An Evaluation of the UNDP’s Support to Security Sector Reform in the Republic of Albania

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The Support to Security Sector Reform (SSSR) Programme evolved from the Small Arms and Light Weapons Control project (SALWC) of UNDP. This was the third in a series of projects implemented by UNDP, using the principle of Weapons in Exchange for Development, in support of weapons collection activities by the Government of Albania following the social unrest in 1997 which resulted in the looting of over 550,000 small arms and light weapons as well as a large number of ammunition and explosives from army depots by the population.

The SALWC operated in 5 of 12 prefectures of Albania and built a solid reputation and a network of support amongst the local authorities and stakeholders. The SSSR programme responded to a need to create a safe and secure environment in Albania. By building on the network of support in the areas of operation of the SALWC, the programme initially endeavored to introduce Community Based Policing (CBP) activities at grass roots level in 5 pilot communities with a view of achieving quick wins to demonstrate the advantages of close collaboration and teamwork between the police and the public, to build mutual trust and respect towards effective crime prevention and conflict resolution in the community.

The SSSR was built on three pillars. 1) To build Police Transparency and Accountability by changing the image of the police in the eyes of the public, through the building of modern public reception halls at the police commissariats, the conduct of an effective public awareness campaigns, and the provision of appropriate training to police officers who come in daily contact with the public. 2) Promoting CBP activities in targeted communities to promote the establishment of a representative community group called a Community Problem Solving Group (CPSG) and the appointment of a Police Inspector dedicated to that community. Furthermore the creation of open meeting spaces where CPSG members can identify, discuss and solve their security related problems 3) A massive Awareness Education in Schools component, whereby the police is brought directly into the classroom to educate the students about the dangers that surround them, such as weapons in the home, drugs and drug trafficking, prostitution, human trafficking, alcohol and tobacco abuse, traffic rules, etc. This component is implemented entirely by local NGOs under contract with SSSR and is enhanced with the production of many posters, leaflets, public programs and media involvement.

The SSSR is central to a CBP strategy developed by the Albanian State Police. Overall the SSSR has pioneered a new approach in the actual practical interpretation of the meaning of CBP on the ground and has demonstrated visible, tangible and measurable results and has thus developed a model that can provide valuable inputs and experiences not only throughout Albania, but to practitioners and agencies everywhere.

Lawrence Doczy
SSSR Programme Manager
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About the Publication

This evaluation was initiated by the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery of UNDP in New York. It examines the work undertaken by the UNDP Support to Security Sector Reform Programme in Albania, which commenced in January 2004. The programme is still running and so this evaluation necessarily had to evaluate an on-going process. Funding difficulties experienced by the programme prompted the evaluation to concentrate on two areas: how to consolidate the gains already made by established projects and how to develop the programme further in order to improve its contribution to community-based policing in the Republic of Albania.

The report includes a rather extended country background as it was felt that it was important for the reader to understand the precise context from which the UNDP SSSR programme evolved. This section additionally attempts to underline the imperative of implementing community-based policing in Albania.

Subsequent sections of the report examine the objectives and activities of the programme and provide a detailed analysis of its outcomes. The report presents a series of recommendations that emerge from the findings of the evaluation.
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1. Executive Summary

The UNDP Security Sector Reform SSSR Programmes under review in this evaluation developed from the framework of the UNDP ‘Weapons in Exchange for Development’ (WED) approach that was first piloted in the Gramsh region between 1998 and 2000. The need for weapons collection referred directly to the need to restore both the rule of law and the state’s monopoly over the use of force, thereby restoring normality to communities in the midst of near anarchical conditions.

The UNDP saw a need that was patently present in Albania to introduce community-based policing but needed to do this through the prism of development - by supporting the development of local communities both in terms of infrastructure and in terms of social capital, i.e. the construction of public works and the construction of relationships. Thus it adapted this WED approach that had successfully married disarmament, public works and community development towards new objectives.

The UNDP SSSR programme has been implementing its comprehensive approach to community-based policing in Albania since January 2004. It operates in five Prefectures of the country and presents a grass-roots ‘model’ that aims to build sustainable relationships among a wide number of actors. The model is simple, effective and relatively expensive. Each participating police commissariat receives a modern police reception hall, and within the commissariat’s jurisdiction one residential area is provided with a ‘common premises’ wherein a trained police officer forms a working relationship with a local community problem solving group (CPSG). The CPSG and the police officer together work with the local authority to advise and participate in a local community development project co-financed by the local municipality and the UNDP SSSR. In the meantime, a media campaign supports and publicises all activities. In addition, an awareness education campaign is running in the area whereby local police and a local NGO teach together in local schools about the danger of weapons in the home, drugs, prostitution, human trafficking and traffic rules.

This evaluation, however, has found that the outcomes considerably affect the individual security of inhabitants at participating pilot sites. It also finds that the ‘model’ holds enormous potential for the reform of the police in Albania as it encapsulates a practical and solid understanding of best practice in the field of community-based policing.

The evaluation has documented both the need for additional funding for this programme and the need for the programme to modify its activities in order to make its ‘model’ more attractive to national stakeholders.

While aware of the benefits derived from its activities to make policing at the local level more transparent, this report recommends that police accountability become a more integral aspect of the programme in the future. This would assist in sustaining the relationships that the UNDP SSSR has forged in the five participating project sites.

The evaluation has also referred to the importance of ‘selling’ the concept of community policing to national level policy makers. It found the high degree of support from the Minister of Interior to be a positive base upon which to ensure that community policing is practiced according to best international practice in Albania.

The evaluation also found that the draft Albanian ten-year national police reform strategy is to be published shortly, and that any future activities or modifications to the ‘model’ needs to adhere closely to this strategy.

The evaluation encourages the UNDP SSSR to disseminate the model it has developed to other developing regions that might benefit from a grass roots approach to security sector reform.
2. The Origins of the Programme

The genesis of the programme under review in this evaluation can be found in the UNDP ‘Weapons in Exchange for Development’ (WED) approach that was first piloted in the district Gramsh between 1998 and 2000 (Gramsh Pilot Project - GPP). The need for weapons collection referred directly to the need to restore both the rule of law and the state’s monopoly over the use of force, thereby restoring normality to communities in the midst of near anarchical conditions. The concept being piloted was an innovative one whereby local communities would be offered development grants in exchange for the return of looted weapons. It resulted in 5,000 weapons being swapped for twelve community grants totalling US$800,000. Whilst not very cost effective, the project showed the potential of the WED concept.

