Albania

A UN One Programme or UNDAF aims to increase the effectiveness of the UN system's development cooperation at country level. According to guidelines, it should demonstrate the **comparative advantages** of the UNCT, and its strategic contributions for the achievement of national development priorities. A UN agency or thematic group of agencies has comparative advantage to meet a clearly identified national challenge when they have[84]:

1. Mandates to address a development challenge;

2. Capacity to do so, as demonstrated by past results and by the availability of relevant technical, human, financial and administrative resources;

3. Positioning to address the challenge better than others working in the same area, demonstrated by:

   » Agency-supported results, compared to the results of other development actors, or

   » A unique role if there is no other organization doing comparable work, and the UN results are significant.

To make the assessment as credible and useful as possible, UNCTs are advised to seek feedback from past and current partners and other external stakeholders to answer two key questions:

1. What are the UNCT's specific capacities related to specific national development challenges?
2. How is the UNCT positioned in the challenge relative to other actors?

Normally UNCTs should compare their capacities and positioning relative to other major development partners in the country. The definition of UNDAF outcomes, and of UN Agency and partner contributions to them, should draw directly on this analysis of comparative advantage.

The preparation of the PoC did not include a formal, structured process to review and consider the UNCT's comparative advantages vis-à-vis those of other major partners working in Albania. The MTR background papers and process in 2014 did include analysis of UN comparative advantage but these mainly provided a description of mandates and past successful strategies. While important, this does not provide enough of the *comparative* element which is essential for a discussion of comparative advantage and to make a choice about strategic areas for programme cooperation[85]. The PoC offered little objective analysis of the UNCT's positioning vis-à-vis other development actors. For the

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[84] How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams, UNDG, 2010. 6.2.2, 11; FINAL DRAFT TECHNICAL NOTE: Assessing UNCT Comparative Advantages for UNDAF Preparation and Implementation, 2010..

[85] In the MTR background reports, only 2 of 4 papers had sections on UN comparative advantage that mentioned the roles and advantages of other partners working in the same sectoral or thematic areas. The Governance and Rule of Law paper points out that the normative agenda for human rights is not one where the UN can automatically claim comparative advantage, citing the roles and performance of EU institutions and regional treaty bodies such as the Council of Europe. The paper on Social Inclusion argues that this is 'not a top priority for EU member states' and there are no other partners doing comparable work.

MTR, staff and partners in government reported that there were informal discussion about the focus of UN cooperation and whether there were other partners who had greater advantages. But it is not clear how much impartial, independent feedback from development partners was collected and used to formulate the MTR papers. None of the MTR papers go to the step of saying what the UN should not be involved in, programmatically. These are sensitive topics that are not easy to discuss with programme partners. Other UNCTs have found it helpful to bring in a third party to conduct confidential discussions with partners in government and civil society and from donor organisations.

To balance the analysis above, it is important to again cite the evidence presented in section 3.1 and 3.2. The substantial achievements during the period 20120-2014 and the clear progress towards outcomes suggest that, broadly, the UN was working in programme areas where it had comparative advantages. A more focused attempt to analyse comparative advantages, including more objective feedback from development partners and an attempt to map and understand the advantages of other development actors, would likely have helped the UN and GoA to further sharpen PoC results and strategies.

One example of this: Work on economic governance (outcome 2.1) and particularly the competitiveness of MSMEs (output 2.1.2) did not proceed as expected during the period 2012-2014. As noted above (see **section 3.2**, outcome 2.1) the Ministry of Economy points, amongst other factors, to a very crowded field for MSME support. In the updated PoC results framework, this work appears to be split between outcome 3, output 3.3 and outcome 4, output 4.3. However, based on documentation, the UN's strategy is unclear. Is it about supporting enterprise development directly or about strengthening the business environment more broadly (e.g. market institutions, licensing)? The MTR background paper did not provide an analysis of the other major players in this area, nor of the UN's positioning. This may be an area that could benefit from a stronger review of UN comparative advantage vis-a-vis other partners.

3.7 The PoC as a framework for coordination and partnership

Based on document review and interviews the PoC serves as an important vehicle for coordination and partnership between the GoA, UN Agencies, civil society and donor partners. Based on the findings and analysis above, there are five pieces of evidence for this:

1. Work plans prepared by the multi-partner output working groups (OWG) are closely aligned with the POC results framework and strategies. This suggests that PoC is not a paper entity but rather a live programme instrument that drives day-to-day development cooperation;

2. In interviews, programme partners from government and civil society valued the flexibility of UN agencies and their ability to respond quickly to requests for specific technical assistance and to take advantage of new opportunities. This flexibility and resourcefulness was identified in the country-led evaluation in 2010 and continues to be a hallmark of cooperation in Albania[86].

3. The results described in section 3.3 demonstrate that some PoC results had real influence over the scope of draft or approved GoA legislation, sector strategies, and action plans. This suggests strongly that PoC results and strategies are seen by partners as being connected and relevant to the priorities and business of the GoA.

4. As noted in section 3.1, partners from both government and civil society were able to speak meaningfully and specifically about the role and contributions of the UNCT for the achievement of these programme results and how they helped to improve institutional

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[86] COUNTRY LED EVALUATION, DELIVERING AS ONE ALBANIA, FINAL REPORT, 7 JULY 2010, 28.

performance. Three specific examples of this are PoC achievements related to: Addressing domestic violence, Advancing territorial reform, and improving services for Roma and other vulnerable groups.

5. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, feedback from PoC partners suggests that planning, management, and decision-making for the PoC at both strategic and technical levels is a joint affair, characterised by generally positive, open, and collegial relationships. Overall, the evaluation team noted the consistently high regard with which programme partners spoke of one another.

One area where the evidence for partnership appears to be contradictory relates to **cash assistance to government**. Both UN Agencies and GoA partners confirm that cash assistance to government, as a part of work plan implementation is very low[87]. For UN funds and programmes generally, the *ideal* of programme cooperation as a partnership is the joint agreement of a work plan, aligned with country strategy and priorities, and the transfer of cash assistance from UN Agencies to government partners for implementation. This dynamic is assumed to be essential for government ownership and as a way for UN Agencies to demonstrate trust and also to support country capacity development.

In the context of an upper middle income country such as Albania, these assumptions may need to be revisited: During the evaluation, some GoA partners reported that they generally do not want direct cash transfers due to the high internal administrative burden they create and to delays in onward transfer from Treasury to responsible ministries and departments. Moreover, in a context where UN programme support is largely directed towards the provision of expertise and policy advice rather than for service delivery, GoA partners report that the procurement procedures of UN Agencies are '*faster*' and more '*user-friendly*'. And so:

» How important to the state of the GoA-UN partnership is the direct transfer of cash assistance?
» Would the PoC results (see section 3.1) have been markedly better had the lion's share of cash assistance been transferred from UN Agencies to the GoA implementing partners?

Definitive answers to these questions are beyond the scope of the evaluation, but the evidence suggests that, in the Albanian context, the direct cash transfer of cash assistance is not instrumental for effective partnership and the achievement of results. Based on the analysis above, other more pressing matters concern (1) the need for the PoC and work plans to be less '*one-sided*' and to provide more information about links with GoA sector plans and budgets, and (2) a more structured approach for capacity development strategy and results. The state of the partnership between the GoA and UN will also depend on the ongoing relevance of the PoC to Albania's rapidly evolving development situation, including potential changes in the NSDI II and the introduction by the EU of direct budget support for sector programmes (see discussion of these points below)

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[87] For example, some UN funds and programmes have reported that less than 1% of programme assistance is transferred directly to GoA as cash for implementation against agreed work plans.

Chapter 4. Conclusions, recommendations, and lessons

These conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned are based upon the findings and analysis presented in chapter 3. They are structured according to the evaluation objectives and evaluation criteria. The recommendations were reviewed and commented upon by GoA and UNCT stakeholders to ensure their relevance and applicability.

Unless otherwise stated, the main actors to implement the recommendations are the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) and the UNCT.

4.1 Conclusions and recommendations

Objective I.

Assess the <u>contribution </u>of the UN system to national development priorities through the outcomes of the Programme of Cooperation (PoC)

Relevance and Effectiveness

Based on the evidence presented in section 3.1 and 3.2, this evaluation concludes that the PoC was **highly relevant** to the priorities expressed in the NSDI I, including those for EU accession. The POC was also **verifiably effective** in terms of the achievement of most planned PoC outputs, and their plausible contribution to the expected outcomes, and to progress towards country priorities.

Using the analysis presented in section 3.2, the evaluation team concludes that 28 of the original 41 planned outputs were substantially achieved and that for 10 of the 11 original outcomes there is tangible evidence of progress towards the expected institutional or behavioural changes.

In addition, each of the 11 PoC outcomes is linked explicitly to no fewer than 3 strategic priorities and policies of the NSDI I (see section 3.2 for detailed descriptions of these links). Many of these were driven by EU accession requirements under the of the *acquis communautaire*. This demonstrates that PoC results and strategies complemented Albania's EU accession aims and that PoC results made plausible contributions to the ground work for the granting of Albania's EU candidate status in June 2014.

Qualitatively, there was a high degree of alignment between the content of UNCT annual progress reports and the perceptions of key stakeholders in government, and from civil society and donor organisations. Stakeholders from both government and civil society were able to speak meaningfully and specifically about the role and contribution of the UNCT for the achievement of outputs, the extent to which these outputs contributed to the planned outcomes, with concrete examples of improved institutional performance. They could also speak to the influence that these changes have had on progress towards national development priorities.

Programme partners also spoke very positively about the nature of the partnership, the value of a delivering-as-one approach, and the connection with the UNCT. Respondents referred to it as '*respectful*', '*challenging*', and '*engaging*'. As one key informant (KI) reported: '*the one UN has worked… it has succeeded in introducing a development agenda in Albania*'.

Donors appear to greatly value the delivering-as-one (DaO) approach. Their representatives reported that the UN had '*the right people in the right place*' and valued the UNCT's ability to use its neutrality to '*engage at political level*' on topics that were seen as being too sensitive for full donor

engagement. The UN's instrumental work to support the successful territorial reform was offered as an example. The UN leadership was also seen as playing a constructive role in donor coordination.