It should be noted that the WED concept defines security in its most expansive possible terms – whereby security is achieved by directly tackling the inadequate infrastructure that reinforces symptoms of poverty that are not conducive to human freedom. Thus, participating communities were rewarded by projects that supplied public goods such as lighting, road construction and electrical distribution. This idea of alleviating insecurity through the conduit of local development would be a constantly evolving theme used by the UNDP over the next eight years in Albania.

Encouraged by the success of the GPP, the Government of Albania requested the UNDP to establish similar projects in other problematic districts. In the regions of Elbasan and Diber, between June 2000 and February 2002, Under the Weapons in Exchange for Development Project (WED) just under 6,000 weapons were collected, 16,000 weapons were destroyed and 23 development projects were awarded at a cost of US$1.8 million.

In February 2002 the project was considerably expanded having been developed by the UNDP into the Small Arms and Light Weapons Control (SALWC) project. This programme was to be supported at the national level by a government amnesty for those who returned weapons. Thus the concept of WED was also expanded and used a combination of incentives, threats and advocacy. 5 of the 12 Prefectures in Albania (nearly half of the country) were targeted by a five-part strategy designed to coax weapons from communities with developmental needs:

| 1. Public Awareness Campaign |
| 2. Development Projects |
| 3. Weapons Collection |
| 4. Logistic Supports |
| 5. Development of a weapons registration and control database |

The most distinguishable aspect of this project from its predecessors was the need for communities to compete against one another for development projects.

The project faced one major constraint with the expiration on 4 August 2002 of the amnesty law. This amnesty law provided the legal operational framework for the SALWC project. In June 2002 UNDP made recommendations to the government for the period after 4 August, which were accepted. Unfortunately, quite unexpectedly, during July 2002 the government changed within the ruling party and the amnesty law was allowed to expire. This eliminated the legislative operational framework of SALWC and resulted in the disbanding of a 250-member Weapons Collection unit of the State Police, dedicated to the collection of weapons.

For all practical purposes all weapons collection in Albania came to a halt.\(^1\) Consequently, the project was operational in the field only for 3 months (May, June, July 2002), when the Amnesty Law expired on 4 August and collected close to 7,000 weapons, awarded 42 development projects totalling $1.0 million.

\(^{1}\) It should be noted that the amnesty law enacted in May 2003, through the constant pressure from UNDP, was submitted to parliament in 2005 for another 2 year extension ahead of the national elections in June 2005, was allowed to expire and no renewal and hence no resumption of weapons collection in Albania was undertaken by the new party in power. A UNDP brokered Small Arms Survey was conducted by Saferworld during the first part of 2006 and revealed that well over 200,000 weapons are still held illegally by the public – so far no structured action has been taken on this front by the Albanian Government.
Through the interventions of UNDP a new Amnesty Law was enacted in May 2003 for a period of 2 years enabling the project to resume support to weapons collection. Overall, within the framework of SALWC, by the time that UNDP support to weapons collection ceased in December 2003, approximately 10,000 weapons were turned over to the police through UNDP interventions by participating communities; a proportionately higher number of weapons than that recorded in areas not covered by the project. In the process, 67 small scale community based development projects were awarded at a total cost of $1.5 million. The absence of tangible governmental support for arms collection however eventually forced the UNDP into examining alternative ways it could contribute to the reform of the security sector in Albania.

The project was undertaken in 2002-2003 and was positively evaluated in a report issued by the South Eastern Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) in 2003. The SEESAC evaluators believed that the network of contacts in communities throughout the country established during the SALWC project would form a strong base to develop a community policing programme. The UNDP felt that community groups that had competed for development projects in exchange for weapons could be re-mobilised to form local community problem solving groups (CPSG). These groups would, it was anticipated, ‘ultimately act as the community counterpart for the police’.

Evaluators agreed with the UNDP that Weapons in Exchange for Development could quite easily form the springboard for a project that awarded grants to local groups comprised of members willing and able to contribute to local security-related development projects. Using similar strategies and capitalising on the ‘excellent rapport’ established by the SALWC with local authorities and local police in participating pilot sites, it was decided to move the programme more firmly into the arena of security sector reform.

Having successfully married disarmament with public works and community development, in March 2003 the UNDP proposed to marry police reform to public works and community development. The result was the Support to Security Sector Reform Programme (SSSR).

Based on the results of the SALWC, if SSSR simply aimed to foster closer relations between the police and local communities it would be successful. However, if it aimed to actually influence the trajectory of police reform in Albania towards community policing this was a decidedly more complex and longer-term project than weapons collection.

3. Relevance of SSSR in Albania

Between 1999 and 2003, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had attempted via SEPCA (South Eastern Police Chiefs Association) to push the concept of community based policing in the Balkans. It played an important role in the decision to create a five-year strategic plan for the introduction of community policing and supported the creation of a working group within the Albanian State Police. Without political support however, the working group was unable to realise its objectives. Given the urgent need in the wake of March 1997 to establish popular legitimacy for policing in the peripheral parts of the country, the level of mistrust that existed

3 ibid page 37.
4 ibid
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between the police and southern communities and the policy of state decentralisation, one would have expected community-based policing to have been a priority.

During 2002 the European Commission Police Assistance in Albania (ECPA) as part of the European Community assistance effort to the Albanian State Police initiated a community policing pilot project in one of the police commissariats of Tirana. This was discontinued after nine months when ECPA was replaced by PAMECA (Police Assistance Mission of the European Commission in Albania). In addition DANIDA, the Danish Foreign Ministry programme, carried out a schools project in the Diber Prefecture, bringing together young children, teachers, criminal police and public order inspectors.

The Diber Prefecture Directorate of Education apparently adopted some aspects of the curricula developed during this project. Other than these two projects - both of which were local and isolated from national policies – the Albanian police had merely received training and advice in community based policing practices but no assistance had been provided by an international organisation to commence an organisation-wide community policing policy. This is perhaps understandable as the EU stabilisation and association process, which would seem to have engaged the Albanian police most, was focussed on different priorities: organised crime and trans-border crime neglects the issue of internal crime, observed; numerous international organisations involved in police reform, not one had properly engaged the Albanian State Police in a national programme of community-based policing.

One must conclude that in 2003, when the UNDP first produced its Programme Document for the Support to Security Sector Reform programme, the proposal to initiate community policing projects was highly relevant, timely and filled a glaring gap in the assistance provided by international organisations to the Albanian State Police.

Brief Summary of International Support to Security Sector 2006. 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Organisation</th>
<th>Main Project Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
<td>Parliamentary oversight, border policing, provision of equipment and technical expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
<td>Support to Security Sector Reform - community policing projects, police station refurbishment, education awareness school children</td>
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“This leads to a situation where technical advice and training is focused upon, but attitudes and perceptions both of police officers and civil society is given less attention. Training of the police is not sufficient but education of the political elite and civil society is needed. “6

It is surprising that by 2003, amongst the

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5. This situation is beginning to change – see table A Brief Summary of International Support to Security Sector Reform in Albania.
7. The UNDP requested the formation of a Working Group for CBP - chaired by the ASP - within the International Consortium – a grouping of international organisations/actors, NGOs in Albania. This WG meets regularly and activities and achievements as well as plans are discussed. SSSR is represented on this Working Group
4. Objectives and Sustainability of SSSR

4.1. Objectives of SSSR

The Albanian State Police had commenced to formulate a strategy and had been co-operating in this regard with a local non-governmental organisation. It was expected that a five-year strategic plan to initiate community based policing covering the period 2004-2009 would refer to the organisational re-structuring required to implement such proposals. This plan was however altered in early 2006 when it was decided to implement a more overarching organisational longer-term plan. The SSSR programme aimed primarily to achieve increased community safety and security and greater transparency and accountability in police services. The following objectives were considered:

**Greater awareness** among citizens and youth and more information provided on community based policing principles. Involving a public awareness media campaign and a schools awareness project, which is quite similar to the relatively successful one performed by DANIDA (see above).

**Enhanced professional capacity of the police.** Provision of training to police and the construction of more customer-friendly reception halls in pilot site police stations. It further envisaged undertaking public surveys to measure the community policing initiative.

**Increased cooperation between the public and the police.** By establishing Community Problem Solving Groups (CPSGs) which would be provided with ‘common premises’ to be located at newly (re)constructed police public order inspector’s offices. Their aims would be to cooperate with the public order inspector and local government to identify and resolve issues affecting their community’s safety. They are also expected to provide some assistance – financially or through expertise - in local construction projects to enhance community safety that are co-funded by the SSSR and the local municipality.

In October 2003, a London-based NGO, Saferworld, under contract with SEESAC in Belgrade, published a Policy Framework document for Community Policing in Albania. In order to gauge the differences in perception by both the police and the public of police service delivery, UNDP conducted a Police Performance and Customer Satisfaction survey in the fall of 2003. In January 2004, based on the results and on consultations in the field and with the Government, Saferworld, under contract with UNDP Albania, published an Operational Document to support the introduction of community policing in Albania. It examined the project’s goals and objectives and produced a very useful and country-specific framework that was followed closely during the programme’s implementation.

Importantly, the document clarifies that the UNDP will not work at the national level, and that the programme will operate at the local level only. While the programme continually sought support from the senior officials in the Ministry of Public Order, its focus was on the police public order inspector and his relationship (there were no female police officers involved in the project) to participating members of the local community whose residential area he policed. In this respect the programme is quite novel as most community policing programmes are top-down and are often criticised for not adequately involving the rank and file police.

The component that involved the construction/transformation of police reception areas sought only the support of the local Police Director. Security-related development projects progressed with the co-operation of local government (usually the Mayor) and participating members of the local community. Though not really required, local police management was included in all discussions regarding local development. Thus, triangles of local expertise were established and coaxed into co-operation by the promise of international development aid. The idea was that relationships would be constructed that had not existed before, and that a system of mutual co-operation would remain after the departure of the UNDP.

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8. In June 2005, the Ministry of Public Order and the Ministry of Local Government were merged into the Ministry of Interior.
9. Note: In Shokdra a female inspector was appointed. Her commitment to the project and her relationship to the CPSG were reportedly problematic enough to warrant her replacement.
The education awareness component enabled the programme to involve local NGOs in place of local community members. It attracted local and national media and consequently the attention of high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Order (now Ministry of Interior).

Nevertheless, while the programme was local it did have national ambitions to ‘be at the vanguard of reform’. It was made clear during this evaluation that the programme intended to offer a model of community-based policing to be considered as part of the 2004-2009 national strategy and is represented in the document, although this CBP Strategy was never formally adopted. The Saferworld document was therefore rather insistent on the need for quantitative and qualitative performance measurements – if the model were to be influential outcomes would need to be empirically provable.

The main participants in support to the security sector reform programme (SSSR) were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools Awareness</th>
<th>Public Awareness</th>
<th>CPSGs</th>
<th>Police Reception Hall</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local elementary and high school children and teachers</td>
<td>Local and national media</td>
<td>Participating residents of pilot site sectors</td>
<td>Local Police management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local NGOs</td>
<td>Local and National-level Police</td>
<td>Local Police Public Order Inspector</td>
<td>National senior level police</td>
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<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>UNDP SSSR</td>
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<td>Local Government</td>
<td>National Government officials</td>
<td>UNDP SSSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local police management, traffic police, public order police.</td>
<td>International NGOs (incl. UNDP SSSR)</td>
<td>Local Construction Company.</td>
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<tr>
<td>National and Local Media</td>
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<td>UNDP SSSR</td>
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4.2. Sustainability of SSSR

The examination of the macro-objectives of the SSSR above leads to a number of important questions concerning the extent to which the programme is progressing towards long-term sustainability.

a. Is the programme positively affecting community safety and security in pilot sites in the long term?

b. Is the programme positively affecting the levels of police transparency and accountability in pilot sites in the long term?

c. Will the relationships between participating community members, local authorities and the police persist in the absence of the UNDP SSSR programme?

d. Is the model proving the benefits of community-based policing to the Albanian State Police? In other words, will the model, or any of the components of the SSSR approach to community-based policing, be incorporated into a national policing reform strategy?

Let us examine each question individually.

4.2.1. Community Safety

Is the programme positively affecting community safety and security in pilot sites in the long term?