It is important to note that these achievements took place during a challenging time, programmatically[88]:

> » A change in government in mid-2013, bringing with it policy changes some major personnel changes at the deputy minister and chiefs of department level in many partner ministries;
> » Parliamentary impasse from mid-2013 to early 2014, in which opposition groups boycotted parliament, causing delays in the approval of key reform laws; and
> » A dramatic downsizing of the civil service, which lost an estimated 5500 positions at all levels.

The overall sense from partners in both government, civil society, and from donor organisations is that the UN is still very relevant to Albania – especially for its normative role and contributions. As one donor representative argued: '*…the next few years are the key ones for Albania*' and the UN has the expertise and capabilities to address big gaps. Donors perceive an important, ongoing role for GoA-UN cooperation to ensure that areas beyond the chapters of the EU acquis, or in areas where there is only '*soft*' acquis or broad principles to which the country must adhere, are not neglected. Examples provided by respondents are: social inclusion policy, access to social services for vulnerable groups, mainstreaming gender concerns and measures into sector programmes, addressing domestic violence, and development of local government management capacity. These are areas where the UN has demonstrated expertise, supported the delivery of results, and where ongoing partner support is still needed to promote international standards and good practices from other countries and regions and to strengthen implementation at local levels.

Looking forward, the ongoing relevance and effectiveness of the PoC for the period 2015-2016, and the design of the next PoC for the period 2017-2021 will be influenced by Albania's rapidly evolving development situation, including:

> » The continued sharpening of the GoA priorities and the launching of the NSDI II;
> » The introduction by the EU of direct budget support for sector programmes; and
> » The restructuring of sector coordination mechanisms and the role of donors and cooperation partners including UN Agencies.

The new NSDI II for the period 2014-2020 was developed under the previous government and has been substantially delayed for review and revision by the new government to ensure alignment with its 6 priorities and fiscal realities. Its launch is now expected no later than end 2015. The delays have caused some partners in Albania to question the ongoing importance and relevance of a national development framework, in the context of an upper middle income country on the road to EU accession. GoA partners report that the NSDI II is still relevant and that is serves to sum up and consolidate the priorities and work of all sectors. GoA partners assert that it is no less relevant than sector strategies, as it '*…pulls these strands together and offers a strategic vision*'.

EU accession remains Albania's top development priority. The total indicative allocation of the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for the period 2014-2020 (IPA II) is € 640 m or approximately US$680m[89]. This is equivalent to about 5-6% of the value of the Albanian economy estimated at US$12.9bn in 2013[90]. In addition, the GoA and EU have decided to phase in a number of **sector programmes** using a **direct budget support** modality. As of mid-2015, two sector

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[88] Albania 2014 Progress Report, Commission Staff Working Document, EC, 8.10.2014. 5-9.
[89] Ref to EU progress report and strategy paper
[90] See World Bank data http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/albania

programmes were launched for Public Administration Reform and Employment. The EC anticipates a further 1 to 2 sector programmes to be introduced the following year, aligned with the EU accession and GoA priorities (Competitiveness and Innovation; Water sector).

Coordination is another pressing matter. Sector working groups, currently with co-leads from GoA and donor or other cooperation partners, are to be replaced with **Integrated Planning and Management Groups (IPMGs)** that will comprise GoA actors only. IPMG Secretariats are to be established to ensure coordination and communication within government departments as well as with other development partners. The coordination links between the sector programmes, the IPMGs and their secretariats, and the PoC strategic management are still to be established. For example, it was reported that budget support in the social sector would focus mainly on employment and skills for the first year, under the coordination of the Social sector IPMG. The thematic working groups for social inclusion and social protection will also be coordinated by the Social sector IPMG, which is also in charge of employment. What these changes mean for the visibility and continued relevance of key areas for GoA-UN cooperation is uncertain. Much energy and attention in 2015-2016 will likely be taken-up by the challenges of implementing the direct budget support programmes.

The introduction of sector programmes, direct budget support, and IPMGs offer interesting opportunities to lever the knowledge and experience gained from GoA-UN cooperation through the PoC. The UN could position itself as a key implementing partner for targeted sector programmes, or areas of sector programmes, where it has expertise and a track record of results. It could also provide greater opportunities for GoA cost-sharing in the next PoC, 2017-2021.

Going forward, there is a good potential for effective UN engagement in:

» The design of sectoral programmes and capacity development for IPMG secretariats related to policy analysis, planning, monitoring, and reporting, as well as gender-responsive approaches;
» Building the capacity of implementing sector ministries and departments at national and local level to absorb the expected IPA II funding
» Play a 'bridging role' to ensure that sector programmes are designed and implemented in open and consultative ways involving CSOs and community consultation
» Supporting the convergence of services at local level. The territorial reform resulted in the amalgamation of 61 new municipalities and regions or local government units (LGU) from the original 373. GoA partners and donors have stated that there is a pressing need for the new LGUs to show that they can perform effectively and deliver quality local services. The legislative and policy frameworks for decentralisation and local service delivery are being revisited following the territorial reform but no major changes are expected in the key areas of involvement by UN Agencies and their partners. Both GoA and donor partners agreed that the UN has real advantages to build upon the progress and lessons from the current PoC to build LGU planning and management capacities and to support the convergence and effective delivery of services, particularly social inclusion and protection services. The updated PoC results framework has a number of indicators that are already geared towards this end:
    - 1.3 % municipalities with working mechanisms to track, report, address violence against women and children;
    - 2.4 – quality rating system for social care services in place (municipal)
    - 4.2 – ratio of social investment exp. to total LGU exp. (social investment ratio)

However, as pointed out by some donor partners, it is not a given that UN Agencies will be involved. There are many potential partners including bilateral development organisations, international and national NGOs, and private sector groups that can offer implementation support. The UN must make the case - deliver a clear and convincing argument to GoA and donor stakeholders - that they are

best positioned in particular sectors and themes to support implementation and the achievement of results. A part of this case will be evidence from PoC implementation for the period 2012-2014. This demonstrates the UN's proven ability to deliver results in complex multi-stakeholder environments and in politically sensitive areas, and its ability to promote international standards, policy expertise, and good practices,

Recommendations

1. Analyse the existing and planned sector programmes to identify policy development and implementation areas that are a best fit for UN programme support. These should be based on the tangible results achieved during the current PoC.

2. Liaise with GoA sector leads and EU partners to understand the full scope of the shift from sector working groups to Integrated Planning and Management Groups (IPMGs) and seek clarification on the capacity support needs of IPMGs.

3. On the basis of 1 and 2 (above) engage with the EU to seek advice and define a role and expected contribution of the GoA-UN PoC to the overall sector programme approach. This may require a re-alignment of the PoC results framework and indicators. On a limited basis, consider supporting the GoA to conduct structured capacity assessments for coordination and implementation in sectors or themes of particular joint interest and where the UN system can best add value.

Sustainability

This evaluation can conclude that several PoC results and related strategies are likely to continue beyond 2016. These are:

- » A significant legal and policy advocacy agenda (see box in **section 3.3**)
- » In 26 of 61 municipalities, there are working mechanisms for the identification, reporting, and referral for services of situations of domestic violence. The representative of a donor organisation commented that, with these services, there was '*real case management happening at local level*'.
- » Mediation and probation services for juveniles with 67% of court sentences given as probation or community service.
- » Territorial reform moving forward.
- » Gender equality measures and metrics mainstreamed in the Medium-term Budgetary Programme (MTBP, 2014-2017).
- » Increasing public 'ownership' of vulnerability in Albania, particularly for groups such as Roma, LGTB persons, and victims of domestic violence.
- » Increase in enrolment rates for pre-school education beyond the already achieved target of 60% for children ages 5-6 and improved standards and curricula for early learning systems
- » Increased effectiveness and outreach of employment promotion programmes through support for increased transparency and accountability of decision-making, including more targeted interventions for vulnerable communities/capacity developed for NES staff.
- » Improvements in accessibility and integration for PwD following ratification of UNRPD and transposition into national legislation, combined with parallel efforts of government in improving the benefit system.

» The UN programme made valuable contributions through development of strategies in the area of social protection, social care, and social inclusion; however sustainability and viability of the latter will greatly depend on whether the Government is committed to allocating funding to these sectors.

Recommendations

4. Given the large proportion of the PoC budget that is un-funded and the constraints in the availability of external donor resources, engage with the GoA to discuss ways for greater cost-sharing by the GoA for ongoing programmatic efforts. Advocacy should focus on results areas that are most closely aligned with the NSDI II priorities.

Efficiency of the PoC

This evaluation can conclude, within the limits of the methodology, that the PoC was able to achieve results in an economic manner and with manageable transaction costs.

Perceptions were very strong on this matter with near consensus amongst partners from government and civil society that PoC results of had been achieved with little waste and duplication. Moreover, partners were keen to emphasise the flexibility and adaptability of UN agencies both during planning and implementation. In addition, it was confirmed that PoC work plans are aligned with the planning and budget cycle used by GoA ministries and departments.

In terms of budgetary efficiency, despite a funding gap of nearly 1 in $3 there were many substantial and sustained results achieved over the period 2012-2014 (see section 3.1 and 3.2). This suggests that the original outcome budgets may have been excessive. And with a projected funding gap for 2015-2016 of USD $21.4m, further review and revision of outcome budgets is warranted. More modest and realistic funding gaps can often be a help to resource mobilisation efforts. As discussed above, the sustainability of PoC results in an environment where ODA is declining will depend on greater cost-sharing by the GoA in programme achievement.

Coherence fund contributions reached a peak in 2009 and fell steadily well into 2014, despite the achievement of tangible PoC results. This suggests strongly that coherence fund performance is *de-linked* from programme performance. The modest performance of the coherence fund in Albania mirrors that of all UN one programme funds globally and reflects a move back to earmarking of donor resources for greater accountability visibility at the level of component programmes and projects. Despite the value placed on the CF by the GoA and UN, it is only one of several channels for development assistance. Donors will use it when it makes sense to channel multiple sources of funding for agreed, specific priorities, such as was done for the work on territorial reform. Beyond these opportunities, and given the shift in donor attitudes and funding constraints, large future commitments to the CF are not likely without greater efforts to promote it.

On the delivery side of the PoC budget, delivery rates have increased to 79% in 2014 from 67% in 2012 and delivery rates by outcome in 2014 showed very good performance, with only 2 outcomes 1.1 Public oversight and 3.1 Regional and rural development below a 60% threshold.

In terms of operational efficiency, the Operations Management Team (OMT) has inter-agency long-term procurement agreements (LTA) for nine lines of business such as travel and translations services and fuel. These common LTAs have helped UN Agencies to avoid 446 hours of staff processing time per year and to realise an estimated cost savings of USD $166,268 from volume purchasing since the LTAs came

into force. The evaluation team did an assessment of the business operations practices in Albania related to leadership, working arrangements, incentives, and the use of analysis and evidence, and the **OMT scored 8 out of a possible 10**, which is excellent[91].

Recommendations

Funding Gaps

5. Outcome coordinators and OWG should review and revise the outcome budgets for the period 2015-2016 to arrive at more realistic funding gaps. With reference to recommendation 4 (above) more modest funding gaps can often assist resource mobilisation efforts.

[*Action: Outcome coordinators and OWG chairs*]

Resource mobilisation and Coherence fund

The analysis in section 3.4.2 suggests that coherence fund performance is ***de-linked*** from programme performance. However, greater CF resources provide flexibility for the GoA and UN and can help to reduce inter-agency competition for funding. GoA partners have expressed a willingness to promote the CF with donors:

6. Document and disseminate up to 3 compelling examples of how the coherence fund (CF) enabled the GoA, UN, and concerned partners to take rapid, effective programmatic action aligned with national priorities. These coherence fund stories should emphasise the value of the CF not just as a funding channel, but as a way to marshal the combined value of UN system competence in Albania.

7. Consult further with all JEC members and donor partners to confirm their perceived value of the CF and their willingness to promote and use it as an important channel for UN development cooperation. Based upon favourable feedback, the JEC and UNCT should develop a concrete advocacy and communication plan for promotion of the CF. This is also an opportunity to highlight the value and complementarity of UN programme assistance with the sector budget programmes (see Rec.3) and the more realistic funding gaps (see Rec. 5)

8. Given the complex resource mobilisation environment and the introduction of sector budget support by the EU and GoA, the UNCT should review and update (as needed) the Joint Resource Mobilisation Strategy and ensure more frequent inter-agency communication around RM efforts.

Business Operations

9. Make a priority to (1) analyse and develop a business case for additional LTAs for common categories of goods and services, such as vehicle management and maintenance, and (2) Develop and implement the common services plan for the one UN house (as per 2015 OMT work plan).

[*Action: OMT*]

10. Provide updated data on (1) the total value of purchase orders raised against common LTAs,

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[91] This is based on the management practice KPI: Number of good business operations practices applied at country level out of 10. The 10 practices consolidate the good management practices of business operations pilot countries and those identified by the UNDG/HLCM. UNDG, Business Operations Harmonization at Country Level, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Reporting Process, FINAL DRAFT, 11 June, 2014.

Recommendations
(2) the estimated cost savings from volume procurement for all 9 LTAs, (3) and the estimated transaction costs avoided for all LTAs since their inception. Going forward, these should be communicated in the Resident Coordinator's Annual Report.
[*Action: OMT*]

Objective II.

Assess the <u>process</u> of the UN system's contribution through the PoC for the achievement of national priorities

Application of UNDG programming principles

The UNDAF Guidelines[92] identify 5 programming principles: a <u>Human rights-based approach</u>, <u>Gender equality</u>, <u>Environmental sustainability</u>, <u>Capacity development</u>, and <u>Results based management</u>. The principles help to identify results and strategies for more effective UN-supported programme cooperation. They also help to balance the pursuit of international norms and standards with the achievement of national development priorities[93].

Human rights-based approach

Based on the achievements described in **section 3.1 and 3.2** the evaluation concludes that PoC results and strategies were driven or at least informed by the standards and principles of Albania's ratified human rights treaties. Specific results and strategies, both in the original plan and as implemented from 2012 through 2014, are linked concretely to many of the concluding observations and recommendations of UN treaty body reports.

However, there is no evidence of a systematic or sustained application of the 3 steps of the HRBA process: (1) Structured causality analysis, (2) role and pattern analysis; and (3) Capacity gaps analysis for specific duty bearers and rights holders. So, while the PoC results were informed by, and responded, to human rights standards, principles, and concerns, the process was not based on a structured, purposive application of the entire HRBA approach and steps.

Gender equality

This evaluation concludes that programming process and results for gender equality from 2012-2014 represented a significant achievement of the PoC. The Gender Theme Group performed very well and has helped all OWG to meet the expectation that programme assistance should reflect on how planned strategies and activities will affect women and men and to disaggregate data. This is reflected in the updated results framework.

The UN through the work of the Gender Theme Group, made important contributions to: Legal and criminal code amendments for women's property rights, expanded reporting and referral services across the country that respond to domestic violence, effective 'get-out-the-vote' campaigns during the 2013 national elections, the institutionalisation of gender-sensitive budgetary process (MTBP) and numerous publications that greatly increased the availability of disaggregated data. Overall, UN

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[92] UNDG, How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams, UN, Nov 2009. 3-4. See also: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams

[93] UNDG, Guidance Note: Application of the Programming Principles to the UNDAF, January 2010.

support for gender equality achievements was mentioned by programme partners from government and civil society more often than for any other topic.

Environmental sustainability

Environmental considerations including efforts to identify and address disaster risks were addressed mainly under PoC outcome 2.2. Many of the achievements are sectoral rather than relating to broader environmental mainstreaming. Notwithstanding the contribution to the national law for strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and work to draft the renewable energy law, this evaluation concludes that mainstreaming efforts proceeded more slowly and work in this area appears to have occurred more as a *silo* compared with the other principles. Two priority engagement areas that emerged from the MTR were: (1) Promotion of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental management and protection in all relevant sectors; and (2) Support to line ministries, in coordination with Ministry of Environment, to establish environmental targets in their sector strategies and plans.

However, rather than re-assert this mainstreaming agenda the updated PoC results framework is more modest in scope. Environmental mainstreaming does not appear in the results and indicators place emphasis on the expansion of protected areas and the adoption of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Capacity development

This evaluation concludes that the UN played an important role to develop new institutional capacities in many GoA ministries, bodies, and amongst CSO partners. Despite indications that capacity constraints were discussed on a frequent, informal basis, there is no evidence that more formal, structured capacity assessments were conducted as part of the PoC preparation, during implementation, or for the MTR. Three important issues were also identified:

» Some government respondents reported that UN agencies have, in some areas of cooperation, tended to take on too much of the actual programme delivery rather than '*hand-over*' more responsibility to country partners for implementation. There was a request for greater willingness to '…*let government make mistakes and learn by doing*'.

» Government respondents urged UN agencies to place even greater emphasis on capacity development, with a particular focus on in-service training and advisory support related to current government work assignments, particularly the approximation of laws and policies with the EU Acquis and for implementation at local, municipal level.

» Third, perceptions amongst CSOs are that the UN has placed too much emphasis on consultancies at the national level and not enough on capacity support for local and community-based organisations for implementation. There was also a sense that the UN had, in some instances, *encroached* on the 'delivery' responsibilities of CSOs rather than building their abilities to deliver.

Recommendations

Human rights-based approach

As part of preparations for the *next* PoC:

11. Conduct a review with partners at the outcome level of linkages with all relevant concluding observations and recommendations from Albania's treaty body reports. In light of substantial programme achievements and lessons learned, ensure that future planned outcomes, outputs, and activities are responding to any outstanding recommendations.

Recommendations

12. Where feasible, introduce the 3 steps of the HRBA more explicitly into planning, monitoring and review processes, where they are certain to add value[94]. This will help to ensure that programme choices are aligned as closely as possible with human rights concerns in Albania and that an understanding of HRBA as a process is integrated more systematically in the programming process.

Gender equality

No recommendation. The JEC and UNCT should continue its excellent work, including efforts to establish a national coordinating mechanism and capacity for gender equality[95].

Environmental sustainability

At the next annual review and/or as part of preparations for the next PoC:

13. In coordination with Ministry of Environment, assess the feasibility of incorporating results related to the promotion of an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to environmental management and the introduction of indicators for environmental mainstreaming in selected sector strategies and plans.

Capacity development

As part of preparations for the *next* PoC:

14. In priority areas of cooperation and where multiple UN agencies are contributing, conduct a limited number of formal capacity assessments to ensure that capacity development results and activities are responding fully to the situation and are clearly aligned with programmatic strategies.

15. Going forward, the UNCT should ensure that all capacity development initiatives are designed to be as technically relevant as possible to the specific tasks at hand and that they produce actionable results, such as policy recommendations, draft regulations, codes, and the skills to see them implemented. Given the high relevance and lack thereof of data monitoring systems to support evidence based policy-making, the UNCT should consider providing greater direct technical advice and support to INSTAT.

Results-based management (RBM)

The essence of RBM is planning and managing so that the processes, products and services of development cooperation contribute to the achievement of desired results: outputs, outcomes and

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[94] The road map to prepare the next PoC (2017-2021) asserts: 'A human rights-based approach is crucial to ensure inclusiveness, non-discrimination and accountability of the development agenda'. A combined HRBA-RBM refresher training is planned for programme staff as part of PoC preparations. United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Albania 2017-2021, Road Map. May 2014.15. It should be noted that the application of a HRBA is highly time consuming and may not be appropriate or desired by all sectors.
[95] For example, it is noted that the UNCT is currently supporting the GoA to prepare a new National Strategy on Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-based Violence and Domestic Violence (2016-2020) that is fully aligned with the draft NSDI II (2015-2020).

impacts which are aligned with national development priorities. The major weaknesses of the **original PoC results framework** were: (1) the lack of an outcome monitoring framework, (2) no explicit links with NSDI I strategic priorities, policies, and monitoring indicators, and (3) no mention of the major assumptions or risks that underpinned the programme design. Combined, these would have helped to make clear, measureable connections between the expected contributions of the PoC and national development priorities[96]. Overall, PoC annual progress reports were good, well-structured, and readable. But the weaknesses described above meant that the contribution analysis at the level of outcomes and the NSDI I was either missing or implied. Overall, the structure of the original PoC results framework and subsequent reporting focused mainly on activities and outputs. This meant:

» There was no explicit *theory of change* for how the results of the PoC were intended to contribute to the expected outcomes and to specific NSDI I priorities[97];

» There was no basis for measuring the change; and

» Reports could not fully tell a fully compelling story about the benefits and value of UN cooperation, in terms of progress towards national development priorities.