Due to the impact of both Awareness Educational component and the Community Problem Solving Groups component of the SSSR programme, remarkable changes are to be observed in all participating pilot sites. One member of Shkodra municipality, comparing non-pilot areas of the city to pilot areas, described the difference as being like ‘night and day’. Indeed, one of the residential neighbourhoods in Shkodra that benefited from a re-surfaced street and street lighting has become a popular route for city dwellers taking an evening stroll.

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The street lighting and the increased sense of security it brings has, according to one resident, utterly changed the environment. In Vlora the increased sense of security seems to derive from the very close relationship established between local residents and public order inspectors highly attuned to the principles of community-oriented policing.

In Lezha, CPSG members were able to point out that the newly established public order inspector’s office (or common premises) had an immediate impact both on the level of prostitution in the area and the number of car thefts. In Kukes, there was universal appreciation for work undertaken to construct a fence and a path around the perimeter of an elementary school that bordered a main road. Traffic police, who now patrol the road near the school’s entrance when children are going to school, later enhanced the effects of the infrastructure work.

While it is difficult to gauge the effects of the Awareness Education component’s contribution to community safety, it would seem evident that the creativity, the content and the pedagogy applied to the component had a positive effect, particularly with younger elementary school children. Qualitatively, at least, participating teachers at interview spoke of an increased awareness of the role of the police – paintings by children before and after the programme depicted police officers in radically different roles. One child’s perception changed from a police officer wielding a gun and chasing a man to a police officer as a smiling person lifting his cap to say “hello”.

Though the example seems quaint, it is nevertheless revealing of attitudinal change. Numerous similar examples were provided at each of the pilot-sites visited. The Regional Director of the Ministry of Education in Kukes explained that he came to recognise the impact of the component when he witnessed a young boy attempting to cross a busy street. Instead of trying to cross alone, the child approached a police officer that was twenty metres up the street and asked him for assistance. This is exactly what the Director had seen being taught a few weeks previously when he attended an awareness presentation at the child’s school.

The evaluation must therefore conclude that, in so far as it is possible to measure the programme’s impact on community safety, the impact is without doubt a positive one.

4.2.2. **Police Transparency and Accountability**

Is the programme positively affecting the levels of police transparency and accountability in pilot sites in the long term?

While other organizations were involved with the reform of the Albanian State Police at the policy and structural level, the SSSR programme identified a number of ‘entry points’ at the local level where it felt it could make a contribution and generate some “quick wins” to demonstrate CBP in practice at grass roots level.

The entry points identified include:

- Strengthening the Public Relations Capacity of the police.
- Enhancing the communication skills of individual officers.
- Introducing a service culture to police-citizen inter-relations.
- Training of Community-based policing standards.
- Computer training for police officers
The work undertaken in this objective is difficult to isolate by looking at specific activities as all of the activities in some way were motivated by the need to improve the transparency of the police. In June 2006 the twelve regional spokespersons received training in ‘public communications’. In May 2005 spokespersons were invited to a one-day course on ‘Media and Customer Relations Training’ which focussed on the issues that arise for spokespersons in a community-policing based environment. However the capacities of police spokespersons are severely limited by organisational constraints on their role. Police spokespersons do not currently directly engage with the media. They are not permitted to make any statements without specific permission from the regional director or from the Public Relations branch of the Ministry.

Furthermore, they still use typewriters rather than computers and all are trained police officers directly responsible to the regional director. In fact, in a number of Directorates visited during this survey, regional directors considered spokespersons to be personal assistants rather than active public relations officers. It is difficult therefore to evaluate the impact of their being trained for a role that currently does not exist. Nevertheless, the spokespersons role is currently underdeveloped within the Albanian State Police and the UNDP SSSR programme should perhaps examine if it can further support aspects of the national reform strategy that aim to expand the role of the police spokesperson. It is unfortunate that spokespersons were not given a greater role in the public awareness campaigns that were undertaken by the UNDP SSSR.

The programme has been very active in training police officers in community based policing and ethics and instilling the ethos of service to public order inspectors, traffic police inspectors and passport office police officers. In 2004 Public order officers from Vlora and Shkodra participated (together with members of their CPSGs) in two one-day training sessions provided by the Kosovo Police Service School in preparation for the introduction of community policing to their sector. Later three officers from these sites and a representative from the Police Academy attended a three-week course at the Kosovo Police Service School. In October 2004 a number of representatives from the CPSGs in Lezha and Kukes also received a ten-day training course in Kosovo. At interview these officers displayed a heightened awareness and a genuine commitment to the community policing projects in their sectors. Seminars were conducted in 2005 with lecturers from the Police Academy on problem solving and conflict resolution. During 2006, a total of 500 officers at rank and senior level will have received training from local experts in communication skills and community-based policing tactics.

The UNDP SSSR has only provided computer training to public order officers in Vlora and Shkodra. Perhaps this is due to the lack of computers in police buildings. In fact in one large central commissariat visited in Tirana there were only three phones and two computers for use by the police.

Notwithstanding the positive effects of training and education, the refurbishment of police reception halls is the most visible and potent exercise in police transparency performed by the UNDP SSSR. This component transformed the manner by which Albanian citizens interact with police in their most common encounter with the agencies of law enforcement – the issuance of passports and the payment of traffic fines. In non-pilot sites citizens must queue outside the high walls of their respective commissariat and exchange documents with

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11. The UNDP SSSR donated computers to the public order inspector’s offices at Vlora and Kukes.
police officers through a small iron-grated hole in the wall. Citizens do not enter the police station nor can they see with whom they are dealing. In pilot sites the UNDP SSSR transformed the entire system by creating modern, spacious, air-conditioned reception halls. A ticket queuing system ensures fairness while officers deal with citizens through glass partitions. Everything is visible, ordered and comfortable. These projects represent a most powerful metaphor for police transparency and are obviously deeply appreciated both by the public and by the police officers, whose working environment has been improved drastically.

Police transparency can also be traced into the relationships that have been created between CPSGs and public order inspectors where at every site visited there was a feeling of camaraderie. In Kukes (and apparently in Vlora) the public order inspector filed reports from meetings he had held with members of the community. These reports contained the efforts made by the public order inspector to address any issues that arose during the meeting.