Several of these weaknesses also apply to the *revised* **PoC results framework (2015-2016)**. There are still no explicit links to the priorities and indicators contained in the draft NSDI II[98] and the consolidated, updated framework, as a stand-alone document, does not always offer a clear, coherent enough story about where and how the GoA and UN are planning making a difference.

The recommendations in this section can be summed up as having to do with: connecting the dots. They are important for establishing a sound theory of change for programme assistance, in relation to planned outcomes and country priorities.

Recommendations

To prepare the next PoC (2017-2021):

16. Ensure that the PoC results framework includes:

4. A row to identify the <u>specific</u> strategic priorities and policies from the draft NSDI II to which the PoC outcomes are expected to contribute.

5. Additional outcome indicators (3 to 5 per outcome) that reflect the actual institutional changes expected from programme cooperation (see discussion and 4 examples in section 3.5.5). Where possible, these should include relevant indicators from the finalised NSDI II monitoring framework.

6. The key assumptions and risks that underpin the programme design and include these in the PoC results framework.

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[96] For example, a comparison of the NSDI I and PoC pillars 1 and 2 (5 outcomes from 1.1 through 2.2) found that, of 8 indicators at the outcome level that could have been used in the PoC, only 2 were These are: Corruption perception index (NSDI indicator 6 for anti-corruption and PoC 1.3.4 indicator 3); and No. trafficking victims (NSDI indicator 7 for organised crime and PoC 1.3.2 indicator 2)

[97] It is important to note that during interviews with UN programme staff and PoC partners there was certainly an implicit understanding amongst some stakeholders of the expected contribution of cooperation results to national priorities. However, there was no formal plan or map, as such.

[98] This can be attributed to the change in government in 2013 and that fact that the NSDI II (2014-2020) is still being reviewed by the new government. However, the GoA has made clear its 6 priorities and the EU has identified 5 priorities for accession. Identification of preliminary priorities, based on the above and the draft NSDI II is both possible and important for the overall logic of programme assistance.

Recommendations

17. Together with country partners, prepare **theory of change diagrams** for each outcome that will summarise how UN programme cooperation is expected to make a contribution to the outcome and to selected NSDI II priorities. As far as possible, these should make explicit reference to GoA and EU accession priorities. Use the updated framework and theories of change to structure future progress reports and communication pieces.

Management arrangements for the PoC

This evaluation concludes that the revised PoC management structure for the period 2015-2016 complies with the standard operating procedures for DaO. Country partners at both strategic and technical levels have expressed satisfaction with the arrangements and they have produced a flow of performance information from OWGs to the JEC to inform decision-making.

The **joint biennial work plans (JBWP)** prepared for the period 2015-2016 are of very high quality. They offer a signed, statement of commitment and partnership for the achievement of joint results. They also provide a strong vehicle for joint programming by PoC partners, without the added transaction costs of having to develop separate joint programme documents. Most importantly, the JBWP identify the un-funded deliverables for the period, providing the clearest possible view of what results will not be achieved for lack of funding.

The inter-agency **UN Communications Team** is working very effectively to promote the results of GoA-UN cooperation, to support common advocacy priorities, and to raise awareness about key development challenges in Albania. The impressive digital face of GoA-UN cooperation in Albania, including an active social media presence is important for the success of programme cooperation.

There are also ongoing challenges:

» The PoC results framework and work plans are still too '*one-sided*' in that they do not reflect the contributions of GoA sector plans and budgets.

» For UN Agencies, the burden related to work planning, monitoring and reporting is still very large. While the expected simplification of procedures for planning, monitoring, and reporting has not happened, the overall high quality of PoC annual reviews and reports, including the MTR process and report suggest that a balance has been found between time and resources spent for reporting on PoC results vis-à-vis UN agency corporate results. However, this has come at the expense of UN staff time and energy.

» The preparation of joint biennial work plans (JBWP) for the PoC is more of a consolidation of UN agency work plans rather than a joint work planning process with partners. It is not clear that the JBWPs actually do reflect a joint visioning between the collaborating UN agencies and country partners.

» Finally, lessons identified through the annual and mid-term review process have not always been fully incorporated into the results and indicators of the updated PoC results framework.

Recommendations

To address the burden of work planning, monitoring, and reporting: <u>No recommendation</u>

The need for UN Agencies at country level to respond to their corporate results frameworks is related to the separate governance mechanisms of UN agencies and to the accountability of country representatives to agency executive directors in headquarters. This dynamic affects all UNCTs, whether supporting a DaO one programme or standard UNDAF. The Albania UNCT has no scope to alter these mechanisms and the incentive systems they produce.

18. To ensure that the Joint Biennial Work Plans (JBWP) actually do reflect a joint vision of the programme partners, the UNCT should consider formalising a 'joint visioning' moment prior to preparation of UN agency and OWG work plans.

This would provide an opportunity to reflect first on country sectoral or thematic priorities for the year and the priorities for programme cooperation PRIOR to the preparation of agency-specific work plans. The joint visioning moment could take the form of a meeting between OWG co-chairs and outcome coordinators to define specific priorities and possible alignment between GoA and UN system efforts.

19. Building on the recommendations above under RBM, each JBWP cover page should include the relevant outcome indicators and it should identify the specific strategic priorities and policies from the draft NSDI II to which the results are expected to contribute.

20. For the updating of the 2016 work plans and as part of the preparation for the next PoC (2017-2021) the outcome coordinators and OWGs should take stock of all previous lessons-learned and ensure that they have been accounted for in programme strategy, results, and indicators.

21. The outcome coordinators (Heads of UN agencies) should ensure that they compensate for the loss of the RBM Advisory Committee and sustain the flow of PoC performance information to the GoA and other partners.

22. To address the 'one-sided' nature of PoC strategy and plans, the joint biennial work plans (JBWP) should be amended to include references to relevant line items, action points, and budgets of GoA sector plans and programmes.

The aim is not to duplicate GoA working documents, but rather to ensure transparent and actionable links between the two and encourage regular opportunities, such as during the joint visioning moment recommended above, to reflect on the linkages and validate that GoA-UN cooperation is as relevant and targeted as possible. This recommendation will become more important as the GoA-EU begin implementing sector budget support programmes.

23. To ensure adequate incentive and recognition of inter-agency communication efforts, every member of the UN Communication Team should have their responsibilities included in formal job descriptions and in annual performance appraisal instruments and reviews.

UN Comparative advantages in Albania

A UN One Programme or UNDAF aims to increase the effectiveness of the UN system's development cooperation at country level. According to guidelines, it should demonstrate the **comparative advantages** of the UNCT, and its strategic contributions for the achievement of national development priorities. UNCTs are advised to assess their comparative advantages as objectively as possible and to seek feedback from past and current partners and other external stakeholders to answer two key questions:

1. What are the UNCT's specific capacities related to specific national development challenges?

2. How is the UNCT positioned in the challenge relative to other actors?

This evaluation concludes that the preparation of the PoC did not include a formal, structured process to review and consider the UNCT's comparative advantages vis-à-vis those of other major partners working in Albania. The MTR background papers and process in 2014 did include analysis of UN comparative advantage but they mainly provided a description of mandates and past successful strategies. While important, they did not provide enough of the *comparative* element which is essential for a discussion of comparative advantage and to make a choice about strategic areas for programme cooperation[99].

To balance the conclusion, it is important to again cite the evidence presented in sections 3.2 and 3.3. The substantial achievements during the period 20120-2014 and the clear progress towards outcomes suggest that, broadly, the UN was working in programme areas where it had comparative advantages. A more focused attempt to analyse comparative advantages, including more objective feedback from development partners and an attempt to map and understand the advantages of other development actors, would likely have helped the UN and GoA to further sharpen PoC results and strategies.

Recommendations

As part of the preparations for the next PoC (2017-2021):

24. The UNCT, as part of its country analysis exercise, should use the services of a third party with knowledge of the PoC and current GoA priorities and sector programme approach to conduct a short review of the UN's comparative advantages in Albania.

This is not a stand-alone exercise, but should part-and-parcel of the planned country analysis exercise. The review can be done rapidly through interviews with key programme partners. The aim would be seek confidential feedback from GoA and donors on the UN's positioning and strengths for continued programme cooperation vis-à-vis other development partners. The review could also be used to gather frank advice from GoA partners on the role of the UN in sector programmes supported with IPA II resources.

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[99] In the MTR background reports, only 2 of 4 papers had sections on UN comparative advantage that mentioned the roles and advantages of other partners working in the same sectoral or thematic areas. The Governance and Rule of Law paper points out that the normative agenda for human rights is not one where the UN can automatically claim comparative advantage, citing the roles and performance of EU institutions and regional treaty bodies such as the Council of Europe. The paper on Social Inclusion argues that this is 'not a top priority for EU member states' and there are no other partners doing comparable work.

The PoC as a framework for coordination and partnership

This evaluation concludes that the GoA-UN PoC was, and continues to be, an effective vehicle for coordination and partnership, with a high degree of knowledge and ownership of cooperation results amongst partners.

> » Work plans prepared by the multi-partner output working groups (OWG) are closely aligned with the POC results framework and strategies. This suggests that PoC is not a paper entity but rather a live programme instrument that drives day-to-day development cooperation;

> » In interviews, programme partners from government and civil society noted the flexibility of UN agencies and their ability to respond quickly to requests for specific technical assistance and to take advantage of new opportunities. This flexibility and resourcefulness was identified in the country-led evaluation in 2010 and continues to be a hallmark of cooperation in Albania[100].

> » The results demonstrate that some PoC results had real influence over the scope of draft or approved GoA legislation, sector strategies, and action plans (please see summary table in section 3.3). This suggests that PoC results and strategies are seen by partners as being connected and relevant to the priorities and business of the GoA.

> » As noted above, partners from both government and civil society were able to speak meaningfully and specifically about the role and contributions of the UNCT for the achievement of these programme results and how they helped to improve institutional performance. Three specific examples of this are PoC achievements related to: Addressing domestic violence, Advancing territorial reform, and improving services for Roma and other vulnerable groups.

> » Finally, and perhaps most importantly, feedback from PoC partners suggests that planning, management, and decision-making for the PoC at both strategic and technical levels is a joint affair, characterised by generally positive, open, and collegial relationships. Overall, the evaluation team noted the consistently high regard with which programme partners spoke of one another.

Recommendations

No recommendation. The conclusion above on coordination and partnership is closely related to conclusions on relevance, effectiveness, and capacity development. Please see related recommendations above.