While it is therefore evident that the programme has made a lasting contribution to police transparency in the pilot sites, it is not very evident to what extent the programme has contributed to police accountability. The evaluation understands police accountability to mean the extent to which the police are made answerable to the public for its actions, priorities and performance. The example given above, of the public order inspector keeping records of meetings is the only documentary evidence found of any change in the levels of accountability. Therefore, it must be stated that, in their current constitution, CPSGs are not significantly contributing to police accountability. Some observers believe that small community groups operating with the police on local problems actually undermine the accountability of the police. It has been argued that it is very rare for such groups to actually influence the police: although their presence tends to build broad based support for the police, it also serves to mask the autonomy in action and decision-making exercised by police organisations.

Notwithstanding these contentions, the CPSG component does possess the potential to improve police accountability.

4.2.3. Relationships Established by SSSR

Will the relationships between participating community members, local authorities and the police persist in the absence of the UNDP SSSR programme?

The keystone of this programme is the extraordinary manner by which the UNDP SSSR is able to marry disparate actors towards a common goal. Acting as a facilitator and as the primary provider (but not the sole provider) of funding, the UNDP SSSR has managed to mobilise committed members of residential neighbourhoods and knit them together with local authorities, a centralised and government-controlled police force, non-governmental bodies and schools, to create micro-security communities in pilot site cities and towns. The origin point of this cooperation is the ‘common premises’, a small office constructed by the UNDP SSSR in the residential neighbourhood wherein development has been scheduled to occur.

This ‘common premises’ is more properly known as the ‘public order inspector’s office’, as it forms the base for this police officer’s work in the local neighbourhood. Similar to the sort of community policing that has been long practised in Japan, the idea is that each neighbourhood contains one public order inspector office to which residents have access at certain times of the day. In the UNDP SSSR programme this office
is also where local security-related issues and development projects are discussed during public meetings that are, theoretically at least, regularly convened and hosted by the public order inspector.

In the first two UNDP SSSR pilot sites (Vlora and Shkodra) these offices were co-located within local sub-municipality buildings. This illustrated the level of confidence of the local police at the time of its construction and the support given by local authorities to the project. It is entirely apt that the public order inspector’s office be co-located within or in close proximity to the local authority as the officer’s function within the Ministry of Interior resembles more a liaison officer between local government and the public than it does a regular police officer, in the west European sense. Their main duties involve property disputes and the resolution of domestic disputes. Much of their work involves local complaints against businesses or residents making too much noise, and the public order inspector refers such complaints to the local municipality offices. Besides training provided by the UNDP and other international organisations, most public order inspectors have received about one month’s training prior to deployment and rarely make arrests. They pass on any crime matters to the non-uniformed criminal investigation branch of the police.

The fact that their office lies within municipality buildings therefore makes perfect sense and accords with legislation passed in 1999 that institutionalises cooperation between the police and local authorities. While it is not entirely clear whether this legislation is being implemented in full, it requires the police to compile and present reports to local authorities on public order (police accountability); gives local authorities a say in the appointment of police regional directors; and requests the police to cooperate with and support local authority initiatives (such as, for instance, CPSGs) which aim to complement existing police structures. Thus, it seems most feasible that public order inspector’s offices are municipality properties and that the municipality is responsible for their maintenance and operability. This was not the case in the pilot sites in Lezha or Kukes, where the Ministry of Interior owned the premises, thereby making it much more a police building than a common premises aligned to local governance structures.

Local government was further integrated into the programme at pilot sites by its role as co-financer, along with the UNDP SSSR with development works, such as road construction work, street lighting, the creation of green areas etc. The connection thus forged local residents with local authorities in local development projects planned in the public inspector’s office at a meeting hosted by the police, whose presence would provide expert advice if needed. The CPSGs were therefore closest to public order inspectors and to local authorities and seemingly had little interaction with other branches of the police or with local police management.

Police management accept these experiments in community-based policing knowing that they will attain a modern reception hall for the commissariat, and in a number of cases, (Vlora and Tirana Commissariat #3) the adjoining administrative offices. At Kukes, the Regional Director used police funds to extend the construction to improve the dilapidated corridor and the adjoining offices from the reception area into the rest of the police station to form a complete rehabilitated wing. Besides the benefits of police transparency that derived from these works (discussed above), the work solidifies the programme’s support from local police management. The UNDP SSSR wholly funds it.

Therefore the primary triangle of cooperation exists between local government, which is always eager to extend its remit over local policing; the members of the CPSG and the police public order inspector. The sustainability of the ‘triangle’, which is at issue in this section, needs to be commented upon.

Three observations were made during this evaluation that would seem to warrant some concern over the sustainability of these relationships. Firstly, it is plain that the raison d’être of CPSGs is the attainment of international

12. Note: In Tirana in Commissariat #3, a sub-municipality of Tirana municipality is responsible for the maintenance and pays all bills arising from the Public Order Inspector’s office.
development funds through UNDP. At all interviews with available members of these groups in pilot areas their primary concern was with the development of their residential area and the possibility of attaining further funding. Particularly in the older pilots, such as Vlora, Shkodra and Lezha, it was clear that meetings to discuss local security matters were not held on a regular basis. If they were being held, the public order inspector had neither records of meetings nor attendance records nor minutes. According to the Deputy Mayor of Shkodra, whose mother was involved in a CPSG, meetings are only held on an *ad hoc* basis and are rare. She wished to formalise the meetings so that both the public order inspector and the CPSG are made more accountable to the local authority. She believed regular meetings with agendas, attendance records and minutes would substantially improve the work of CPSGs. In addition, bi-annual reports from CPSGs might be distributed to the mayor, the regional director of the police, the chief public order inspector, the UNDP and to residents of the locality.

An example might clarify the point: on a number of occasions the researcher found the public order inspector's office in Tirana closed during times when it was supposed to be open. This would not happen if the relevant CPSG together with the sub-municipality mayor responsible for the office held regular meetings where such omissions might be addressed and written into a formal record for presentation to the officer's superiors and to other influential parties.

In the absence of international development money CPSGs need to play a role in police accountability – as auxiliary structures of the local authority they have the potential to become integrated with an accountability system that enables them to monitor police performance in their locality. If they remain as they are presently constituted their membership may further dwindle; their ‘common premises’ may either be colonised by the police or may disappear altogether; and they may come to be viewed by fellow residents as being too close to the police to be wholly trusted as neutral local representatives.

It is nevertheless suggested that the UNDP SSSR convene a conference in Tirana for all eighty members of the CPSGs they have established in order to re-mobilise and re-direct their energies towards their potential long-term contribution to community safety. This conference might include talks by members of similar groups that have been established in Northern Ireland. Without international development aid to fuse cooperation efforts, the triangles of expertise established by the UNDP SSSR are in danger of withering away. The UNDP SSSR must support a re-vitalised role for CPSGs that can act together with local government to ensure that police public order inspectors continue to serve the community.

### 4.2.4. SSSR and the National Strategy

**Is the model proving the benefits of community-based policing to the Albanian State Police?**

The original five-year plan for the implementation of community policing had envisaged a series of activities to run from 2004 to 2009. This plan involved the creation of a Community Police Sector within the Ministry to guide and monitor the progress of a number of very specific and concrete objectives towards establishing a community-focussed police force in Albania. Heavily based on the best practice gleaning from other police forces, the community policing strategy envisaged organisation-wide structural and cultural changes. It was a pragmatic and expensive programme of change that would run needs identification surveys in each Directorate throughout 2006. Training curricula and public relations documents would be devised during this period and a review of the UNDP SSSR interventions would estimate their
value to the Albanian police. Major structural re-organisation was planned that would *inter alia* provide detailed job descriptions to all ranks and establish clear reporting rules and chains of command. Training and the dissemination of a police code of ethics would run concurrently with a number of awareness campaigns. Vitally, the document included the need to draft a project that would aim to renovate police premises and create ‘improved’ waiting rooms. Local government bodies were seen as having an especially important role in the setting-up of offices for local police officers and community groups. The new reception halls, together with new police directorate buildings and local public order offices in all areas would commence in 2007.

![Interior view of a renovated waiting room in Lezha](image)

Its primary objectives were very close to that of the UNDP SSSR programme – to re-create the image of the police; to increase the quality of police communication; to re-organize the police into a system of neighbourhoods and communes; to set up auxiliary police structures in each locality whereby citizens could liaise between the police and the wider community; and to institutionalise co-operation between the police and other actors. One must therefore assume that the UNDP SSSR programme had exerted a major influence over this strategy.

Crucially however, during the course of our evaluation it became known that the Five-Year reform strategy would not be published. Instead, under advice from PAMECA, a longer-term ten-year reform strategy was being considered. It was anticipated that this strategy would cover the period 2006-2016 and that a draft would be ready for presentation in September 2006. Considering the enormous challenges facing the Albanian State Police to reform, the decision to opt for a long-term plan that includes infrastructural, organisational and normative changes is quite justified. The strategy will also cover a crucial period of Albania’s efforts to adjust to the requirements of European Union membership.

However, at interviews with senior officials from the Ministry of Interior and with the General Director of the State Police it was stated that serious crime and trans-border crime would occupy the central focus of the revised longer-term strategy. It was explained that there were no specific proposals for community policing – but that its ‘philosophy’ would permeate the entire document. Community policing was described in terms of a luxury that a reforming police force without basic equipment could not justify. Asked about the UNDP SSSR projects, and if there were plans to incorporate aspects of these models into the wider strategy, senior management answered that it was difficult to measure the benefits of these projects. They added that they were very pleased with the police reception buildings and they hoped the UNDP SSSR would continue to refurbish more police buildings.

It is unclear therefore as to role community-based policing will occupy in the revised document. It would appear *prima facie* that there has been a change of emphasis and that there are differences between the original five-year strategy and the draft ten-year strategy. This partly attests to the difficult political environment in which the SSSR programme is operating. With the arrival of the new Government in June 2005 there have been significant changes in police senior and middle management. For instance, most of the regional directors interviewed for this evaluation had only taken office six months previously, after the formation of the new government. Many were unfamiliar with the project and some saw it as an

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13. The author was shown a presentation prepared and delivered by PAMECA to the Albanian State Police outlining the benefits of a ten-year strategic approach.
achievement associated with a predecessor and were therefore not very enthusiastic or supportive.

Albania is an apt candidate for community based policing and shares many of the characteristics of other divided societies where the police have used the strategy to acquire legitimacy and build a broad support base. This evaluation will recommend that the UNDP SSSR utilise the support it receives from the Minister of Interior to have community-based policing declared publicly as a national priority alongside organised crime and other priority areas of reform.

It should also be noted that the draft version of the Albanian State Police Law does incorporate, under Article 130, proposals to develop community policing. Based heavily on the British model, the Article envisages the publication of district policing strategies devised in cooperation with local authorities and civil society bodies. The Article falls short of identifying the level of influence non-police bodies will exert and does not specify what measures are to be taken if regional police directors fail to accomplish the goals set out in their strategy. This legislation is due to be presented to parliament in September 2006. If the law were to be passed, its implementation would draw on much of the work undertaken by the UNDP SSSR programme to establish locally informed community groups on security-related issues.

The Public Awareness and Information (PAI) component is an intensive public awareness media campaign that is continually supporting UNDP SSSR activities. This aspect of the model being developed by the programme ensures that local or national media is always present to report project milestones such as the inauguration of a new police station or children’s shows that end each Awareness Education project.

The PAI component, interestingly, engages itself in the public sphere to spread the concept of security-related community development by inviting participants to discuss the projects in televised roundtable discussions. Advertising is also utilised to fuel national awareness of the programme’s ultimate objectives. Much material was produced, such as posters, leaflets, newsletters, TV spots, Video CDs providing imagery of the SSSR’s activities, televised round table discussions with national and local authorities and stakeholders, as well as an effective website that is continually kept up to date by project staff. The project capitalizes on project related public events, such as the inaugurations of infrastructure projects, mobilizing the media and by inviting high profile officials to attend.

![National TV round table](image)

4.3. Evaluating Awareness Education

Local government officials, Ministry of Education officials, teachers, NGOs and senior police officers at interview have all expressed unconditional support for the component. Of all components to the UNDP SSSR, awareness education suffers least from the polarised political environment prevalent in Albania. In fact, one UNDP SSSR regional coordinator claimed during this evaluation that the AE component was, in his opinion, the most important and most successful aspect of the entire programme.