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[100] COUNTRY LED EVALUATION, DELIVERING AS ONE ALBANIA, FINAL REPORT, 7 JULY 2010, 28.

4.2 Lessons

1. **This evaluation confirms that a successful one programme approach must involve joint programming by stakeholders, but it does not necessarily have to include joint implementation by two or more UN Agencies and their partners.** The joint biennial work plans (JBWP) provide a strong vehicle for joint programming by PoC partners, without the added transaction costs of having to develop separate joint programme documents or negotiate fund management modalities. The innovation in Albania is that the JBWP identify the *un-funded* deliverables for the period, providing the clearest possible view of what results will <u>not</u> be achieved for lack of funding.

2. The gender theme group played a major role to support gender mainstreaming in the PoC and gender equality results were a significant achievement. This confirms the importance of a well-led and resourced inter-agency Gender Theme Group, with senior programme staff from constituent UN Agencies, to reflect on how programme cooperation results and strategies will affect women and men and to incorporate gender dimensions into work plans and disaggregate data.

The approach of the gender theme group in Albania highlights a niche for the UN to help pre-accession governments and the EU to mainstream gender into sector budget programmes. This would involve policy advice and technical support to adopt and implement international and EU normative standards for gender equality, including special temporary measures[101].

3. The role of the UN in helping the GoA to move the territorial reform agenda forward was important and offers a strong example of how the UN's neutrality and impartiality can be a major advantage when engaging in very complex and often sensitive, political challenges related to decentralisation. **The successful engagement of the UN in the territorial reform initiative also highlights the enduring appeal of strong management and programme procedures**. International partners came to the UN for its perceived competence as a trustee of funds, and for its management capacity along with a solid track record of procurement and recruitment[102]. These advantages are equally relevant for the sector budget approach being implemented by the EU and GoA.

4. GoA-UN programme cooperation focused strongly on legal and policy development based on international standards and on evidence. This depends on effective information and data gathering frameworks and analysis. These are also areas where beneficiary capacity is relatively weaker and resources are scarcer. **UN system support to develop statistical and other data gathering and analysis systems, aligned with GoA and EU accession priorities, will be highly valuable in the medium term**.

5. The GoA-UN PoC achieved significant results where there was clear alignment with national priorities and where there was strong ownership of the initiative by national authorities not only during the planning stage but also during implementation. **Country leadership of the programming process and the responsibility of senior and mid-level managers in Government for the achievement of results is an essential ingredient of success**.

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[101] Based on feedback from Gender Theme Group.
[102] Based on UNDP Results Oriented Annual Report and lessons learned, 2015.

6. For many UN Agencies capacity development has become a mantra. There is a danger that UN Agencies assume that programme support is building the right kinds of capacity in the right ways without having been sufficiently diligent about understanding the actual capacity constraints and development needs that exist. Middle income countries, such as Albania, have many more sources for capacity development than traditional development assistance. In these contexts, **it is very important that formal, structured capacity assessments are budgeted for and conducted as part of programme preparation**.

7. **The burden related to UN Agency work planning, monitoring and reporting is still very large and the expected simplification of procedures from a DaO approach has not yet happened**. This evaluation made no recommendation to address this situation because there is little scope at country level to change the governance and accountability mechanisms of UN agencies and the incentive systems they produce. The overall high quality of PoC annual reviews and reports, including the MTR process and report, suggest that a balance has been found between time and resources spent for reporting on PoC results vis-à-vis UN agency corporate results. However, this has come at the expense of UN staff time and energy. While Albania is no longer a DaO pilot country and the one programme approach is firmly established, elements of lesson 5 from the Country Led Evaluation[103] should be heeded:

> *"…there are few corporate rewards to be enjoyed. Performance assessments criteria do not recognize the additional responsibilities and pressures faced by staff in One UN pilots… Also, work experience in a UN pilot does not necessarily improve career prospects across the system. Under these conditions, working in UN pilots can be a risk… in the absence of appropriate corporate recognition and incentive mechanisms."*

8. **Consolidation of results and indicators in one programme results frameworks should not come at the expense of clarity in the results chain and theory of change**. Knowledgeable external readers and reviewers should be able to trace a clear and compelling story line from the outputs expected of Government-UN cooperation thru to the outcome indicators and to specific policy priorities and indicators in the national development plan or targeted sector plans and programmes.

However, this evaluation found that some aspects of the original PoC results matrix are stronger than the revised one for the period 2015-2016. The consolidated, updated framework, as a stand-alone document, does not always offer a clear, coherent enough story about where and how the GoA and UN are planning to make a difference (*i.e.* the dots are not as well connected). And in some cases the clearest picture of intended results is only available at the work plan level (see discussion in section 3.5.5).

9. In middle and upper income countries where UN programme support is focused on the provision of expertise and policy advice rather than service delivery, **cash assistance to government does not appear to be an essential ingredient for effective partnership and programme ownership**. Caution is warranted in the use of this lesson without further review and study in other middle and upper income country contexts.

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[103] COUNTRY LED EVALUATION, DELIVERING AS ONE ALBANIA, FINAL REPORT, 7 JULY 2010, 382. P95.

Annexes

A. Evaluation Matrix

This is an important tool to guide the evaluation. It is derived from the terms of reference and it helps to make the evaluation process as transparent as possible. It will assist the evaluation team, the evaluation management group, and steering committee to develop and understand the main evaluative arguments. The matrix shows the evaluation objectives and criteria, the related key questions and sub-questions for investigation, the data collection methods, the sources of information, and the indicators or standards of success.

Evaluation Matrix: Government of Albania-United Nations Programme of Cooperation (PoC), 2012-2016

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
Objective I. To assess the *contribution* of UN system to national development priorities through the PoC outcomes:					
Relevance	1. How relevant is the PoC to Albania's country priorities and international commitments?	1.1 How relevant are the PoC outcomes and strategies to Albania's national development priorities, per the National Strategy for Development and Integration, 2014-2020?	- Document review focused on links between the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI) 2007-2013 and PoC results framework - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation (see Annex C) - UNCT; Government of Albania (GoA) officials - UN outcome coordinators (former) - CSO and PS representatives - Donor representatives	- Identification of national priorities and targets in the PoC results framework and a clear theory of change for how UN supported programmes will make a contribution - Common understanding amongst stakeholders about the expected and actual links between PoC results and selected national priorities - Stakeholders can identify actual or potential areas of divergence between the NSDI and PoC results and strategies
		1.2 How relevant are the PoC outcomes to the goals and commitments of Albania's ratified treaties and international agreements? Specifically: a. Concluding observations and recommendations from human rights treaty body reports; b. Major challenges and issues identified in National Plans and Strategies related to MEAs such as the CBD, and FCCC.	- Document review focused on relevant treaty body reports, concluding observations and recommendations, and linkages with PoC results framework - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation including recent relevant treaty body reports from OHCHR and repositories from MEAs - UNCT; - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators (former) - CSO and PS representatives - Donor representatives	- Clear identification of specific issues, recommendations, and/or objectives from treaty body reports in PoC results matrix and programme strategies - Stakeholders can identify specific results, strategies from cooperation related to issues, recommendations, and/or objectives from treaty body reports - Stakeholders can identify actual or potential areas of divergence between treaty body recommendations and results and strategies of PoC and NSDI

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
Effectiveness	2. What were the UN's actual contributions to the achievement of the PoC outcomes and Albania's country priorities?	2.1 To what extent were planned outputs achieved, as per the results framework in the original PoC?	- Document review focused on mid-term review, annual reviews and progress reports. - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UN outcome coordinators (former)	-Objective comparison of actual outputs achieved against the original plan, including consideration of annual adjustments - Programme stakeholders can offer concrete examples of outputs achieved, lessons, good practices, as well as constraints
		2.2 To what extent have the outputs of UN programme cooperation contributed to, or are they likely to contribute to, the PoC outcomes, based on performance against the indicators in the results framework?	- Document review focused on progress towards outcome indicators - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps	- The actual outputs are likely to make a significant contribution towards the expected outcomes - There are positive trends in the outcome indicators - Stakeholders at both the strategic and programmatic levels can offer examples, stories for how new skills, abilities, services have led to, or are leading to, changes in institutional performance and/or behaviours
		2.3 To what extent have PoC results contributed to progress for achievement of country priorities, particularly the EU integration process, and nationalized MDGs?	- Document review focused on contribution of PoC results and strategies to national development priorities and indicators - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps - Donor reps	- Positive trends in key NSDI indicators and specific indicators and targets related to EU accession - Plausible evidence that UN-supported results under the PoC have made a contribution to national priorities and change in NSDI indicators, with emphasis on policies and targets related to the EU accession - Stakeholders at both the strategic and programmatic levels can offer examples, stories for how institutional and/or behavioural changes resulting from PoC have influenced concrete changes in national development situation and indicators
Efficiency	3. Were the PoC results achieved at reasonably low cost and were resources used appropriately?	3.1 How realistic were the outcome budgets for the results expected?	- Document review focused on the PoC budget, annual changes thru work plans - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Outcome budgets are broadly in line with scale and scope of expected results
		3.2. To what extent were the planned budgets realised thru core, non-core,	- Document review focused on financial analysis and delivery	- UNCT - GoA officials	- Expected vs. actual performance in resource mobilisation for core, non-core, and UN coherence

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
		and UN coherence fund sources, and did the UN coherence fund increase the funding available for the PoC?	rates for the 11 outcomes from programme reviews and progress reports	- UN outcome coordinators	fund sources - Positive perceptions about the UN coherence fund as a vehicle for additional resource mobilisation
		3.3 How well aligned was the annual work planning process with the national budget process and did this generate greater coherence in programme delivery and results?	""	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Positive perceptions about the degree of alignment and identification of specific benefits for programme design and delivery
		3.4 What was the overall performance in programme delivery	""	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Positive trends in delivery rates for PoC outcomes
		3.5 To what extent were outputs achieved in an economic manner (i.e. avoiding waste and duplication) and how well did stakeholders adapt to funding shortfalls?	- Interviews	- UNCT - OMT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators	- Positive perceptions about costs vs. benefits of PoC results and the efficiency of implementing modalities employed - Positive perceptions about the financial costs of UN programmatic assistance vis-à-vis those of other international partners
		3.6 To what extent were outputs of acceptable quality and achieved in a timely manner?	- Interviews	- UNCT - OMT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators	- Positive perceptions about the timeliness and quality of new products and services delivered under PoC [UNCT; GoA; Outcome coord.] - Positive performance of vendors delivering goods and services under PoC [OMT]
		3.7 Could the actual outputs have been delivered more 'efficiently' by other partners or with the use of other partnership approaches	- Interviews		
Sustainability	4. How sustainable are the results that have been achieved?	4.1. To what extent did UN programme cooperation, including advocacy, lead to institutional changes that will help to sustain programme results?	- Document review focused on institutional measures in place or expected that will help to sustain PoC results and strategies - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT; - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps - Donor reps	- Evidence of: a. Concrete changes in national laws, policies, regulations, and plans that can sustain PoC results and strategies b. The scaling-up of pilot initiatives, c. The adoption of major lessons and good practices that led to changes in the strategic and organisational direction of the GoA, d. Additional allocations of national budget and/or other donor resources e. The institutional capacity is in place to sustain levels of achievement or a strategy and plan exists