The AE component boasts extraordinary achievements. It would also seem to represent very good value for money. Up to February this year the Irish Government had donated Euro 233,110 (approx US$290,000) to the project that by then had reached 91,000 children in 124
An Evaluation of the UNDP’s Support to Security Sector Reform in the Republic of Albania

A further contribution of Euro 216,000 was made by the Irish Government in April 2006. While it is a crude indicator, this represents an input of just over US$3 per pupil. Perhaps it would be more meaningful to speak in terms of the number of schools. For instance, the ‘Children’s First Foundation’ project in Tirana was budgeted for US$16,500 and involved six schools. This translates into approximately US$2,750 per school.

The most impressive accomplishment of the component is the sheer volume of participants it can claim has benefited from the project. At the time of writing, the UNDP SSSR counted 137,000 children that have been involved to some degree in the project.

In addition, there is a myriad of curricula that have been developed by individual NGOs. This exercise would considerably assist the UNDP SSSR as it looks to the period beyond its current funding. The teacher training work undertaken by two NGOs in Tirana highlights the potential for AE to respond to a very real need in Albania by consolidating the best aspects of its programme into a teacher training pack on security-related issues. To keep with the spirit of the UNDP SSSR objectives, this teacher training pack might be developed by lecturers from the Ministry of Interior, curriculum specialists from the Ministry of Education and by the participating NGOs. Such a pack would become an invaluable tool for community policing in Albania, both for the police and for elementary schools. One of the most successful ‘entry points’ for police organisations attempting to forge links with the community is through school-based projects.

5. Conclusions

The decision to move from ‘weapons for development’ to security sector reform was an ambitious move for the UNDP. In order to do this it adapted an approach that had successfully married disarmament, public works and community development towards new objectives. The UNDP saw a need that was patently present in Albania to introduce community-based policing at grass roots level, but needed to do this through the prism of development - by supporting the development of local communities both in terms of infrastructure and in terms of social capital, i.e. the construction of public works and the construction of relationships. While other international organisations were assisting the Albanian State Police with police reform at a structural level, the UNDP SSSR programme saw that its strength lay in its ability to effect change at a local level. Derived from the successful formula used in the SALWC, the programme aimed to coax institutional actors from their respective corners with development aid, and to motivate them to engage via enthusiastic and supportive residents who had been formed into groups. The SALWC awareness component was significantly expanded by the Awareness Education component, which aimed to establish sustainable mutually beneficial relationships between the police, schools and NGOs. It was anticipated that the impact of these participatory grass-roots activities would be felt at the national level and that the UNDP SSSR ‘model’ would become a ‘vanguard of reform’.

The model is simple, effective although rather costly. Each participating police commissariat receives a modern police reception hall, and within the commissariat’s jurisdiction one residential area is provided with a ‘common premises’ wherein a trained police officer forms a working relationship with a Community Problem Solving Group (CPSG). The CPSG and the police officer together work with the local authority to advise and participate in a local community development project co-financed by the local municipality and the UNDP SSSR. In the meantime, a media campaign supports and

Children speaking for their rights in Shkodra
publicises all activities. In addition, an awareness education campaign is running in the areas of intervention in which local police and a local NGO teach together in local schools about the danger of weapons in the home, drugs, prostitution, human trafficking and traffic rules.

This evaluation has found that the model is highly effective at establishing relationships between the police and community groups (and NGOs) and between local government and community groups. While the project is running there is a heightened awareness of the goals of community-based police reform measures. People feel what it is like to reside in an area secured by a community-oriented police force. The public works and the relationships that emerge from them positively affect the level of security felt by the local residents. Almost every individual interviewed during this evaluation confirmed that the UNDP SSSR programme had made a tremendous impact on his or her locality.

The programme is successful at inculcating the democratic ideal of transparency by developing the service aspect of police work. While the relationship between participating police, a local authority, NGOs and community group members has become open, cooperative and less distrustful, it is not possible to report an increased level of police accountability. Neither local government nor local community groups have gained any foothold over the autonomy enjoyed by the Albanian police. Nevertheless, the project has sown the seeds of accountability by initiating CPSGs and by co-locating them with local government. If this relationship was formalised with more rigorous reporting procedures, there is little doubt that the public order inspector at least would feel himself or herself, more answerable for his/her actions to the community.

This leads us to examine the sustainability of the relationships formed by the UNDP SSSR programme. The evaluation found little evidence to contradict the finding that many of the relationships established are based on a need to cooperate to gain the incentives offered by the UNDP SSSR. While public works remain and will be used and enjoyed for countless years, the relationships built require a focus point to keep them working. CPSGs are dissipating; meetings are increasingly irregular since the absence of development grants in the more established pilot sites. ‘Common Premises’ are either becoming police property or are lying relatively idle. There is therefore a real need to re-mobilise these groups and re-direct them towards their proper role in a community-policing based environment. This should be connected with their role in establishing stronger institutional links as ancillary security bodies for local government. The researcher perceived that at present local government has a greater use for CPSGs than have local police directorates. The 1999 State Police Law supports this purpose. This might change if community policing became a national priority for the Albanian State Police.

The future role of CPSGs is therefore highly dependent on the ten-year national strategy due for publication in September 2006. This is an organisational-wide reform plan that should hopefully incorporate the earlier five-year community policing strategy, which included much of what the UNDP SSSR had piloted. Meetings with senior police to try to determine the exact role of UNDP SSSR strategies in the new strategy were unsatisfactory. The evaluation has to report that there would seem to have been a change in the priority given to community-based policing in this broader document. The UNDP SSSR does not have a seat on the working committee drafting this report and is not in a well-placed position to report on the tremendous success it has achieved. This needs to change.

The evaluation also sought to examine the replicability of the UNDP SSSR approach. It finds that the programme’s goals accord closely with the development priorities of the international community but that the cost of the model makes it difficult to guarantee sufficient funding for the long-term commitment required to implement community-oriented policing. Recommendations have been made which suggest ways of decreasing this expense. These might be tried out in an upcoming pilot site and the results contrasted with the current model. However, if one understands community policing as a long-term process, the model developed by the UNDP SSSR does have value for other regions in the midst of transition. The model has proven its
worth at the local level. It has produced a tried and tested working community police model and accomplished concrete objectives under extremely difficult circumstances. At this stage of the model’s development it needs to illustrate how sustainable these achievements can be made.