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
					for how it will be developed and funded - Triangulation of perceptions about the sustainability of PoC results and strategies - Stakeholders at both the strategic and programmatic levels can offer examples, stories for how Albanian institutions are sustaining programmatic results
		4.2 How did complementarities and collaboration fostered by the PoC between UN agencies and their implementing partners contribute to, or are expected to contribute to, the sustainability of results?	- Interviews	- UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps	- Triangulation of perceptions about the identification and use of complementarities and level of collaboration between UN agencies and implementing partners

In order to evaluate the PoC against the criteria and major questions above under objective I, the following *process* factors will be examined to understand how these affected the UN's contributions for the achievement of PoC outcomes and national development priorities.

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
Objective II. To assess the *process* of the UN system's contribution through the PoC for the achievement of country priorities [Focus on effectiveness and efficiency of processes, mechanisms, procedures to plan, implement, and monitor the PoC and report on progress]					
Effectiveness	1. How effectively were the UNDG's programming principles applied to the PoC?	1.1 To what extent did the PoC promote and apply a **human rights based approach (HRBA) and gender equality standards and principles** (to achieve outputs and contribute to the PoC outcomes?	- Document review focused on the overall PoC design, annual work plans, programme reviews, and progress reports - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups	- PoC strategies, results and indicators address the standards of ratified human rights treaties including international labour standards[104] and address major recommendations of treaty body reports - PoC strategies, results and indicators have been informed by gender analysis and some understanding of how women and men experience problems differently in Albania - Major PoC indicators are disaggregated by gender - Evidence of (1) Causality analysis, (2) role-pattern analysis, and (3) Capacity gap analysis in analytical and planning documents - PoC strategies, results and indicators are informed by key operational HR principles: (1) Non-discrimination and equality; (2) Participation and inclusion; (3) Accountability and the rule of law - Stakeholders at both the strategic and programmatic levels can offer examples, stories for how HRBA was applied during the programming process
		1.2 Did target groups identified as vulnerable and at risk of discrimination and marginalisation benefit from the PoC?	- Document review focused on the target groups identified in PoC design, annual work plans, programme reviews, and progress reports	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Evidence that programme efforts were successfully targeted, delivered to vulnerable groups, including change in disaggregated indicators

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[104] The big 9 are: ICCPR, ICESCR, CERD, CAT, CEDAW, CRC, CMW, and ICPPED & CRPD (the last not yet in force). Also included are the human rights conventions and instruments related to the specialised agencies

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
			- Interviews	- UNCT - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups	- Stakeholders at both strategic and programmatic levels can offer examples, stories about how programme strategy and delivery was adapted to reach vulnerable groups
		1.3 To what extent did the PoC effectively use the principles of **environmental sustainability** to achieve outputs and contribute to the PoC outcomes?	- Document review focused on the overall PoC design, annual work plans, programme reviews, and progress reports	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Evidence that the PoC was informed by an understanding of the linkages between environment and development, including screening for environmental issues and review of draft PoC results
			- Interviews	- UNCT - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups	- Evidence of the use of key ES principles for the formulation of the PoC: Integration and Interdependence; Transparency, Public Participation and Access to Information and Remedies; Precaution; Polluter-Pays; Responsibility for trans-boundary Harm - Stakeholder examples, stories about how programme strategy and delivery was informed, adapted to address ES concerns
		1.4 To what extent did the PoC succeed to **strengthen national capacities, support national ownership and execution** of programmes, and make use of **national expertise and technologies**?	- Document review focused on the overall PoC design, annual work plans, programme reviews, and progress reports	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Evidence that programmatic work under each outcome was informed by an understanding of the major capacity assets and constraints of implementing partners, including capacity assessments
			- Interviews	- UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps	- Evidence of specific capacity development strategies and plans, making use of national expertise and technologies contributing to each outcome - Stakeholder perceptions about the level of engagement and success in national capacity development under the PoC
		1.5 To what extent did the PoC strengthen the capacities for data collection and analysis and improve the **availability of disaggregated**	- Document review focused on the overall PoC design, annual work plans, programme reviews, and progress reports	- Reference materials for evaluation	- Evidence of specific PoC results and strategies related to data collection and analysis

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
		data on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, income levels, and geographic location	- Interviews	- UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - UN theme groups - CSOs and PS reps	- Where relevant, PoC indicators are disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, income levels, and geographic location - Positive stakeholder perceptions about the availability of disaggregated data from PoC implementation and influence on national statistical systems
		Results Based Management 1.6 To what extent is the PoC results framework logical, results-oriented, and realistic given the strategies, timeframe, and resources committed?	- Document review focused on the design of the PoC results framework and its use for annual reviews and progress reporting - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - UN outcome coordinators	- Assessment of the PoC results framework against UNDG guidelines and SMART criteria - Evidence and positive stakeholder perceptions about the 'user-friendly' and 'sensible' aspects of the PoC results framework
		1.7 To what extent are the risks and assumptions made clear in the PoC design and how well were they considered during the implementation of programme cooperation?	- Document review focused on the identification of critical assumptions and risks in the overall PoC design and their use for annual reviews and progress reporting - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - UN outcome coordinators	- Assessment of assumptions and risks in the overall PoC design and theory of change - Evidence that assumptions and risks were considered during programme reviews and for progress reporting
		1.9 How effective were the management arrangements for joint annual work planning, monitoring and progress reporting	- Document review focused on the PoC management arrangements and responsibilities, TORs, and their actual performance for progress monitoring, learning, and reporting - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators - CSOs and PS reps	Programme management arrangements [output working groups, outcome coordinators] produced: a. Effective joint programming processes by UN agencies and implementing partners b. A regular, user-friendly stream of information and data about progress against the plan c. Actionable lessons and good practices for consideration by the UNCT and JEC - Positive stakeholder perceptions about the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall management arrangements for PoC progress monitoring, learning, and reporting, including the

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
					roles of the UNCT and JEC
		1.10 To what extent was the PoC results framework sufficiently flexible to respond to new challenges and opportunities that arose during implementation?	- Document review focused on the annual reviews and progress reports - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators	- Evidence that outcome coordinators, in liaison with UN agencies, could adapt results and strategies to new situation and had flexibility to arrange resources as required to achieve the desired outcomes - Evidence that the UNCT and JEC were open and responsive to requests to adapt overall PoC design
Effectiveness	2. To what extent did the PoC employ the comparative advantage of the UN System in Albania?	2.1 How were the comparative advantages of the UN system in Albania identified?	- Document review focused on the PoC and preparatory documents and reports on UNCT comparative advantages - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators (former)	Evidence that the assessment of UN comparative advantages in Albania was credible and involved perceptions and agreement of stakeholders outside the UN
		2.2 How well were these comparative advantages positioned in PoC results and strategies and in relation to other development actors in the country?	- Document review focused on the PoC and mid-term review Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators	Stakeholder perceptions about how well the UN's comparative advantages were considered and positioned during the selection of PoC priorities, results, and strategies
Effectiveness	3. How effective was the PoC as a coordination and partnership framework?	3.1 To what extent was the PoC used by UN agencies and IPs to prepare work plans and targets and by GoA to inform sector plans and strategies?	- Document review focused on the joint annual work plans - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators (former)	- Clear links between the joint annual work plans and the results, indicators, and budget framework of the PoC - Evidence of links between the PoC results and strategies and relevant GoA sector plans and strategies
		3.2 To what extent has the PoC contributed to greater synergy between UN agencies and GoA partners	- Interviews	- UNCT - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators (former)	- Triangulation of perceptions about the benefits of the PoC and a 'one programme' approach for greater coherence and collaboration by UN agencies and GoA partners
		3.3 Did the PoC promote effective **partnerships and strategic alliances** around the main National	- Interviews	- UNCT; - GoA officials - UN outcome coordinators	- Evidence of new partnerships or alliances related to PoC programming and advocacy

Criteria	Key questions	Sub-Questions	Data collection methods	Sources of information	Indicators, Success Standards
		development goals and PoC outcomes areas?		- One UN Communication Team - CSOs and PS reps - Donor reps	- Evidence of increased public awareness of national development priorities and the UN's contribution
Efficiency	4. To what extent did the PoC help to minimize transaction costs for the GoA and for UN agencies?	4.1 To what extent and in what way has the PoC contributed to a reduction of transaction costs for the government and for the UN agencies? How can they be further reduced?	- Document review focused on the overall PoC design, programme reviews, and progress reports - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - GoA officials - UNCT - UN outcome coordinators	- Evidence and perceptions about how the PoC, as a one programme, and its management arrangements affected transaction costs for UN agencies and GoA partners?
		4.2 To what extent have the organisations harmonized procedures in order to reduce transaction cost and to enhance results?	- Document review focused on the OMT work plans and strategies and plans to harmonize business operations - Interviews	- Reference materials for evaluation - UNCT - OMT	- Evidence of progress to institute good practices for harmonized business operations - Estimated cost savings from collaborative procurement - Change in value of purchase orders raised against common LTAs and contracts - Estimated savings from use of common premises - Number of common service agreements and MOUs established - Perceptions of stakeholders that harmonized business operations have improved the quality of procurement and other business services.