In addition, a number of technical issues need to be addressed. Primary amongst these is the charge that the model has only worked in ‘soft’ communities and is untried in more problematic areas where security issues tend to be more acute. It is however clear, that this approach was by design, as the SSSR intended to secure quick and tangible results and these could only be attained at the beginning in less problematic areas.

Linked to this is the composition of CPSGs. While there are thirty-three women listed amongst the eighty members of CPSGs, only one was available for interview during this evaluation. The majority of active members are middle-aged, well-educated, male professionals.

Another technical issue involves the ownership of CPSG buildings – the public order inspector’s office, or the ‘common premises’. Some of these buildings are owned and maintained by local government while some are owned and maintained by the police. The model, if it is to be replicated, needs to determine which institutional actor will control the common premises. This evaluation found that buildings owned by the police were maintained better and were more functional than buildings owned by local municipalities. It is deduced that police tend to be more conscientious in their own buildings.

However, the report also finds tentative evidence to suggest that there is greater potential in making the CPSG firstly, a partner of local government and secondly a partner of the local police. This would assist the autonomy of CPSGs in the future.

As the programme itself faces an uncertain future due to funding difficulties, the evaluation was asked to address the direction it must take in year 2007 and beyond – with and without appropriate funding. Either way the project needs to consolidate its activities in order to insulate it to some extent from funding gaps. The evaluation finds that a regional presence needs to be maintained in regions outside Tirana for the first quarter of 2007 in order to consolidate established projects and guide current projects. Two regional offices may accomplish this task – one with access to southern projects and one with access to northern projects. The programme should now concentrate on Tirana and work to refine its model to increase the sustainability of the relationships established. One method to do this and to decrease costs might be to concentrate on one district of Tirana. Rather than extending the programme to other districts using the current model, the programme might consider rehabilitating one police reception area and create a number CPSGs and associated public order offices in the same commissariat. Some of these CPSGs might not need actual buildings if relevant authorities agreed to host meetings at a neutral venue. This would enable the programme to set-up an entire system of institutional relationships whereby CPSGs could interact with, and learn from each other.

The future of the awareness education in any revised approach needs to be gauged more thoroughly than was feasible by this evaluation. It would seem that the positive feedback and enthusiasm of participants, and the fact that the component is demand-driven would suggest that there is a need for awareness education to become a more permanent fixture on the national curriculum. This would appear to be particularly the case for elementary school children who gained a great deal from the projects. The report recommends that consideration could be given to the proposal to create a teacher training pack that could be disseminated to schools. However, the various curricula and methodologies used by the huge number of NGOs involved deserve more attention than was possible during this study. The evaluation did find ample evidence to assess the component’s contribution to the programme as being highly positive.

The degree of local ownership and the phenomenal numbers of children affected are impressive. Moreover the component had a powerful multiplier effect that invigorated teachers and police officers and improved the
capacity of local NGOs. Having heard positive feedback from a number of police officers, it is presumed that the concept of community policing in the education sector will be driven by a demand both from teachers but also from the police.

Student’s Drawing: “Cooperation between police and community will fight crime”.

Any future trajectory for the UNDP SSSR programme is dependent upon the ten-year national police reform draft strategy that will be published shortly. Whatever proposals are contained therein will profoundly influence the future activities of the programme. It would be lamentable for the people of Albania if the document does not incorporate the sort of concrete specific proposals for community-based policing that have been implemented so successfully over the last two and a half years by the UNDP SSSR programme.

SSSR is endeavouring to bring about a change in mentality and perception as well as attitudinal and behavioural change and to demonstrate that there is a better way of dealing with crime and conflict in the community through the promotion of close collaboration between the public and the police. It is clear that this kind of change needs time and constant nurturing to take root. It is for this reason that it would be essential to have SSSR continue its activities beyond 2006, for which however additional funding must be found.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the UNDP SSSR:

1. Is fully supported by the International Development Community owing to the real need to continue community-based policing in Albania

2. Requests the Minister of Interior to make public the ardent support he has expressed for the programme so that senior management in the Ministry might prioritise community-based policing.

3. Recognizing that changes advocated by SSSR take time to take root, prevails upon the Ministry of Interior and the Albanian State Police to ensure as much as possible the long term assignment of Police Directors and Police Officers who have been trained, have adopted and are practicing the principles of CBP in the regions.

4. Becomes engaged with the community policing aspects of the revised ten-year national strategy and transfers its expertise and experience in community-based policing and police station rehabilitation to the Ministry of Interior.

5. Modifies its ‘model’ in view of funding gaps and the need to make more sustainable the relationships it has established at the local level. It has been suggested to consolidate all activities into one district and to discontinue expanding the programme outside Tirana.

6. Employs a Regional Coordinator for the Tirana Region.

7. Applies its model to a more problematic residential district, wherein resides marginalized and minority communities.

8. Examines methods to improve the police accountability component of the programme, possibly by supporting a more formalised system of reporting from CPSG to local government and local police. Additionally, in the event that the Draft Police Law is passed by parliament, the UNDP
SSSR should examine how its model can fit into the district partnership model being proposed under Article 130.

9. Provides computers, printers, paper and computer training at all new public order inspector offices. Explores methods whereby value can be added to this office by transforming it into a community point for information.

10. Calls a conference for all CPSG members, relevant local government officials and public order inspectors to be held in Tirana in early 2007 to re-direct their post-UNDP SSSR function towards community policing and local accountability. CPSG counterparts from Northern Ireland’s District Policing Partnership Boards or Community Safety Partnerships should be invited to share their apposite experience. UNDP SSSR should produce and disseminate a publication outlining the long-term goals of CPSGs. This should be seen as an exit strategy for completed projects.

11. Provides further training to improve the capabilities of police spokespersons. Provides essential equipment where required to police spokespersons. This work should be undertaken with reference to the role outlined for spokespersons in the ten-year national strategy.

12. Conducts a more rigorous evaluation of the Awareness Education component that will examine the feasibility of it contributing to the national curriculum at elementary level by producing a teacher training pack.

13. Examines the role of community-based policing in the education sector of the national ten-year police reform strategy. Advises the Ministry on the goals and achievements of the Awareness Education component.

14. Encourages the replication of its approach to other transitional and post-conflict regions that require support for security sector reform at the community-level.