B. Agenda of Meetings and Key Informants

**EVALUATION OF
GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA AND UNITED NATIONS
PROGRAMME OF COOPERATION 2012-2016**

**AGENDA OF MEETINGS AND KEY INFORMANTS
14 April- 23 April, 2015
Tirana, Albania**

Members of the Evaluation Mission:

Mr. Alexander MacKenzie, International Consultant, Mission Team Leader
Ms. Sabina Ymeri, National Consultant, Support to the Evaluation Team Leader

Support staff:

Ms. Fioralba Shkodra, Team Leader/UN Coordination Specialist, UNRCO (00355 69 2090254)
Ms. Azeta Collaku, RBM Analyst, UNRCO (00355 66 2001910)
Ms. Letizia Beltrame, UN Coordination Analyst, UNRCO (00355 69 4020043)
Ms. Blerina Karagjozi, UN Coordination Associate, UNRCO (00355 69 4096673)

Monday, 13 April

10:00   *Meeting of the Evaluation Team: Mr. Alexander MacKenzie & Ms. Sabina Ymeri*

Briefing session among the Evaluation Consultants and preparation of the Evaluation Team for meetings to be conducted during 14-23 April, 2015

Tuesday, 14 April

9:00-9:55   *Meeting with Ms. Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun, UN Resident Coordinator*
<u>Venue</u>: UN RC Office

10:00-10:55   *Meeting with Ms. Yesim M. Oruc Kaya, UNDP Country Director and AA*
<u>Venue</u>: UNDP CD office

11:00-11:55   *Meeting with Ms. Antonella Scolamiero, UNICEF Representative*
<u>Venue</u>: UNICEF Office

12:00-13:00   *Meeting with Mr. David Saunders, UN WOMEN Representative*
<u>Venue</u>: UN WOMEN office

13:10-13:55   *Lunch*

14:00-15:30   *Meeting on Programmatic Areas*
<u>Venue</u>: Small Conference Room 2nd Floor

Outcome Coordinators Pillar 1- Governance and Rule of Law
Mr. Arben Rama, Cluster Manager, UNDP

Ms. Teuta Grazhdani, Project Officer, IOM
Ms. Estela Bulku, National Programme Officer, UN Women

UN Output Co-Chairs – Outcome 1 Human Rights
Ms. Entela Lako, Cluster Manager, UNDP
Ms. Emira Shkurti, Legal Advisor, UNICEF
Ms. Elsona Agolli, National Programme Analyst on Youth and Gender, UNFPA

14:00-15:30   **Meeting on Programmatic Areas**
Venue: UN Conference Room

Outcome Coordinators Pillar 2- Economy and Environment
Mr. Eno Ngjela, Programme Analyst, UNDP
Ms. Elvita Kabashi, Programme Officer for Environment, UNDP

UN Output Co-Chairs – Outcome 3 Governance and Rule of Law
Mr. Vladimir Malkaj, Cluster Manager, UNDP
Ms. Elvita Kabashi, Programme Officer for Environment, UNDP
Ms. Fiorela Shalsi, National Programme Manager, UN Women
Mr. Rezart Xhelo, Policy Specialist, GRB and Statistics, UN Women
Ms. Teuta Grazhdani, Project Officer, IOM

15:30-17:30   **Meeting on Programmatic Areas**
Venue: Small Conference Room 2nd Floor

Outcome Coordinators Pillar 3- Regional and Local Development
Mr. Vladimir Malkaj, Cluster Manager, UNDP

UN Output Co-Chairs – Outcome 4 Regional and Local Development
Mr. Vladimir Malkaj, Cluster Manager, UNDP
Ms. Elvita Kabashi, Programme Officer for Environment, UNDP
Mr. Eno Ngjela, Programme Analyst, UNDP
Ms. Erisa Cela, National Programme Coordinator, UN Women

15:30-17:30   **Meeting on Programmatic Areas**
Venue: UN Conference room

Outcome Coordinators Pillar 4- Inclusive Social Policy
Ms. Entela Lako, Cluster Manager, UNDP
Ms. Vera Gavrilova, Deputy Representative UNICEF
Ms. Mariana Bukli, Health and Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF
Ms. Ledia Lazeri, Head of Office, WHO
Mr. Alfred Topi, National Coordinator, ILO

UN Output Co-Chairs – Outcome 3 Inclusive Social Policies
Ms. Mirlinda Bushati, Early Learning Education Specialist, UNICEF
Ms. Alketa Zazo, Social Protection Specialist, UNICEF
Ms. Ledia Lazeri, Head of Office, WHO
Mr. Alfred Topi, National Coordinator, ILO

Wednesday, 15 April

9:30-11:30   **Meeting with UN Country Team** (NRAs will be connected via videoconference call)
Venue: UN Conference Room

12:00-13:00	***Meeting with Ms. Nora Malaj, Deputy Minister MES and OWG Co-Chair*** <u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Education and Sports

13:00-13:45   ***Lunch***

14:15-15:15   ***Meeting with Ms. Bardhulka Kospiri, Deputy Minister MoSWY and OWG Co-Chair***
<u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

15:45-17:00   ***Meeting with Ms. Genta Sula, Deputy Minister MoSWY and OWG Co-Chair***
<u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth

Thursday, 16 April

10:00-11:00   ***Meeting with Ms. Majlinda Dhuka, Director DDPFFA and JEC Co-Chair***
<u>Venue</u>: Prime Minister's Office (PMO) premises

11:15-12:45   ***Meeting with Ms. Oriana Arapi, Director Strategic Unit, DDPFFA***
Ms. Alpina Qiriazi, Foreign Aid Coordinator, DDPFFA
<u>Venue</u>: PMO premises

13:00-14:00   ***Lunch***

14:15-15:15   ***Meeting with Mr. Bledi Cuci, Minister of State for Local Government and OWG Co-Chair***
<u>Venue</u>: PMO premises

15:30-17.00   ***Meeting with Ms. Valbona Kuko, Former Director DDPFFA/PMO and Former JEC Co-Chair***
<u>Venue</u>: TBD

Friday, 17 April

9:00-9:45   ***Meeting with UN Operations Management Team (OMT)***
<u>Venue</u>: UN Conference Room

10:00-11:00   ***Meeting with UN Gender Theme Group***
<u>Venue</u>: UN Conference Room

                    Mr. David Saunders, UN Women Representative
                    Ms. Ledia Lazri, WHO Head of Office
                    Mr. Alfred Topi, ILO National Coordinator
                    Ms. Alma Jani, IOM Head of Office/Resource Management Officer
                    Ms. Manuela Bello, UNFPA Assistant Representative
                    Ms. Estela Bulku, UN Women National Programme Coordinator
                    Ms. Entela Lako, UNDP Cluster Manager
                    Ms. Alketa Zazo, UNICEF Social Protection Specialist
                    Ms. Emira Shkurti, UNICEF Legal Advisor
                    Ms. Bujana Hoti, UNAIDS Coordinator
                    Ms. Fioralba Shkodra, UNRCO Team Leader/UN Coordination Specialist
                    Ms. Ela Banaj, UNDP National Project Officer
                    Ms. Aroa Santiago Bautista, FAO, Gender and Social Protection Consultant

11:15-12:30   ***Meeting with national Civil Society Organizations and Private Sector representatives***
<u>Venue</u>: UN Conference Room

Ms. Elma Tershana, Executive Director, Child Rights Observatory
Mr. Altin Hazizaj, General Director, CRCA
Ms. Jezerca Tigani, Country Representative, Terre des Hommes
Ms. Anila Meço, Country Director, Save the Children
Mr. Albi Greva, Executive Director, Vodafone Albania

13:00-14:30   ***Working lunch with SDC, SIDA, ADA and IDC representatives***
            <u>Venue</u>: Safran Restaurant, Rruga Skënderbej

Mr. Heinz Habertheuer, Country Director, Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
Mr. Holger Tausch, Deputy Head of Mission, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
Ms. Lisa Fredriksson, Counsellor, Head of Development Cooperation (SIDA), Embassy of Sweden
Mr. Andrea Senatori, Director, Italian Development Cooperation (IDC) Office, Embassy of Italy

14:45-15:30   ***Meeting with One UN Communication Team***
            <u>Venue</u>: UN Conference Room

Ms. Nora Kushti, UN Communication Specialist UNRCO
Ms. Anila Miria, Communication Officer UNICEF
Ms. Bujana Hoti, Coordinator UNAIDS
Ms. Fiorela Shalsi, National Programme Manager UN Women
Ms. Elida Nuri, National Programme Associate UNFPA
Ms. Edlira Baka Peço, Protection Associate UNHCR
Ms. Teuta Grazhdani, Project Officer IOM
Ms. Gladiola Kashari, Administrative Assistant WHO
Mr. Besnik Baka, Consultant UN Women

Saturday, 18 April

Field visits   - House of Colors, a center for vulnerable and neglected children (9.30 hrs)
               - Nishtulla community centr, a multifunctional community center which serves the Roma
                community (11.00 hrs)

Sunday, 19 April

Weekend -   ***Evaluation Team meets as per their arrangements***

Monday, 20 April

9:30-10:30   ***Meeting with Ms. Elona Gjebrea, Deputy Minister MoI and OWG Co-Chair***
            <u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Interior

11:00-12:00   ***Meeting with Mr. Ilir Bejtja, Deputy Minister of Energy and OWG Co-Chair***
            <u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Energy and Industry

12:30-13:30   ***Meeting with Ms. Brunilda Paskali, Deputy Minister MEDTE and OWG Co-Chair***
            <u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Entrepreneurship
13:45-14:30   ***Lunch***

14:45-15:45   ***Meeting with Ms. Milva Ekonomi, Deputy Minister MoH and OWG Co-Chair***
            <u>Venue</u>: Ministry of Health

16:15-17:15   ***Meeting with Ms. Valbona Petoshati, Head of Project Coordination Sector, INSTAT*** <u>Venue</u>: INSTAT

Tuesday, 21 April

9:00-9:45   ***Debriefing Meeting with Ms. Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun, UN Resident Coordinator***
<u>Venue</u>: UN RC Office

10:15-11:15   ***Meeting with Ms. Romana Vlahutin, Head of European Union Delegation***
<u>Venue</u>: EU Delegation premises

11:45-12:45   ***Meeting with Ms. Tahseen Sayed, Country Manager World Bank Office***
<u>Venue</u>: WB Office premises

13:00-13:45   ***Lunch***

14:00-15:00   ***Meeting with Ms. Vasilika Hysi, Parliament***
<u>Venue</u>: Parliament premises

15:30-16:30   ***Meeting with Ms. Irma Baraku, Anti-Discrimination Commissioner***
<u>Venue</u>: Anti-Discrimination Commissioner Office premises

16:45-17:45   ***Meeting with Mr. Igli Totozani, Ombudsman***
<u>Venue</u>: Ombudsman Office premises

Wednesday, 22 April

10:00-12:00   ***Wrap-up and debriefing meeting with UNCT***
<u>Venue</u>: UN Conference Room

12:30-13:30   ***Lunch (Internal wrap up work within the team (UNRCO staff and Evaluation Team)***

14:00-17:00   **Tentative meetings with previous Outcome Coordinators and current OWGs Chairs**

C. Reference materials for the evaluation

Folders		Title of Documents	Availability (26 March/15)
01.	Main Programme Documents	Common Country Programme Document 2012-2016	yes
		GoA – UN Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016 http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/news/GoA-UN-Cooperation-ProgrammeSIGNED.pdf	yes
02.	PoC Results Framework	PoC Results Frameworks 2012-2014 http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/GoA-UN%20Programme%20of%20Cooperation_Results%20Framework%202012-2016.pdf	yes
		PoC Results Frameworks 2015-2016 http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/GoA-UN%20Programme%20of%20Cooperation_New%20Results%20Framework%202015-2016.pdf	yes
03.	Annual Progress Report	Annual Progress Report 2012 http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/UN%20Progress%20Report%202012%20final%20eng.pdf	yes
		Annual Progress Report 2013 http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/2013%20Annual%20Progress%20Report_small.pdf	yes
		Annual Progress Report 2014	yes
04.	Mid Term Review	RBM - Mid Term Review Workshop - 19 Sept. 2013	yes
		UNCT Report of Country Analysis Workshop / Oct. 2013	yes
		5 Background Papers which fed to the MTR	yes
		UNCT Minutes regarding MTR exercise - April 2014	yes
		Mid-Term Review Report 2014	yes
05.	Annual Programme Review	Annual Programme Review - Meeting Report 2012	yes
		Annual Programme Review - Meeting Report 2013	yes
		Annual Programme Review Report & Minutes 2014	yes
		Annual Programme Review Guidelines and Templates (narrative and financial)	yes
06.	Mid-Year Review	Mid-Year Review Meeting Report 2012	yes
		Mid-Year Review Meeting Report 2013	yes
07.	UN Common Budgetary Framework	Common Budgetary Framework 2012-2016	yes
		Budgetary Framework 2014	yes
		Budgetary Framework 2015	work in progress
08.	Joint Annual Work Plans	Joint Annual Work Plans 2012	yes
		Joint Annual Work Plans 2013	yes
		Joint Annual Work Plans 2014	yes
		Joint Annual Work Plans 2015	work in progress
09.	UNCT Retreat	Minutes UNCT Retreat, 2012	yes
		Minutes UNCT Retreat, 2013	yes
		Minutes UNCT Retreat, 2014	yes
10.	Management Arrangements	Final ToR RBM Advisory Committee_17 November 2011 (v.1)	yes
		Final ToR Outcome Coordinator_17 November 2011 (v.1)	yes

Folders		Title of Documents	Availability (26 March/15)
		ToRs Outcome Groups (revised Dec. 2014)	yes
		Final ToR Output Working Group_17 November 2011 (v.1)	yes
		ToRs Joint Executive Committee (revised 2013)	yes
		PoC Integrated Management Arrangements – Organogram (Nov. 2013 – v.1)	yes
		Management Structure - Organogram (version 1)	yes
		Management Structure - Organogram (revised Dec. 2014)	yes
11.	Common Services and Harmonized Business Practices	Operations Management Team ToRs - Albania	yes
		Operations Strategy 2012-2016	yes
12.	Communication	UN Communications Strategy 2012-2016	yes
13.	Resource Mobilization	Resource Mobilization Strategy 2012-2016	yes
		Albania UN Coherence Fund - MoU between Participating UN Organizations (Dec. 2011)	yes
		UN Coherence Fund Guidelines Albania 2012-2016 (version 1 – Jan. 2012)	yes
		UN Coherence Fund Guidelines Albania 2012-2016 (revised Feb. 2013)	yes
14.	Joint Executive Committee	JEC Minutes 2012	yes
		JEC Minutes 2013	yes
		JEC Minutes 2014	yes
15.	RBM Advisory Committee & Outcome Groups	RBM AC Meetings Minutes 2012 - 2016	yes
		Outcome Groups Meeting Minutes 2015	yes
16.	RCAR	RCAR 2012	yes
		RCAR 2013	yes
		RCAR 2014	2014 Workplan ppt
17.	UNCT Work Plan	UNCT WorkPlan 2012	yes
		UNCT WorkPlan 2013	yes
		UNCT WorkPlan 2014	yes
18.	UNDAF 2017-2021	UNDAF 2017-2021 Roadmap	yes
		UN Agencies Cost Sharing Document	yes
		GoA Endorsement of Evaluation ToRs and Roadmap	yes
19.	Post 2015 Development Agenda	Phase 1 – Consultation Report (March 2013)	yes
		Phase 2 – Consultation Report (July 2014)	yes
20.	Membership Lists	UNCT	yes
		NRAs	yes - distribution list
		Joint Executive Committee	yes
		RBM Advisory Committee (Division of labor old/new Outcome Coordinators)	yes
		Output Working Groups (as of 3 Feb. 2015)	yes
		UN Communications Team	yes - distribution list
		UN Gender Theme Group	yes - distribution list
		UN Operations Management Team	yes - distribution list
21.	Key National Reports	National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013	yes
		National Strategy for Development and Integration 2014-2020	yes

	Folders		Title of Documents	Availability (26 March/15)
			MoF - Albania Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2014-2016	yes
			MoF - Albania National Economic Reform Programme 2015-2017	yes
			AIDA 2014 Report	yes
			DDPFFA External Assistance Progress Report 2009-2010	yes
			DDPFFA External Assistance Progress Report 2011-2012	yes
22.	Key International Reports		EC - Albania 2012 Progress Report http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/documents/al_rapport_2012_en.pdf	yes
			EC - Albania 2013 Progress Report http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/documents/al_rapport_2013.pdf	yes
			EC - Albania 2014 Progress Report http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/documents/eu_albania/swd_304_-_albania_-_final_prov_8.10.14.pdf	yes
			EU Strategy Paper Albania 2014-2020	yes
			The political economy of donor intervention in Western Balkans and Turkey: mapping and potential for stronger synergies http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/financial_assistance/phare/evaluation/2015/20150203_the_political_economy_of_donor_executive_summary_en_with_identifiers_final.pdf	yes
			World Bank – Albania Program Snapshots (April, June, October 2014) http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/eca/Albania-Snapshot.pdf	yes
			World Bank – Country Partnership Strategy in Albania 2011-2014 http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2010/06/12471011/albania-country-partnership-strategy-period-fy11-fy14	yes
23.	Other Documents		V High Level Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One: Outcome Document http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/Tirana%20Conference%20Outcome%20Document.pdf	yes
			V High Level Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One: Final Report http://www.un.org.al/editor-files/file/Final%20Report%20Tirana%20Conference.pdf	yes
	Websites		www.un.org.al; www.al.undp.org; www.undg.org;	
	Social Media		Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/UnitedNationsAlbania http://www.facebook.com/pages/UNDP-Albania/302120716513378?ref=hl Twitter: https://twitter.com/UN_Albania YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/user/UnitedNationsAlbania	
	Print Media			
	Specific UN Agency Programme Evaluation & Other Documents		**UNDP List of Evaluative Material (web links)** 1. Mid-Term Review of Improving coverage and management effectiveness in marine and coastal protected areas project Project 2014 Yes 2. Evaluation of Social Inclusion through Vocational Education Training Project Project 2014 Yes	

Folders	Title of Documents		Availability (26 March/15)
	3. Empowering Vulnerable Local Communities Joint Programme	Project 2013 Yes	
	4. Mid-Term Evaluation: ART GOLD 2 Programme in Albania	Project 2013 Yes	
	5. Identification and Implementation of the Adaptation Response Measures in the Drini-Mati River Deltas (PIMS 3629)	Project 2013 Yes	
	6. Programme of Albania for market strengthening and acceleration to promote solar water heating in Albania	Project 2012 Yes	
	7. Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin	Project 2012 Yes	
	8. Empowering Vulnerable Local Communities Joint Programme	Project 2012 Yes	
	9. Kukes Region Cross Border Cooperation programme	Project 2012 Yes	
	10. Youth Employment and Migration Joint programme	Project 2012 Yes	
	11. Final Evaluation of the MDG-F Joint Programme: ?Economic Governance, Regulatory Reform and Pro-Poor Development in Albania?	Project 2012 Yes	
	12. Culture and Heritage for Social and Economic Development	Project 2011 Yes	
	13. Youth Employment and Migration Joint programme	Project 2010 Yes	
	14. Empowering the Vulnerable Communities in Albania : Support to the Implementation of the National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions	Project 2010 Yes	
	15. Assessment of the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) & Transition Plan	Others 2010 Yes	
	16. Integrated Ecosystem Management in the Prespa Lakes Basin of Albania, FYR Macedonia and Greece	Project 2010 Yes	
Specific UN Agency Programme Evaluation & Other Documents	**UNICEF List of Reference Materials** --- Evaluation of Albania's child rights machinery (2012) --- Evaluation of Albania's national strategy for social inclusion (2013) http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Albania_2013-003_National_Social_Inclusion_Policy_Evaluation.pdf --- Reducing child malnutrition in Albania. Mid-Term evaluation of the MDG-F funded joint UN project (2012) http://www.mdgfund.org/sites/default/files/Albania%20-%20Nutrition%20-%20Mid-term%20Evaluation%20Report_0.pdf --- Reducing child malnutrition in Albania. Final evaluation of the MDG-F funded joint UN project (2013) http://www.mdgfund.org/sites/default/files/Albania%20-%20Nutrition%20-%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report.pdf --- Assessment of the foster care pilot project in Albania (2013) http://www.unicef.org/albania/Protection-Albania_fostering_evaluation-oct13.pdf --- Multi-Country Evaluation (including Albania) of the Impact of Juvenile Justice System Reforms on Children in Conflict with the Law (2006-2012)		yes Report completed – to be shared as soon publicly released by UNICEF Regional Office

D. PoC results framework (2015-2016)

Please see the results framework, attached separately.

E. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

Please see the ToR for the evaluation, attached separately.